

**FOREIGN  
RELATIONS  
OF THE  
UNITED  
STATES**

---

**1977–1980**

**VOLUME XXII**

---

**SOUTHEAST ASIA  
AND THE PACIFIC**



---

**DEPARTMENT  
OF  
STATE**

**Washington**



# Foreign Relations of the United States, 1977–1980

---

Volume XXII

## Southeast Asia and the Pacific

<i>Editors</i>	David P. Nickles Melissa Jane Taylor
<i>General Editor</i>	Adam M. Howard

---

United States Government Publishing Office  
Washington  
2017

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
OFFICE OF THE HISTORIAN  
BUREAU OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

---

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Publishing Office  
Internet: [bookstore.gpo.gov](http://bookstore.gpo.gov) Phone: toll free (866) 512-1800; DC area (202) 512-1800  
Fax: (202) 512-2250 Mail: Stop IDCC, Washington, DC 20402-0001

# About the Series

The *Foreign Relations of the United States* series presents the official documentary historical record of major foreign policy decisions and significant diplomatic activity of the U.S. Government. The Historian of the Department of State is charged with the responsibility for the preparation of the *Foreign Relations* series. The staff of the Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, under the direction of the General Editor of the *Foreign Relations* series, plans, researches, compiles, and edits the volumes in the series. Secretary of State Frank B. Kellogg first promulgated official regulations codifying specific standards for the selection and editing of documents for the series on March 26, 1925. These regulations, with minor modifications, guided the series through 1991.

Public Law 102-138, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, established a new statutory charter for the preparation of the series which was signed by President George H.W. Bush on October 28, 1991. Section 198 of P.L. 102-138 added a new Title IV to the Department of State's Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 4351, et seq.).

The statute requires that the *Foreign Relations* series be a thorough, accurate, and reliable record of major U.S. foreign policy decisions and significant U.S. diplomatic activity. The volumes of the series should include all records needed to provide comprehensive documentation of major foreign policy decisions and actions of the U.S. Government. The statute also confirms the editing principles established by Secretary Kellogg: the *Foreign Relations* series is guided by the principles of historical objectivity and accuracy; records should not be altered or deletions made without indicating in the published text that a deletion has been made; the published record should omit no facts that were of major importance in reaching a decision; and nothing should be omitted for the purposes of concealing a defect in policy. The statute also requires that the *Foreign Relations* series be published not more than 30 years after the events recorded. The editors are convinced that this volume meets all regulatory, statutory, and scholarly standards of selection and editing.

## *Sources for the Foreign Relations Series*

The *Foreign Relations* statute requires that the published record in the *Foreign Relations* series include all records needed to provide comprehensive documentation of major U.S. foreign policy decisions and significant U.S. diplomatic activity. It further requires that government agencies, departments, and other entities of the U.S. Government en-

gaged in foreign policy formulation, execution, or support cooperate with the Department of State historians by providing full and complete access to records pertinent to foreign policy decisions and actions and by providing copies of selected records. Most of the sources consulted in the preparation of this volume have been declassified and are available for review at the National Archives and Records Administration (Archives II), in College Park, Maryland.

The editors of the *Foreign Relations* series have complete access to all the retired records and papers of the Department of State: the central files of the Department; the special decentralized files ("lot files") of the Department at the bureau, office, and division levels; the files of the Department's Executive Secretariat, which contain the records of international conferences and high-level official visits, correspondence with foreign leaders by the President and Secretary of State, and the memoranda of conversations between the President and the Secretary of State and foreign officials; and the files of overseas diplomatic posts. All of the Department's central files for 1977–1981 are available in electronic or microfilm formats at Archives II, and may be accessed using the Access to Archival Databases (AAD) tool. Almost all of the Department's decentralized office files covering this period, which the National Archives deems worthy of permanent retention, have been transferred to or are in the process of being transferred from the Department's custody to Archives II.

Research for *Foreign Relations* volumes is undertaken through special access to restricted documents at the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and other agencies. While all the material printed in this volume has been declassified, some of it is extracted from still-classified documents. The staff of the Carter Library is processing and declassifying many of the documents used in this volume, but they may not be available in their entirety at the time of publication. Presidential papers maintained and preserved at the Carter Library include some of the most significant foreign-affairs related documentation from White House offices, the Department of State, and other federal agencies including the National Security Council, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Department of Defense, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Some of the research for volumes in this subseries was done in Carter Library record collections scanned for the Remote Archive Capture (RAC) project. This project, which is administered by the National Archives and Records Administration's Office of Presidential Libraries, was designed to coordinate the declassification of still-classified records held in various Presidential libraries. As a result of the way in which records were scanned for the RAC, the editors of the *Foreign Relations* series were not always able to determine whether attachments to a given document were in fact attached to the paper copy of the docu-

ment in the Carter Library file. In such cases, some editors of the *Foreign Relations* series have indicated this ambiguity by stating that the attachments were "Not found attached."

### *Editorial Methodology*

The documents are presented chronologically according to time in Washington, DC. Memoranda of conversation are placed according to the time and date of the conversation, rather than the date the memorandum was drafted.

Editorial treatment of the documents published in the *Foreign Relations* series follows Office style guidelines, supplemented by guidance from the General Editor and the Chief of the Declassification and Publishing Division. The original document is reproduced as exactly as possible, including marginalia or other notations, which are described in the footnotes. Texts are transcribed and printed according to accepted conventions for the publication of historical documents within the limitations of modern typography. A heading has been supplied by the editors for each document included in the volume. Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are retained as found in the original text, except that obvious typographical errors are silently corrected. Other mistakes and omissions in the documents are corrected by bracketed insertions: a correction is set in italic type; an addition in roman type. Words or phrases underlined in the original document are printed in italics. Abbreviations and contractions are preserved as found in the original text, and a list of abbreviations and terms is included in the front matter of each volume. In telegrams, the telegram number (including special designators such as Secto) is printed at the start of the text of the telegram.

Bracketed insertions are also used to indicate omitted text that deals with an unrelated subject (in roman type) or that remains classified after declassification review (in italic type). The amount and, where possible, the nature of the material not declassified has been noted by indicating the number of lines or pages of text that were omitted. Entire documents withheld after declassification review have been accounted for and are listed in their chronological place with headings, source notes, and the number of pages not declassified. All brackets that appear in the original document are so identified in the footnotes. All ellipses are in the original documents.

The first footnote to each document indicates the sources of the document and its original classification, distribution, and drafting information. This note also provides the background of important documents and policies and indicates whether the President or his major policy advisers read the document.

Editorial notes and additional annotation summarize pertinent material not printed in the volume, indicate the location of additional

documentary sources, provide references to important related documents printed in other volumes, describe key events, and provide summaries of and citations to public statements that supplement and elucidate the printed documents. Information derived from memoirs and other first-hand accounts has been used when appropriate to supplement or explicate the official record.

### *Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic Documentation*

The Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic Documentation, established under the *Foreign Relations* statute, monitors the overall compilation and editorial process of the series and advises on all aspects of the preparation of the series and declassification of records. The Advisory Committee does not necessarily review the contents of individual volumes in the series, but it makes recommendations on issues that come to its attention and reviews volumes as it deems necessary to fulfill its advisory and statutory obligations.

### *Declassification Review*

The Office of Information Programs and Services, Bureau of Administration, conducted the declassification review for the Department of State of the documents published in this volume. The review was conducted in accordance with the standards set forth in Executive Order 13526 on Classified National Security Information and applicable laws.

The principle guiding declassification review is to release all information, subject only to the current requirements of national security as embodied in law and regulation. Declassification decisions entailed concurrence of the appropriate geographic and functional bureaus in the Department of State, other concerned agencies of the U.S. Government, and the appropriate foreign governments regarding specific documents of those governments. The declassification review of this volume, which began in 2014 and was completed in 2016, resulted in the decision to withhold 0 documents in full, excise a paragraph or more in 6 documents, and make minor excisions of less than a paragraph in 54 documents.

The Office of the Historian is confident, on the basis of the research conducted in preparing this volume and as a result of the declassification review process described above, that the documentation and editorial notes presented here provide a thorough, accurate, and reliable record of the Carter Administration's policy toward Southeast Asia.

**Stephen P. Randolph, Ph.D.**  
*The Historian*

**Adam M. Howard, Ph.D.**  
*General Editor*

Bureau of Public Affairs  
September 2017

# Preface

## *Structure and Scope of the Foreign Relations Series*

This volume is part of a subseries of volumes of the *Foreign Relations* series that documents the most important issues in the foreign policy of the administration of Jimmy Carter. The subseries presents a documentary record of major foreign policy decisions and actions of the Carter administration. This specific volume documents U.S. foreign policy toward Southeast Asia during that administration. It continues to document many of the issues and themes that were addressed in the previous volume on Southeast Asia: *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, Volume E-12, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973–1976. Additionally, readers may wish to read this volume in conjunction with the Carter volumes on China (especially for information on the Sino-Vietnamese War), Japan and Korea, and Global Issues (especially for the information on Micronesia): *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, Volume XIII, China; *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, Volume XIV, Korea; Japan; and *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, Volume XXV, Global Issues; United Nations Issues.

## *Focus of Research and Principles of Selection for Foreign Relations, 1977–1980, Volume XXII*

With the conclusion of the Vietnam War preceding President Carter's ascension to the presidency, the new administration focused much of its Southeast Asia-related attention on Vietnam, seeking to normalize relations with the Vietnamese government and dealing with the Sino-Vietnamese War, the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea, and the famine in Kampuchea. The Sino-Vietnamese War and the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea created a refugee crisis that had huge implications for all of Southeast Asia. The refugee situation dominated U.S. interaction with the region and coincided with a U.S. domestic agenda that sought to establish refugee policy and legislation. In addition to documenting the implications of the Southeast Asian refugee crisis, this volume documents regional issues such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the narcotics traffic in the Golden Triangle, which included Thailand, Laos, and Myanmar, where the Carter administration grappled with the increased opium production in these countries.

Australia's prominence in the U.S. relationship with Southeast Asia is clear from the documents included in this volume, especially the rich correspondence between President Carter and Australian



Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser. High-level meetings happened more with officials from Australia and New Zealand than with other countries in Southeast Asia and included discussions about nuclear proliferation.

This volume also covers the establishment of U.S. relations with newly independent Pacific island nations, many of which were gaining their independence during the Carter administration. The Philippines features prominently in this volume due to the special importance of the base negotiations that took place during the Carter years.

While there are many memoranda of conversation in this volume, covering meetings involving high-level discussions in Washington and New York City and congressional delegations sent to Southeast Asia, many of the crisis situations are documented through telegrams in real time. Rich documentation of meetings and correspondence, especially with regard to refugee issues, provides insights into the policy formulation process in Washington.

While critical political, military, and demographic events were transpiring in Southeast Asia throughout the Carter administration, many in the region struggled with the United States' largely reactive policy agenda. Individual countries, as well as ASEAN, wanted to be taken seriously in the global arena, but the Carter administration did not prioritize its relationships with most Southeast Asian countries within the larger foreign policy context. Nevertheless, most of these countries sought to engage Washington, educate it, and gain greater inclusion in its foreign policy agenda during the Carter years.

### *Acknowledgments*

The editors wish to acknowledge the assistance of officials at the Jimmy Carter Library, especially Dave Stanhope, James Yancey, Ceri McCarron, Brittany Parris, and Amanda Pellerin. Thanks are due to the Historical Staff of the Central Intelligence Agency, who were helpful in arranging full access to the files of the Central Intelligence Agency. The editors would also like to thank Sandy Meagher for her valuable assistance in expediting the use of files of the Department of Defense.

David P. Nickles collected documentation for this volume. Melissa Jane Taylor collected and selected documentation and edited the volume. Both editors worked under the supervision of Kathleen Rasmussen, Chief of the Global Issues and General Division, and Adam Howard, General Editor of the *Foreign Relations* series. Kristin Ahlberg also reviewed the volume. Dean Weatherhead coordinated the declassification review under the supervision of Carl Ashley, Chief of the Declassification Division. Heather McDaniel completed the copy and technical editing.

**Melissa Jane Taylor**  
*Historian*

# Contents

About the Series .....	III
Preface .....	VII
Sources .....	XI
Abbreviations and Terms .....	XV
Persons .....	XXI
Southeast Asia and the Pacific	
Indochina .....	1
Southeast Asia and the Pacific Region .....	358
Thailand and Burma .....	552
Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and East Timor .....	670
Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and ANZUS .....	750
Pacific Islands .....	930
Philippines .....	943



# Sources

## *Sources for Foreign Relations, 1977–1980, Volume XXVIII*

The Carter Library is the best source of high-level decisionmaking documentation toward Southeast Asia from 1977 until 1980. A number of collections within the National Security Affairs files are particularly relevant in this regard. Within the Brzezinski Material, the Brzezinski Office File, the President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, and the Country File were most useful. Within the Staff Material, the Far East file was invaluable. Additionally, the Mondale Papers provided indepth documentation of Mondale's trip to Southeast Asia in May 1978.

At the Department of State, the records of Secretary of State Cyrus Vance (Lot 84D241) contained helpful documents. At the National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, Maryland, the records of Secretary of State Edmund Muskie also provided useful documentation. Additionally, the East Asian and Pacific Affairs Files, 1977–1979 (Lot 82D129), at the National Archives held substantive documents.

While a variety of other collections and resources contributed to the completion of this volume, those described above constitute the most important collections for U.S. foreign policy toward Southeast Asia during the Carter administration. Readers should consult both the source notes and additional annotation in order to learn what additional files have been consulted.

In addition to the paper files cited below, a growing number of documents are available on the Internet. The Office of the Historian maintains a list of these Internet resources on its website and encourages readers to consult that site on a regular basis.

## Unpublished Sources

### Department of State

Central Files: See National Archives and Records Administration below

Lot 80 D 90, 1978 Memoranda for DOS Principals

Lot 80 D 135, Personal Files of the Secretary of State, 1977–1980

Lot 80 D 307, Vietnam General Files for 1978

Lot 81 D 5, Records of the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, 1974–1978

Lot 81 D 117, Executive Secretariat (S/S-I)

Lot 81 D 154, Records of the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, 1978–1981

## XII Sources

---

Lot 81 D 325, Records of the Bureau for East Asian and Pacific Affairs from 1978  
Lot 82 D 129, East Asian and Pacific Affairs Files, 1977–1979  
Lot 82 D 306, Memoranda for DOS Principals from 1980  
Lot 84 D 241, Records of the Secretary of State, 1977–1980  
Lot 87 D 331, Sensitive Memcons from 1977  
Lot 89 D 265, Official Correspondence of the Under Secretary for Political Affairs, 1969–1988  
Lot 89 D 145, Top Secret Memoranda for 1974, 1978–1983  
Lot 90 D 192, Top Secret Documents, 1980–1988  
Lot 93 D 389, Records Pertaining to US-Philippine Military Base Agreement/Negotiations, 1976–1988  
Lot 94 D 430, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968–1991

### **National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland**

RG 59, General Records of the Department of State  
Central Foreign Policy File  
Entry P-9, Official Working Papers of S/P Director, 1977–1981  
Entry P-10, Subject Files of Edmund S. Muskie, 1963–1981  
Entry P-14, Records of the Deputy Secretary of State, 1977–1980

### **Carter Library**

National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material  
President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders  
VIP Visit File  
Country File  
Subject File  
Agency File  
General Odom File  
Brzezinski Office File  
Cables File  
National Security Affairs, Staff Material  
Office File  
Far East  
Global Issues  
Defense/Security File  
Brzezinski Donated Materials  
President's Daily Diary  
Carter Handwriting File  
National Security Council Institutional Files  
Walter Mondale Papers  
President's File, Plains File

### **Central Intelligence Agency**

Executive Registry Subject Files  
Job 79T01050A  
Job 80T00071A

Job 80T00634A  
 Job 80T00942A  
 Job 81B00112R  
 Job 81T00208R  
 Job 82T00267R  
 Job 85T00287R

## National Security Council

Carter Intelligence Files

## Washington National Records Center

RG 330, Records of the Department of Defense  
   OSD Files: FRC 330–80–0016  
     OSD Political Files, 1977  
   OSD Files: FRC 330–80–0017  
     OSD Official Records, 1977  
   OSD Files: FRC 330–80–0035  
     OSD Secret Files  
   OSD Files: FRC 330–81–0202  
     Secret OSD Official Records, 1978  
   OSD Files: FRC 330–81–0212  
     Top Secret OSD Official Records, 1978  
   OSD File: FRC 330–82–0205  
     Secret OSD Historical Documents, 1979  
   OSD File: FRC 330–82–0270  
     Top Secret OSD Official Records, 1979  
   OSD File: FRC 330–82–0217  
     Secret OSD Records, 1980  
   OSD File: FRC 330–82–0284  
     Top Secret OSD Official Records, 1980  
   OSD File: FRC 330–82–0285  
     Top Secret OSD Files, 1980  
   OSD File: FRC 330–83–0122  
     Foreign Military Rights Files, 1972–1980  
   OSD File: FRC 330–83–0123  
     East Asia and Pacific Affairs, 1972–1980

## Published Sources

Brzezinski, Zbigniew. *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Adviser, 1977–1981*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1983.  
 Carter, Jimmy. *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President*. New York: Bantam Books, 1982.  
 ———. *White House Diary*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2010.  
*Congress and the Nation*, Vol. V, 1977–1980. Washington, Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1981.  
 National Archives and Records Administration. *Public Papers of the Presidents, Jimmy Carter, 1977–1981*. Washington, Government Printing Office, 1977–1981.

## XIV Sources

---

United Nations. *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1977–1980. New York: United Nations Publication, 1980–1983.

United States. Department of State. *Bulletin*. Washington, 1977–1980.

———. *Treaties and Other International Acts* (TIAS).

Vance, Cyrus. *Hard Choices: Critical Years in America's Foreign Policy*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983.

# Abbreviations and Terms

**ADB**, Asian Development Bank

**AF**, Air Force

**AFP**, Armed Forces of the Philippines

**AID**, Agency for International Development

**ANZUS**, Australia-New Zealand-United States Security Treaty

**APC**, armored personnel carrier

**ARVN**, Army of the Republic of Vietnam

**ASAP**, as soon as possible

**ASD (ISA)**, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs

**ASEAN**, Association of South East Asian Nations

**ASW**, antisubmarine warfare

**AWACS**, Airborne Warning and Control System

**AWOL**, Absent Without Leave

**BCP**, Burmese Communist Party

**BOP**, Balance of Payments

**BPP**, Border Patrol Police

**CC**, carbon copy

**CEMA**, Council for Mutual Economic Assistance

**CENTO**, Central Treaty Organization

**CIA**, Central Intelligence Agency

**CIEC**, Conference on International Economic Cooperation

**CIF**, Chinese Irregular Forces

**CIL**, Central Identification Laboratory (Department of Defense facility in Hawaii)

**CINCPAC**, Commander in Chief, Pacific Command

**CINCPACAF**, Commander in Chief, Pacific Air Forces

**CINCPACFLT**, Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet

**CINCPACREPPHIL**, Commander in Chief, Pacific Representative, Philippines

**CODEL**, Congressional Delegation

**COM**, Chief of Mission

**COMECON**, Council for Mutual Economic Assistance

**CONUS**, contiguous United States

**CPT**, Communist Party Thailand

**CRS**, Catholic Relief Services

**D**, Democrat

**DAS**, Deputy Assistant Secretary

**DC**, developed country

**DCA**, Defense Communications Agency

**DCM**, Deputy Chief of Mission

**DEA**, Drug Enforcement Agency

**DFA**, Department of Foreign Affairs

**D/HA/PW**, Office of Prisoner of War and Missing In Action Matters, Department of State

**DIA**, Defense Intelligence Agency

**DK**, Democratic Kampuchea

**DMZ**, Demilitarized Zone



**DOD**, Department of Defense

**DOD/ISA**, Department of Defense, International Security Affairs

**dols**, U.S. dollars

**EA**, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Department of State

**EA/ANP**, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Office of Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and Pacific Island Affairs, Department of State

**EA/ANZ**, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Office of Australia and New Zealand, Department of State

**EA/IMS**, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Office of Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, Department of State

**EA/PHL**, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Office of the Philippines, Department of State

**EA/PRCM**, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Office of the People's Republic of China and Mongolia Affairs, Department of State

**EA/RA**, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Office of Regional Affairs, Department of State

**EA/T**, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Office of Thailand, Department of State

**EA/TB**, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Office of Thailand and Burma, Department of State

**EA/TIMBS**, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Office of Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Burma and Singapore, Department of State

**EA/VLC**, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Office of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, Department of State

**EC**, European Community

**ECOSOC**, Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

**EEC**, European Economic Community

**EmbOff**, Embassy Officer

**EXDIS**, Exclusive Distribution

**EXIM**, Export and Import

**FAO**, Foreign Affairs Office

**FMS**, Foreign Military Sales

**FonMin**, Foreign Minister

**FSO**, Foreign Service Officer

**FY**, Fiscal Year

**GNP**, Gross National Product

**GNZ**, Government of New Zealand

**GOA**, Government of Australia

**GOI**, Government of Indonesia

**GOJ**, Government of Japan

**GOM**, Government of Malaysia

**GOP**, Government of the Philippines

**GOS**, Government of Singapore

**GSP**, General System of Preferences

**GSRV**, Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

**GUB**, Government of the Union of Burma

**GVN**, Government of Vietnam

**HA**, Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, Department of State

**HA/ORM**, Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs, Department of State

**HB**, Harold Brown

**HE**, His Excellency

**HEW**, Department of Health, Education & Welfare

**IAEA**, International Atomic Energy Agency

**IBP**, Integrated Bar of the Philippines

**IBRD**, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

**ICC**, International Control Commission

**ICEM**, Intergovernmental Committee on European Migration

**ICRC**, International Committee of the Red Cross

**IDCA**, International Development Cooperation Agency

**IFAD**, International Fund for Agricultural Development

**IFI**, International Financial Institutions

**IGGI**, Inter-Governmental Group on Indonesia

**IMET**, International Military Education and Training

**IMF/IBRD**, International Monetary Fund/International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

**INA**, Immigration and Nationality Act

**INFCE**, International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation

**INR**, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State

**INR/REA**, Office of Research and Analysis for East Asia and Pacific, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State

**INS**, Immigration and Naturalization Service

**IO**, International Organizations; Bureau of International Organization Affairs, Department of State

**IO/UNP**, Office of United Nations Political Affairs, Bureau of International Organization Affairs, Department of State

**IRS**, Internal Revenue Service

**ISA**, International Sugar Agreement

**JCRC**, Joint Casualty Resolution Center

**JCS**, Joint Chiefs of Staff

**JUSMAG**, Joint United States Military Assistance Group

**JUSMAGTHAI**, Joint United States Military Assistance Group—Thailand

**KBL**, *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan* (New Society Movement)—Philippine political party

**KEG**, Kampuchea Emergency Group

**KPNLF**, Khmer People's National Liberation Front

**LAW**, Light Anti-tank Weapon

**LDC**, less-developed country

**Limdis**, limited distribution

**LNG**, Liquefied Natural Gas

**LOA**, Letter of Offer and Acceptance

**LPDR**, Lao Peoples Democratic Republic

**MAG**, Military Assistance Group

**MAP**, Military Assistance Program

**MBA**, Military Bases Agreement

**MBFR**, Mutual Balanced Force Reductions

**MDT**, Mutual Defense Treaty

**Memcon**, memorandum of conversation

**memo**, memorandum

**MFA**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**MIA**, Missing In Action

**MNLF**, Moro National Liberation Front, Philippine political organization

**MOI**, Ministry of the Interior

**MPS**, Maritime Pre-Position Ship

**MTN**, Multilateral Trade Negotiations

**NAM**, Nonaligned Movement

**NATO**, North Atlantic Treaty Organization

**NEZ**, New Economic Zones

**NF**, No Foreign Dissemination

**NFAC**, National Foreign Assessment Center

**NIT**, National Intelligence Test

**Nocontract**, No Dissemination to Contractors

**Noform**, No Dissemination to Foreign Nationals

**Notal**, Not Received by all Addressees

**NPA**, New People's Army, armed wing of the Communist party in the Philippines

**NPW**, nuclear powered warship

**NSA**, National Security Agency

**NSC**, National Security Council

**NSC-EPG**, National Security Council-Economic Policy Group

**Nodis**, No Distribution

**NZ**, New Zealand

**OBE**, overtaken by events

**ODP**, Orderly Departure Program

**OECD**, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

**OMB**, Office of Management and Budget

**OPEC**, Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries

**OPIC**, Overseas Private Investment Corporation

**Orcon**, Controlled by Originator

**OSD**, Office of the Secretary of Defense

**P**, Under Secretary for Political Affairs, Department of State

**PACOM**, Pacific Command

**PARA**, Policy Analysis and Resource Allocation

**PAVN**, People's Army of Vietnam

**PC**, percent

**PermRep**, Permanent Representative

**PL-480**, Food for Peace Program—public law 480

**PLA**, People's Liberation Army (China)

**PM**, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, Department of State

**PNG**, Papua New Guinea

**POLAD**, Foreign Policy Advisor Program, Department of State

**POL**, petroleum, oil, & lubricants

**POW**, prisoner of war

**PRC**, People's Republic of China; Policy Review Committee

**PRG**, Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam

**PriMin**, Prime Minister

**PRK**, People's Republic of Kampuchea

**PRM**, Presidential Review Memorandum

**PVO**, Private Voluntary Organization

**PX**, Post Exchange

**reftel**, Reference Telegram  
**RIMPAC**, Rim of the Pacific  
**RLG**, Royal Laotian Government  
**ROK**, Republic of Korea  
**RP**, Republic of the Philippines  
**RPC**, Refugee Processing Centers  
**RT**, right  
**RTA**, Royal Thai Army  
**RTG**, Royal Thai Government  
**R&R**, Rest and Relaxation

**S**, Office of the Secretary of State  
**S/P**, Policy Planning Staff, Office of the Secretary of State  
**S/R**, Coordinator for Refugee Affairs, Office of the Secretary of State  
**S/S**, Executive Secretariat, Office of the Secretary of State  
**S/S-O**, Operations Center, Office of the Secretary of State  
**SALT**, Strategic Arms Limitations Talks  
**SAM**, Surface-to-Air Missile  
**SEA**, Southeast Asia  
**SEATO**, Southeast Asia Treaty Organization  
**SecDef**, Secretary of Defense  
**septel**, separate telegram  
**SFRC**, Senate Foreign Relations Committee  
**SOFA**, Status of Forces Agreement  
**SocDems**, Social Democrats  
**SPC**, Special Processing Center (for refugees)  
**SPNWFZ**, South Pacific Nuclear Weapon Free Zone  
**SPRFO**, South Pacific Regional Fisheries Organization  
**SRUB**, Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma  
**SRV**, Socialist Republic of Vietnam  
**SSA**, Security Supporting Assistance  
**Stadis**, State distribution  
**STR**, Special Trade Representative  
**SUA**, Shan United Army

**TDY**, Temporary Duty  
**TOW**, Tube-launched, Optically-tracked, Wire-guided Missile  
**TTPI**, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

**UMNO**, United Malays National Organisation  
**UN**, United Nations  
**UNCTAD**, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development  
**UNDAC**, United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination  
**UNFDAC**, United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control  
**UNGA**, United Nations General Assembly  
**UNHCR**, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
**UNSC**, United Nations Security Council  
**US**, United States  
**USAF**, United States Air Force  
**USG**, United States Government  
**USNATO**, United States Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

## XX Abbreviations and Terms

---

**USSR**, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

**USUN**, United States Mission to the United Nations

**VBB**, Vance, Brzezinski, Brown

**VIP**, very important person

**VN**, Vietnam

**VOA**, Voice of America

**VOLAG**, Voluntary Agencies (which helped with refugee resettlement in the United States)

**WestPac**, Western Pacific

**WFP**, World Food Programme

**WH**, White House

**WSSSFAF**, Wartime Standard Support System for Foreign Armed Forces

**Z**, Zulu (Greenwich Mean) Time

# Persons

- Abad Santos, Vicente**, Philippine Secretary of Justice
- Abramowitz, Morton I.**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asian and Pacific Affairs until 1978; U.S. Ambassador to Thailand from June 1978
- Albright, Madeleine**, Congressional Relations Officer, Press and Congressional Liaison Office, National Security Council from March 1978
- Allende, Salvador**, President of Chile from November 1970 until September 1973
- Alston, Philip Henry**, U.S. Ambassador to Australia
- Amarand, Prok**, Thai Ambassador to the United States
- Armocost, Michael H.**, member, National Security Council Staff for East Asia and China until July 1978; Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia, Pacific and Inter-American Affairs from July 1978; Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs from January 1980
- Arun Panupongse**, Thai Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Ashari, Danudirdjo**, Indonesian Ambassador to the United States
- Baucus, Max S.**, member, U.S. House of Representatives (D-Montana) until December 1978; Senator from January 1979
- Begin, Menachem**, Israeli Prime Minister
- Bell, Griffin B.**, Attorney General until August 1979
- Bentsen, Lloyd**, Senator (D-Texas)
- Bergland, Robert S.**, Secretary of Agriculture
- Bleakley, Kenneth W.**, Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs
- Blumenthal, W. Michael**, Secretary of the Treasury until August 4, 1979
- Boonchoo, Rojanastien (Bunchu)**, Thai Deputy Prime Minister from March 1980
- Bourne, Peter G.**, Special Assistant to the President for Drug Abuse and Health Issues until July 1978
- Brezhnev, Leonid I.**, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union
- Brown, Harold**, Secretary of Defense
- Bundy, William Putnam**, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs from 1964 until 1969
- Byrd, Harry Flood, Jr.**, Senator (I-Virginia)
- Califano, Joseph A., Jr.**, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare until August 1979
- Carrington, Lord (Peter Alexander)**, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom from May 1979
- Carter, James Earl, Jr., "Jimmy"** President of the United States
- Carter, Rosalynn**, First Lady of the United States
- Ceaușescu, Nicolae**, President of Romania
- Chai Zemin (Ch'ai Tse-min)**, People's Republic of China Ambassador to the United States from March 1979
- Chiang Ching-kuo**, see Jiang Jingguo
- Church, Frank F., III**, Senator (D-Idaho)
- Clark, Richard C. "Dick"**, Senator (D-Idaho), U.S. Ambassador-at-Large and Coordinator for Refugee Affairs from May 1 until November 1, 1979
- Clayton, W. Graham, Jr.**, Secretary of the Navy from February 14, 1977, until July 26, 1979; Acting Secretary of Transportation in 1979; Deputy Secretary of Defense from August 24, 1979

**Cleveland, Paul Matthews**, Director of the Office of Thailand, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Department of State

**Clifford, Clark M.**, Secretary of Defense from March 1968 until January 1969

**Cooper, Richard Newall**, Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs from April 1977

**Cranston, Alan M.**, Senator (D-California)

**Cutler, Lloyd N.**, White House Counsel from 1979

**Danforth, John Claggett**, Senator (R-Missouri)

**Dayan, Moshe**, Israeli Defense Minister

**de Gaulle, Charles**, President of France from January 1959 until April 1969

**DeConcini, Dennis Webster**, Senator (D-Arizona)

**Denend, Leslie G.**, member, National Security Council Staff for International Economics until April 1979; Special Assistant to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs from January 1980

**Deng Xiaoping (Teng Hsiao-p'ing)**, People's Republic of China Deputy Premier from 1952 until 1967; Vice Premier of State Council from 1973 until 1974; Vice Premier until 1983

**Derian, Patricia Murphy "Patt"**, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, Department of State

**Devesi, Baddeley**, Governor General of the Solomon Islands from June 1978

**Dhanabalan, Suppiah**, Minister of Foreign Affairs for Singapore

**Do Thanh**, First Secretary, Socialist Republic of Vietnam Embassy, France

**Eastland, James Oliver**, Senator (D-Mississippi) until December 1978

**Edelman, Marian Wright**, Founder of Children's Defense Fund

**Eilberg, Joshua**, member, U.S. House of Representatives (D-Pennsylvania) until January 1979

**Eizenstat, Stuart E.**, Assistant to the President for Domestic Affairs

**Enrile, Juan Ponce**, Philippine Secretary of National Defense from 1970

**Evans, Billy Lee**, member, U.S. House of Representatives (D-Georgia)

**Falco, K. Mathea**, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State and Coordinator for International Narcotic Matters

**Finch Hoyt, Mary**, Press Secretary to the First Lady and East Wing Coordinator

**Fraser, J. Malcolm**, Australian Prime Minister

**Fukuda, Takeo**, Japanese Prime Minister until December 1978

**Gammon, Samuel D.**, Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy in Paris

**Gandhi, Indira**, Indian Prime Minister until March 1977 and from January 1980

**Garn, Edwin Jacob, "Jake"**, Senator (R-Utah) from December 21, 1974

**Giap, Vo Nguyen**, see Vo Nguyen Giap

**Gilligan, John Joyce "Jack"**, Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development from March 1977 until July 1979

**Glenn, John H., Jr.**, Senator (D-Ohio) from December 24, 1974

**Gleysteen, William Henry, Jr.**, Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Department of State; U.S. Ambassador to South Korea from July 1978

**Gregg, Donald Phinney**, member, National Security Council Staff for East Asian and Chinese Affairs from January 1980

**Griffin, Robert Paul**, Senator (R-Michigan)

**Ha Van Lau**, Vietnamese Permanent Representative to the United Nations Mission in New York

**Habib, Philip Charles**, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs until April 1978

- Hall, Sam Blakeley, Jr.**, member, U.S. House of Representatives (D–Texas)
- Harter, Dennis**, member, Office of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Department of State
- Hartling, Poul**, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees from 1978
- Hassan II**, King of Morocco
- Heginbotham, Erland**, Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Department of State
- Heng Samrin**, member, Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation; Chairman of the Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea from 1979
- Holbrooke, Richard C.**, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs
- Hollings, Ernest F. "Fritz"**, Senator (D–South Carolina) from November 9, 1966
- Holtzman, Elizabeth**, member, U.S. House of Representatives (D–New York)
- Hormats, Robert David**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs until 1979; Deputy Trade Representative from 1979
- Hua Guofeng (Hua Kuo-feng)**, member, Politburo from 1973 until 1982; Premier of the State Council of People's Republic of China from 1976 until 1980; Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party from 1976 until 1981
- Huang Hua**, People's Republic of China Ambassador to the United Arab Republic until July 1969; People's Republic of China Ambassador to Canada, July 1971; People's Republic of China Chief Delegate, UN Security Council and People's Republic of China Ambassador to the United Nations from November 1971
- Hull, Cordell**, Secretary of State from 1933 until 1944
- Hun Sen**, Kampuchean Foreign Minister
- Hussein bin Onn**, Malaysian Prime Minister
- Inderfurth, Karl Frederick "Rick"**, Special Assistant to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs from January 1977 until April 1979
- Ieng Sary**, Kampuchean Deputy Prime Minister in Charge of Foreign Affairs
- Inouye, Daniel K.**, Senator (D–Hawaii)
- Ito, Masayoshi**, Japanese Prime Minister
- Jackson, Robert G.A., Sir**, Under Secretary-General for the United Nations
- Javits, Jacob Koppel**, Senator (R–New York)
- Jiang Jinguo (Chiang Ching-kuo)**, President of the People's Republic of China from 1978
- Jones, David C.**, General, USAF; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from June 1978
- Kalkoa, George**, President of Vanuatu from July 1980
- Kamphay Bouppha**, Lao Minister of Posts & Telecommunications
- Kaunda, Kenneth David**, President of Zambia
- Kaysone Phomvihan**, Lao Prime Minister
- Kennedy, Edward M. "Ted"**, Senator (D–Massachusetts)
- Khalil, Mustafa**, Egyptian Prime Minister
- Khieu Samphan**, Chairman of the State Presidium of Kampuchea; Kampuchean Prime Minister
- Kim Il-sung (Kim Il-Sung)**, Premier and Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea
- Kissinger, Henry A.**, National Security Advisor, from 1969 until 1975; Secretary of State, from September 1973 until January 1977
- Kneip, Richard Francis**, U.S. Ambassador to Singapore from May 1978 until September 1980
- Komer, Robert W.**, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy from October 24, 1979
- Kosygin, Aleksey N.**, Chairman, Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union
- Kreps, Juanita M.**, Secretary of Commerce until October 1979



**Kriangsak Chamanan**, General, Thai Prime Minister from November 11, 1977, until March 3, 1980

**Lau, Ha Van**, see Ha Van Lau

**Le Duan**, General Secretary of the Vietnamese Workers' Party (later the Vietnamese Communist Party)

**Lee Kuan Yew**, Singaporean Prime Minister

**Levin, Carl M.**, Senator (D-Michigan)

**Lon Nol**, President of the Khmer Republic from March 1972 until April 1975

**Loy, Frank E.**, Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugee and Migration Affairs from June 1980

**Lipshutz, Robert J.**, White House Counsel until 1980

**Ma Khaikhamphithoun**, Lao Chief of the National Planning Committee

**Manglapus, Raul**, Philippine politician; opponent of Marcos

**Manley, Michael N.**, Jamaican Prime Minister

**Mansfield, Michael Joseph "Mike"**, Senator (D-Montana) from 1952 until 1976; U.S. Ambassador to Japan from June 1977

**Mao Tse-tung**, see Mao Zedong

**Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung)**, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party until September 9, 1976

**Mara, Kamisese**, Fijian Prime Minister

**Marcos, Ferdinand**, President of the Philippines

**Marcos, Imelda**, First Lady of the Philippines; Special Diplomatic Envoy from 1978

**Masters, Edward E.**, U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia from November 1977

**Mathews, Jessica Tuchman**, member, National Security Council Staff for Global Issues from January 1977 until June 1979

**Maung Maung Kha, U Lay**, Burmese Prime Minister

**Maynes, William Charles "Bill"**, Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs from April 14, 1977

**McAuliffe, Eugene V.**, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs until April 1, 1977

**McHenry, Donald F.**, U.S. Representative to the United Nations

**McIntyre, James T., Jr.**, Director of the Office of Management and Budget from March 24, 1978

**McNamara, Robert S.**, Secretary of Defense

**Mendoza, Estelito P.**, Philippine Solicitor General

**Mochtar, Kusumaatmadja**, Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs

**Moi, Daniel T. arap**, Kenyan President from August 1978

**Mondale, Walter F. "Fritz"**, Vice President of the United States from 1977

**Montgomery, Gillespie "Sonny" V.**, member, U.S. House of Representatives (D-Mississippi); Chairman, House Select Committee on Missing Persons in Southeast Asia

**Moore, Francis B. "Frank"**, Assistant to the President for Congressional Liaison from 1977

**Muldoon, Robert David**, New Zealand Prime Minister

**Murdani, Leonardus Benjamin**, Major General and Chief of Intelligence for the Indonesian Department of Defense and Security

**Murphy, Richard William**, U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines from June 1978

**Muskie, Edmund Sixtus**, Senator (D-Maine) until 1980; Secretary of State from May 1980

**Negroponte, John Dimitri**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs

**Neto, Agostinho**, President of Angola

**Ne Win, U**, President of Burma

**Newsom, David Dunlap**, U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia until November 1977; U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines from November 1977 until March 1978; Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs from April 1978

**Ngo Dien**, Vietnamese Assistant Minister in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Nguyen Co Thach**, Vice Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam from 1960 until 1979

**Nguyen Duy Trinh**, North Vietnamese Minister of Foreign Affairs

**Nixon, Richard M.**, President of the United States from 1969 until 1974

**Nouphan Sitphasay**, Lao Deputy Foreign Minister

**Nunn, Samuel "Sam" Augustus**, Senator (D-Georgia)

**Oakley, Robert Bigger**, Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs

**Ohira, Masayoshi**, Japanese Prime Minister from December 1978 until June 1980

**Okita, Saburo**, Japanese Foreign Minister from December 1979

**Oksenberg, Michel**, member, National Security Council Staff for East Asia and China until February 1980

**Olewale, Ebia**, Deputy Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea

**O'Neill, Thomas Phillip "Tip", Jr.**, member, U.S. House of Representatives (D-Massachusetts); Speaker of the House

**Ople, Blas**, Philippine Secretary of Labor and Employment

**Osborn, David Lawrence**, U.S. Ambassador to Burma until July 1977

**Owen, Henry David**, Special Representative for Economic Summits from March 1977; member, National Security Council Staff for International Economics from October 1977; Ambassador at Large from October 1978

**Palimieri, Victor H.**, Ambassador at Large and Coordinator for Refugee Affairs from December 1979

**Pahlavi, Mohammad Reza**, Shah of Iran until December 1979

**Paterno, Vicente T.**, Philippine Secretary of Industry

**Peacock, Andrew S.**, Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Pell, Claiborne**, Senator (D-Rhode Island)

**Petree, Richard W.**, Deputy U.S. Representative to the UN Security Council from October 1979

**Pham Van Dong**, Vietnamese Prime Minister

**Phan Hien**, Vietnamese Vice Foreign Minister

**Phoun Sipaseut**, Lao Minister of Foreign Affairs

**Platt, Nicholas**, member, National Security Council Staff for East Asian and Chinese Affairs from 1978 until 1980; Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs from 1980

**Pol Pot (Salth Sar)**, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Kampuchea; Prime Minister of Democratic Kampuchea (Cambodia) until January 7, 1979

**Powell, Joseph "Jody" L., Jr.**, White House Press Secretary

**Praman Adireksarn**, Major General, Thai Deputy Prime Minister

**Pratuang Kiratibutra**, Thai Minister of the Interior

**Prem Tinsulanonda**, General, Thai Prime Minister from March 1980

**Prok**, see Amaranand, Prok

**Qaddafi, Muammar**, Chairman of the Libyan Revolutionary Command Council and Commander in Chief of the Libyan Armed Forces

**Quiazon, Troadio**, Philippine Secretary of Trade

**Raines, Franklin Delano "Frank"**, Assistant Director of Domestic Policy Planning

**Rajaratnam, Sinnathamby**, Singaporean Deputy Prime Minister

**Renouf, Alan Philip**, Australian Ambassador to the United States from 1977 until 1979  
**Richardson, Elliot Lee**, U.S. Ambassador at Large and the President's Special Representative for Law of the Sea

**Rithauddeen bin Ismail, Ahmad**, Malaysian Minister of Foreign Affairs

**Roberts, George B., Jr.**, Chargé d'Affaires ad interim to Laos

**Rodino, Peter W., Jr.**, member, U.S. House of Representatives (D-New Jersey)

**Romulo, Carlos F.**, Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs

**Rusk, David Dean**, Secretary of State from January 1961 until January 1969

**Ryan, Leo J.**, member, U.S. House of Representatives (D-California) until November 1978

**Sadat, Anwar**, President of Egypt

**Sasser, James R.**, Senator (D-Tennessee)

**Schechter, Jerrold**, member, Press and Congressional Liaison Office, National Security Council Staff; Press Officer and Associate Press Secretary from January 1977 until February 1980

**Schlesinger, James R.**, Secretary of Energy from August 5, 1977 until July 20, 1979

**Schmidt, Helmut**, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany

**Sicat, Gerardo**, Philippine Director General of the National Economic and Development Authority

**Sieverts, Frank A.**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State and Coordinator for Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Matters, Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, from 1977 until 1979; Director, Country Reports, Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, 1979

**Sihanouk Norodom**, King of Cambodia from 1941 until 1955; Cambodian Chief of State from 1960 until 1970

**Sin, Jaime**, Cardinal, Archbishop of Manila

**Sitthi Savetsila**, Thai Minister of Foreign Affairs

**Smith, Ian Douglas**, Rhodesian Prime Minister

**Son Sann**, Kampuchean Deputy Prime Minister in Charge of National Defense

**Sonoda, Sunao**, Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs until November 1979

**Soubanh Sithilath**, Secretary General of the Lao Foreign Ministry

**Souphanouvong**, President of Laos

**Strauss, Robert Schwarz**, Special Representative for Trade Negotiations from 1977 until 1979; Personal Representative of the President from April 1979

**Stull Lee Thomson**, Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy in Manila until March 1978; Chargé d'Affaires to the Philippines from March 1978 until May 1978

**Sudharmono**, Major General, Indonesian Minister of State for Administration

**Suharto, Mohammed**, General, President of Indonesia

**Sullivan, Roger W.**, Hong Kong International Relations Officer from August 1976; Deputy Chief of Mission Minister Counselor in Taipei from August 1977; Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs from July 1978; member, National Security Council Staff for East Asian and Chinese Affairs from February 1980

**Sullivan, William Healy**, U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines from August 1973 until April 1977; Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs from 1969 until 1973

**Suzuki, Zenko**, Japanese Prime Minister from July 1980

**Talboys, Brian E.**, New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister; New Zealand Minister of Foreign Affairs

**Tarnoff, Peter R.**, Special Assistant to the Secretary and Executive Secretary, Department of State, from April 4, 1977

**Teng Hsiao-p'ing**, see Deng Xiaoping

**Tatad, Francisco "Kit" Sarmiento**, Philippine Secretary of Public Information

**Teo, Fiatau Penitala**, Governor General of Tuvalu from September 1978  
**Thach, Nguyen Co**, see **Nguyen Co Thach**  
**Thanat Khoman**, Colonel, Thai Deputy Prime Minister from March 1980  
**Thanin Kraivichian**, Thai Prime Minister until October 1977  
**Thatcher, Margaret**, British Prime Minister  
**Tito, Josip Broz**, President of Yugoslavia  
**Toussaint, Donald R.**, Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy in Manila  
**Trudeau, Pierre-Elliott**, Canadian Prime Minister

**Underhill, Francis T.**, U.S. Ambassador to Malaysia until May 1977  
**Uppadit Pachariyangkun**, Thai Minister of Foreign Affairs

**Vance, Cyrus**, Secretary of State  
**Velasco, Geronimo**, Philippine Secretary of Energy  
**Vorster, Balthazar Johannes**, South African Prime Minister

**Waldheim, Kurt J.**, Secretary-General of the United Nations  
**Weicker, Lowell P., Jr.**, Senator (R-Connecticut)  
**Whitehouse, Charles Sheldon**, U.S. Ambassador to Thailand until June 1978  
**Wolff, Lester Lionel**, member, U.S. House of Representatives (D-New York)  
**Woodcock, Leonard F.**, Chief U.S. Liaison Office in Beijing from July 1977 until March 1979; U.S. Ambassador to the People's Republic of China from March 1979

**Vo Nguyen Giap, General**, Vietnamese Minister of National Defense

**Yost, Charles Woodruff**, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations from January 22, 1969, until February 25, 1971; Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institute  
**Young, Andrew Jackson, Jr.**, member, U.S. House of Representatives (D-Georgia) until January 29, 1977; U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations from January 30, 1977, until September 23, 1979

**Zablocki, Clement J.**, member, U.S. House of Representatives (D-Wisconsin)  
**Zhao Ziyang**, Premier of the State Council of China  
**Zhou Enlai (Chou En-lai)**, Premier of the People's Republic of China from October 1949 until January 1976  
**Zia-ul-Haq, Muhammad**, President of Pakistan from September 1978



# Southeast Asia and the Pacific

## Indochina

### 1. Paper Prepared in the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Washington, January 26, 1977

#### *First Steps Toward Normalization of U.S.-Vietnamese Relations*

##### *I. General Approaches to Normalization*

The major problem facing the Administration is to begin the process of normalization without giving up the essential bargaining levers we need to assure a satisfactory outcome on MIAs.

In any negotiations with us on normalization of relations, we can expect that the Vietnamese will press hard for their maximum position—UN admission, unrestricted trade, U.S. economic aid which they can represent as reparations—rather than seek early compromise. This is their consistent negotiating style, reinforced in this case by a strong moral conviction that they are completely right. We nevertheless retain a fairly wide range of action opportunities and bargaining instruments for dealing with Hanoi on this issue. Several different combinations of these are possible, but three general approaches suggest themselves:

1. We could *continue our present policy*, insisting on an MIA accounting as a required first step to normalization and envisaging further steps gradually on a reciprocal basis. We could continue making clear that official aid would not be part of the new relationship we seek.

2. *Major or minor U.S. initiative approach.* We could undertake a *major U.S. initiative* through both unilateral gestures and negotiations which, in exchange for a reasonably satisfactory MIA accounting, would offer prompt and full normalization of relations to include

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968–1991, Lot 94D430, Viet Nam Normalization of Relations (SRV). Secret. Drafted by James D. Rosenthal (EA/VLC). The paper was prepared for Secretary Vance.

humanitarian assistance and possibly even some future economic aid (though not as reparations). We could make one or more of the following *major unilateral gestures*:

- not retain Vietnamese admission and entry in the United Nations (see separate section on UN membership below);
- sending a delegation promptly to meet with the Vietnamese, the level of such a mission depending on the signal to be conveyed;
- offering immediate diplomatic relations and exchange of embassies without conditions;
- eliminating or significantly relaxing the trade embargo and foreign assets controls.

Alternatively we could initiate the same process with some minor unilateral steps as listed below.

3. *Big Package-Minor/Major Steps Approach.* We could seek *early negotiations* with Hanoi, either through diplomatic channels or a special emissary, *to deal with all issues and aspects of normalization on a comprehensive basis*, making no major unilateral gestures but taking several *minor unilateral steps* immediately to indicate our positive attitude and improve the atmosphere for talks.

- lifting of current minor wartime restrictions on shipping to and from Vietnam;
- lifting of controls on travel to Vietnam;
- making further individual exceptions to our trade embargo and assets controls;
- taking a more positive attitude toward Vietnamese participation in international agencies and financial institutions.

Under this approach our negotiating objective would be the establishment of diplomatic relations without direct economic aid but including trade and travel on the same basis as with the USSR and PRC, UN membership for Vietnam, and exchange of diplomatic missions.

*The first approach* would leave it to Hanoi to take the first step to indicate its attitude toward the new Administration. It would be the easiest and most controllable course, but it would almost certainly result in a continued stalemate. It would lose us the opportunity for a fresh start afforded by the change in Administration and, if carried on too long unsuccessfully, would probably work against our overall best interests. We do not recommend it.

*The second course* clearly offers the best possibility of rapid normalization, but on terms which could cause us both domestic and foreign political difficulties by implicitly accepting much of the Vietnamese view of our alleged war guilt and perhaps promising more than we can reasonably expect to deliver over the long run. Any indication of

intention to provide aid, for example, would be highly controversial and require repeal of existing legislation. This course might also result in wasting some of our best bargaining counters if our unilateral gestures were not reciprocated by significant Vietnamese moves on the MIA issue. We do not recommend it. However, if the question of UN membership comes up soon, we may find our hand forced on that matter as we prefer not to have to veto a Vietnamese effort to join the UN.

We recommend a course along the lines of the *third approach*, which offers a middle ground between these two. It retains our major bargaining power intact and provides for a comprehensive rather than piecemeal settlement of the issues involved in normalization, including MIAs. It maintains our flexibility, permitting us to step up our actions in the direction of the second approach if circumstances dictate, yet does not commit us to a specific course of action at the outset. It is likely to result in a more realistic and mutually beneficial relationship over the long run. At the same time, through limited early unilateral gestures of a minor nature (plus UN membership if our hand is forced) we could be publicly demonstrating the Administration's break with the past and willingness to move ahead.

There is no guarantee of success in this or any other approach. We have no indication so far that the Vietnamese are willing to drop their demand that our relationship must include a U.S. aid obligation of some sort. In the course of negotiations we could point to the substantial U.S. contributions to international agencies already aiding Vietnam and perhaps consider making further limited humanitarian assistance available through such channels if necessary. However, it would be better to probe Vietnamese intentions thoroughly before making any such commitment.

## II. *Suggested Scenario*

We should begin by contacting the Vietnamese at an early date to indicate our general trend of thinking and to head off any actions on their part which might make things more difficult (e.g. pressing for an early reconsideration of their UN membership application). This would be consistent with your recent testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee<sup>2</sup> when you indicated your hope that the question of Vietnamese admission to the UN would not arise until we were able to work with the Vietnamese on the question of our bilateral relations.

The contents of our initial message to Hanoi could include the following:

---

<sup>2</sup> Not further identified.



—An expression of the new Administration's desire to move rapidly toward early normalization and its intention to seek full discussions with the Vietnamese promptly, perhaps within a month. The message could indicate the proposed site and level of talks, (e.g. Paris, Hanoi, or New York; Deputy Chief of Mission, Ambassador, Country Director, Deputy Assistant or Assistant Secretary, Under Secretary).

—We would point out that in the meantime the Administration is taking several concrete steps to demonstrate its attitude and would describe those steps (see below).

—The message would make reference to the continued importance to us of a satisfactory accounting for MIAs and state that we would welcome early significant gestures from them in this regard.

—We would also point to the more positive U.S. attitude toward Vietnam in various international organizations and programs such as the UNDP, Asian Development Bank, and others.

At the same time, we would take some or all of the following measures to demonstrate our new attitude:

A. —*Lift wartime restrictions* such as: 1) the prohibition of U.S. bunkering of vessels in the Vietnam trade; 2) prohibition against carrying government-financed commodities in such ships; and 3) prohibition against finance or export of PL-480 commodities by any corporation engaged in trade with Vietnam. These prohibitions are lingering war-time restrictions which no longer affect Hanoi significantly (in fact, they are more of an irritant to some of our friends). Their removal would cost us nothing. Most could be done easily by the executive branch without affecting the trade embargo *per se*. We could work with Congress to lift additional similar restrictions requiring Congressional approval.

B. —Without lifting the trade embargo itself, we could begin to *approve certain categories of commercial transactions with Vietnam on a case-by-case basis*. We already have one such license application to consider, and this would be clear departure from our previous policy of refusing all commercial requests.

C. —We could *decline to reinstate existing controls on travel to Vietnam when they automatically expire in mid-March*. (However, this must be considered in the context of similar controls on travel to Cambodia, Cuba, and North Korea, which expire at the same time).

We should keep key members of Congress and staffers closely informed of our approach and seek their assistance where necessary. There is apparently strong opposition in Congress to any official aid to Vietnam, as reflected by specific prohibition against such aid in

current foreign assistance legislation and by a pending resolution by Senator Harry Byrd calling for even stricter prohibitions.<sup>3</sup>

### *Other Nations*

We should keep our friends and allies in Southeast Asia as well as Europe and Japan at least generally informed about our attitude and actions. This would have the effect not only of reassuring them but also of encouraging them to help persuade the Vietnamese of our changed attitude. We might also make a similar effort with the Soviets and Chinese for this purpose, as well as for the purposes of our bilateral relations with each of them.

The Vietnamese might respond with a gesture toward us, such as releasing more MIA information or returning the bodies of some of those already publicly identified as dead. While we would welcome any such gesture, we would have to assess it carefully to determine its significance in terms of the overall MIA problem to decide whether and how to respond. If it were significant enough (for example, information on several dozen MIAs and/or return of a like number of remains), we might consider responding with a major additional gesture of our own.

### *III. Vietnamese Admission to the UN*

The question of our stance on Vietnam's admission to the UN requires special consideration. We have been totally isolated at the UN on our previous vetoes and widely criticized for basing our action on bilateral issues rather than strictly on the Charter qualifications for membership. It is an issue on which Hanoi can force our hand at any time, by bringing it up again to the Security Council or at a UNGA Special Session which could be called this spring. On the other hand, the last Administration made UN admission a major bargaining counter for MIAs, and this linkage has some Congressional and public support (Senator Griffin has already introduced a resolution insisting on continued linkage of an MIA accounting to removal of our veto).<sup>4</sup> It is also consistent with President Carter's campaign statements endorsing this linkage. Although this has been modified somewhat by your confirmation hearings and those of Ambassador Young. Moreover, Hanoi clearly places a high value on admission to the UN, and we should not expend this bargaining counter too easily.

We should therefore consider carefully how we wish to handle this issue as part of our initial general approach. We could:

---

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to S. 41, 95th Congress, introduced on January 10.

<sup>4</sup> Reference is to S. Con. Res. 5, 95th Congress, introduced on January 14.

1). *Indicate we will continue to oppose Vietnamese membership until the MIA issue is resolved.* This would be most consistent with President Carter's campaign statements. It would retain what was previously our major bargaining chip on MIAs. However, it would incur widespread criticism at the UN and elsewhere and would be inconsistent with the more flexible attitude conveyed in Ambassador Young's recent statements on the issue. Hanoi would consider it a negative signal. We do not recommend this approach.

2). *Indicate that we will no longer stand in the way of Vietnam's UN admission,* either on our own initiative or in response to Hanoi's re-raising the issue promptly at the UN. This would represent a major gesture on our part designed to improve the atmosphere for negotiations or normalization. It would be welcomed at the UN and elsewhere and might induce Hanoi to make a major gesture on MIAs in return. On the other hand, it risks wasting a significant negotiating chip and incurring Congressional and public criticism. It might only encourage Hanoi to hold out more strongly for aid from us in exchange for major movement on MIAs. On balance, we think it unlikely that Hanoi would make a major gesture on MIAs in return for a unilateral gesture from us on UN admission. For this reason, we do not favor taking the initiative on this at the present time.

3). *Approach the Vietnamese to delay their application until serious negotiations on normalization can get under way.* This would be consistent with both your and Ambassador Young's recent remarks. If successful, it would give us time to assess Hanoi's real attitude toward the new Administration in light of our early positive steps. It would permit us to retain some flexibility on the matter and to consider as we go along whether we wish to retain UN membership as a bargaining chip in our comprehensive negotiating approach or use it to help spur ongoing negotiations. Some reserve on our part at this point might also induce the Vietnamese to make a further gesture on MIAs, which if significant enough could have a substantial positive impact and justify our acquiescence in their UN membership apart from negotiations. We recommend this course of action at this time. If it does not succeed in stimulating a major MIA gesture, and Hanoi presses us on the membership issue, we will have to review the situation and our options at that time.

#### IV. *Initial Contacts with Hanoi*

How we choose to convey our attitude initially to Hanoi deserves further consideration. Basically, we have three choices under the general approach recommended above, plus a fourth which leans more toward the "major initiative" approach. They are not mutually exclusive.

1. *In a personal letter from you to Vietnamese Foreign Minister Trinh.* This would be the simplest and most direct approach. It would likely

evoke a response which would help indicate Hanoi's current attitude. *We recommend this method for our initial approach*, to be followed up as necessary either in Paris or New York. The letter could be delivered through diplomatic channels or carried to Hanoi by a special envoy (see below).

2. *In Paris.* The normal diplomatic procedures are already established in Paris. The Vietnamese are better-represented there than anywhere else outside of Hanoi, and it is the most accessible "neutral" ground for meetings between higher-ranking officials than the resident diplomats. On the other hand, Paris evokes the long 1968–1973 negotiations<sup>5</sup> and the 1973 Accords,<sup>6</sup> which we have repudiated.

3. *In contacts between our respective UN delegations.* These offer better prospects than Paris for regular discussion under less publicity. They could take advantage of Ambassador Young's already-expressed views on Vietnam to instill greater confidence on the part of the Vietnamese that they would get a fair hearing. (Initial contacts should nevertheless be at a level below the Ambassador, as in the past). However, Vietnamese representation is weak in New York, and access for higher-level Vietnamese officials would be difficult.

4. *By sending a special mission to Hanoi.* This would be the most dramatic way of emphasizing a new U.S. attitude toward normalization and would be consistent with President Carter's campaign statements that he would consider such a mission to deal with the MIA issue. The mission could be at one of several levels: Office Director; Deputy Assistant Secretary; Assistant Secretary; Under Secretary for Political Affairs—either in their own capacity or as a special presidential emissary. An emissary from outside the Department is also a possibility. (A DOD representative should accompany for expertise on MIAs.) A major drawback is that such a mission would constitute a major gesture at almost any level. It would greatly raise expectations both here and in Vietnam. The mission might be construed by the Vietnamese as overeagerness on our part. There would have to be preliminary contacts in any case with Hanoi to arrange such a mission. Technically, communications would be extremely difficult for us in Hanoi, and we would be completely dependent on the Vietnamese for procedural arrangements. We recommend against this means of contact initially unless Hanoi

---

<sup>5</sup> The negotiations are documented in the following volumes: *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. VI, Vietnam, January 1969–July 1970; vol. VII, Vietnam, July 1970–January 1972; vol. VIII, Vietnam, January–October 1972; and vol. IX, Vietnam, October 1972–January 1973.

<sup>6</sup> Reference is to "The Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam," which was signed on January 27, 1973, in Paris. For the text, see Department of State *Bulletin*, February 12, 1973, pp. 169–188. See also *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. 14, Vietnam, October 1972–January 1973, Document 340.

first gives us an opening by offering to return more MIA remains, in which case we should consider a special mission to pick up the remains and at the same time begin discussions.

*V. Annexes*<sup>7</sup>

The attached Annex A provides further background on “U.S. and Vietnamese Interests in Normalization”. Annex B describes the present state of our relations with Cambodia and Laos and discusses whether or not we should make parallel approaches to these two countries along with our moves vis-à-vis the Vietnamese.

---

<sup>7</sup> Annexes A and B, both undated papers prepared in the Department of State, are attached but not printed.

---

**2. Memorandum From Michael Armacost of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, February 2, 1977

SUBJECT

Yost Mission to Hanoi

I understand consideration is being given to dispatching Charlie Yost to Hanoi at an early date to discuss MIAs and other matters with the Vietnamese authorities. Though I am unfamiliar with the details and underlying rationale for this proposed mission, I thought I owed you my own reservations about it. It seems to me that a high-level mission of this sort at this time poses greater risks than are warranted by any potential gains. Specifically, I would be concerned about the following:

—Such a mission could convey to Asians a false impression of our priorities. Taken in conjunction with the difficulties we are likely to experience with both the Koreans and the Filipinos in the weeks ahead, a dramatic gambit toward Hanoi could suggest to the Japanese, Chinese, and others a more far-reaching reordering of our priorities in

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Box 1, Armacost Chron File: 2/1–6/77. Secret. Sent for information.

the Far East than I think we intend. I think we should take a quick reading of Japanese, Chinese, and ASEAN attitudes toward U.S. policy toward Indochina before embarking on anything as dramatic as this.

—I think a high-level mission to Hanoi is premature. The SRV has taken a tough line toward President Carter's statements on Vietnam both during the campaign and following his inauguration. The Vietnamese characteristically set forth very tough positions at the outset of negotiations. If Yost were to go there under current circumstances, one cannot rule out a cool reception and the sort of intransigence on key issues that could put a more enduring chill on our relationship. I think we can afford to proceed more gradually, trading gestures—rhetorical and substantive—to prepare the ground for normalization talks.

—I believe it would be unwise to have the initial encounters between the Administration and the Vietnamese take place in Hanoi. We would be on their turf, and if we wish to make progress on MIAs, they will hold the cards on a key issue. As you know, we held one meeting with the Vietnamese on November 12.<sup>2</sup> Another was scheduled, then cancelled.<sup>3</sup> The ball is in our court to hold the next session in Paris—if that is to be the venue for further discussions. I think it is worth testing the waters in Paris before deciding how to proceed on something like the Yost mission.

---

<sup>2</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. E–12, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973–1976, Document 91.

<sup>3</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. E–12, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973–1976, Document 94.

3. **Memorandum From Michael Armacost of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)**<sup>1</sup>

Washington, February 4, 1977

SUBJECT

U.S. Policy Toward Vietnam: Some Wider Aspects of the Problem

You asked me for some further thoughts on the proposed Yost mission to Hanoi, focusing in particular on wider regional implications. Here they are.

1. One of our consistent failings over the past fifteen years has been to lose all sense of proportion when it comes to thinking about Vietnam. We have generally exaggerated its importance to our interests; we have regularly allowed domestic political considerations to overwhelm foreign policy concerns; we have invariably been impatient for results.

2. Unfortunately, our policy toward Indochina has frequently provided for Asians the central litmus test of our broader intentions in the region. To some extent that remains the case, though most Asians now recognize we have larger fish to fry.

3. With their long time perspective, Asians have become accustomed to seeing the United States go through periodic cycles of intense involvement in the Pacific, as in the past decade, followed by indifference toward the area. They anticipate that this Administration will have a strong "Europe-first" orientation, and consequently, they are particularly attentive to evidence of retrenchment in our Asian policy. Clearly this Administration recognizes the enormous economic and security stakes we have in fostering the delicate balance of power that has begun to take shape in the area in recent years.

4. But from the vantage point of Asia, the first impressions of the Carter Administration are not terribly reassuring. Alert Asian officials and commentators have noted: the special emphasis Secretary Vance has given to U.S.-Soviet ties and the muted interest displayed to date toward China; Administration efforts to cut the Defense budget; the President's announced desire to withdraw ground forces from Korea;<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 85, Vietnam, 1/77–12/78. Confidential. Sent for information. Inderfurth and Denend initialed the top right-hand corner of the first page of the memorandum.

<sup>2</sup> Carter first announced his intention of moving ground troops out of South Korea when he spoke to the Foreign Policy Association, June 23, 1976. For the full text of this address, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. I, Foundations of Foreign Policy, Document 6.

hints that we are reconsidering our base requirements in the Philippines; a more outspoken stance on human rights question (which puts us at odds with virtually every Asian Government save Japan, Australia, and New Zealand); a more critical attitude toward arms transfers; and AFL/CIO pressure for tax deferral legislation which would diminish the incentives for U.S. investments overseas.

5. Many of their concerns are exaggerated. Mondale's trip to Japan<sup>3</sup> was helpful in reaffirming the importance we attach to that relationship and our intent—despite Vietnam—not to turn our backs on the Asian-Pacific region. But the Vice President's trip will by itself neither dissipate Asian fears that we are significantly downgrading our stakes in the Pacific, nor their confusion as to the priority we ascribe to particular relationships and interests in the area.

6. This latter concern is especially pertinent to our approach to Indochina. In Asia—as in our larger global design—the Administration needs to establish its credential with our allies and friends before undertaking initiatives to achieve reconciliation with our adversaries. To dispatch a mission to Hanoi before we have made any significant gestures of goodwill toward key allies like the Filipinos and the South Koreans would suggest an inexplicable reversal of our priorities. Such an impression would be further reinforced if OMB should eliminate grant military assistance to Thailand and Indonesia in FY-78—as it apparently wishes to do. The last Administration concentrated too much of its attention in the 1969-73 period on former adversaries, too little on our most important friends. We should not repeat that on a smaller scale in Southeast Asia this year.

7. Obviously, we must seek to normalize relations with Vietnam. Normalization could serve a variety of U.S. interests. It might enable us to limit Soviet influence in Indochina, inhibit Vietnamese adventurism toward its neighbors, and open up commercial and economic opportunities for American businessmen. Most Asian governments—e.g. Japan, China, and all the ASEAN states—hope to see us overcome our differences with the Vietnamese. But they will also be sensitive to our *style* in pursuing that objective. None would be favorably impressed if we displayed excess zeal in pursuit of Hanoi; if we allow the Vietnamese to manipulate U.S. policy through our overemphasis on the MIA issue; if we provide significant economic assistance; or if we fail to give them advance warning of major U.S. moves.

8. I would draw two conclusions from this. First, at a minimum, we must inform the Japanese, the Chinese, and ASEAN countries in advance of any mission to Hanoi. Second, I believe we should relax

---

<sup>3</sup> January 30–February 1.



and proceed in a more deliberate way vis-à-vis the SRV, postponing dramatic initiatives until we (a) probe Vietnamese intentions quietly through the Paris channel, and (b) consider more fully the views of our Asian friends regarding U.S. policy in Indochina. We need not give them a veto over our Indochina policy; we do have a stake in making clear to them that we know what we are doing before we set forth.

---

#### 4. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in France<sup>1</sup>

Washington, February 8, 1977, 0056Z

27695. Subject: Message From the Secretary to SRV Foreign Minister Trinh.

1. Embassy Liaison Officer Pratt should deliver soonest to SRV Embassy following letter from the Secretary to SRV FonMin Trinh:

Dear Mr. Minister:

Among the responsibilities which President Carter has entrusted to me as Secretary of State is that of exploring fully the possibilities for normalization of relations between the United States and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. I am convinced that moving toward normal relations is in the interests of both countries, and I hope that you will agree that such a process can begin promptly.

With this objective in mind and as a first step, the President proposes to appoint a Presidential Commission<sup>2</sup> composed of several distinguished Americans to visit Hanoi in the near future. In the course of its visit the Commission, which would be led by the President's personal representative, will seek information from your government regarding the fate of our servicemen missing or killed in action, and will hope to obtain remains of our dead. The Commission would also be prepared to exchange views on other matters of concern to both countries.

As you know, President Carter has publicly expressed a great personal interest in sending such a Commission to your country. Your

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850056–1992. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Drafted by James D. Rosenthal (EA/VLC); cleared by Holbrooke, Habib, Lake, and Leo J. Reddy (S/S); approved by Vance.

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to the Woodcock Commission. See Document 8.

willingness to receive this group would be a welcome and promising step in opening a dialogue between us in order to begin building a new relationship that I believe will be in the interest of both countries.

I look forward to receiving an early response from you on this matter. Sincerely, Cyrus Vance.

2. If SRV Embassy inquires, EmbOff should indicate that Commission would probably consist of four or five members, plus a small supporting staff, and would expect to stay two or three days. Discussion of further arrangements should await the SRV reply.

3. When delivering above message, EmbOff should point out orally that President and Secretary wish to move promptly toward normalization of relations with SRV, which is in the interests of both countries. The President's desire to send his personal representatives to Hanoi, as proposed above, is clearly an indication of this attitude. As an additional demonstration of our intentions, we have taken or are in the process of taking the following unilateral steps:

A. We will no longer raise objections or reservations to the SRV's succession to the former South Vietnamese regime's seat in various UN specialized agencies and similar international institutions. As a first concrete step in this direction, we recently indicated to the IAEA Director General that we have no objection to administrative actions by the agency which apparently presume official SRV succession.

B. We raised no objections or reservations to the UNDP Governing Council's recent approval of a \$44 million indicative planning figure for Vietnam.

C. We are in the process of removing several wartime restrictions on the bunkering in U.S. ports of vessels in the Vietnam trade and on the carrying of USG-financed cargoes in such vessels.

D. We are approving a license (i.e., an exception to our trade and asset controls) for a U.S. firm to participate indirectly in the reestablishment of a Manila-Saigon telecommunications link by an affiliated Filipino company. You should ask SRV Liaison Officer to bring these steps to his government's attention and emphasize that we will consider further gestures as appropriate.

4. You should also note that the MIA issue remains a primary concern for us and express the hope that the SRV will take further steps on it, particularly in light of our initiatives.

5. Re press handling, you should advise SRV Liaison Officer that we do not intend to announce delivery of letter or this contact at present; however, if matter becomes public anyhow or there is widespread public speculation, we will confirm that we have been in contact with the Vietnamese but will provide no further details. FYI: Assuming a positive SRV response, we envisage announcing Commission visit

after SRV reply, in manner to be worked out with them at that time. Further instructions on this will be provided. End FYI.

6. Separate message<sup>3</sup> deals with informing other governments including French of this initiative. You should not—rpt—not tell Vietnamese of these efforts.

Vance

---

<sup>3</sup> See Document 5.

---

**5. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassies in Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, France, and the United Kingdom<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, February 8, 1977, 2311Z

28456. For Ambassador or Chargé only. Subject: U.S.-Vietnamese Relations.

1. We are about to undertake contacts with the Vietnamese to explore further the prospects for obtaining a satisfactory accounting for our missing personnel and establishing a more normal relationship between the U.S. and Vietnam. As the Secretary has made clear, we believe that normalization of relations is in the interests of both the U.S. and Vietnam, and we hope that such a process can begin promptly.

2. As an initial step, we are proposing directly to the SRV further contacts shortly with this objective in mind. The actual pace and substance of the normalization process will depend to a considerable extent on Hanoi's attitude, and we hope for a prompt and positive reaction. We will need to be satisfied on MIA issue if progress is to be made.

3. For Bangkok, Jakarta, Canberra, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Seoul, Singapore, Tokyo, Wellington: You should immediately communicate substance of above to host governments at highest appropriate level.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P800033–1157. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Drafted by David C. Harr and James D. Rosenthal (EA/VLC); cleared by Holbrooke and Peter Bridges (S/S); and approved by Habib. Sent for information Immediate to Vientiane, Moscow, and Beijing.

You should stress that information must be closely held in strictest confidence, and that we intend to continue to keep them informed. You should add that we are taking these steps in the belief that normalization of U.S.-Vietnamese relations is in the interests of the region as a whole and that we intend to proceed in full consideration of the concerns of all the countries involved. This move does not constitute a turning away from old friends.

4. For Vientiane: Above is FYI only. Plans for initiative do not involve Laos at present, and you should not repeat nor consult with Lao on this matter.

5. For Moscow and Peking: Department is informing Soviet Embassy and PRCLO officials here of above. You should take no further action.

6. For Paris: Ambassador should inform Foreign Minister along lines of paras 1–3 above, emphasizing need for holding information closely.

7. For London: Ambassador should inform Foreign Minister or Palliser<sup>2</sup> similarly.

Vance

---

<sup>2</sup> Sir Michael Palliser, Permanent Under Secretary of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

---

## **6. Telegram From the Embassy in France to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Paris, February 23, 1977, 1816Z

5419. Subj: US-VN Relations: SRV FonMin's Reply to Secretary's Letter. Ref: Paris 3875.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968–1991, Lot 94D430, Viet Nam—US Talks with VN, 1977. Secret; Immediate; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> In telegram 3875 from Paris, February 8, the Embassy noted that Vance's message to Trinh had been delivered. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 22, France: 1–12/77)

1. SRV First Secretary Do Thanh came to Embassy at 1730 Feb 23 to deliver SRV FonMin Nguyen Duy Trinh's Feb 21 reply to the Secretary's letter of Feb 8.<sup>3</sup> Text of the English language version of the letter is contained in para 2. The Vietnamese original, the English version and a copy of the SRV Embassy transmittal note are being pouched to EA/VLC.<sup>4</sup> EmbOff told Do Thanh that the letter and his oral points, para 3, would be immediately forwarded to Washington.

2. English language text: Quote.

Hanoi, February 21, 1977.

Mr. Secretary of State,

I have received your letter dated February 8, 1977, in which you expressed the wish to start a process leading to the normalization of relations between the United States and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, in the interest of both countries as well as to have an exchange of views on matters of mutual concern.

As you have known, the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam has repeatedly stated its readiness to discuss with the U.S. Government the solution of questions of interest to each side and the normalization of relations between the two countries as provided for by the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam.<sup>5</sup> In this spirit, the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam is ready to receive in Hanoi the Presidential Commission headed by a representative of the U.S. President.

In order to contribute to making the Vietnamese-U.S. meeting fruitful, the Vietnamese side is prepared to examine and solve with goodwill the question of Americans missing in action and other matters of interest to the United States. The U.S. side should adopt the same attitude regarding the U.S. contribution to the healing of the wounds of war and to postwar reconstruction in Viet Nam and other matters of interest to Viet Nam.

The Vietnamese side believes that the period from March 6 to March 11 or from March 16 to March 19, 1977, would be convenient for the visit of the U.S. President's representative to Hanoi. The Vietnamese side is prepared to consider any other suggestion you might make regarding the timing of the visit.

To ensure that the forthcoming meeting in Hanoi may proceed smoothly, I wish to propose that one week before the U.S. President's representative comes to Hanoi, representatives in Paris of the Socialist

---

<sup>3</sup> See Document 4.

<sup>4</sup> Not found.

<sup>5</sup> See footnote 6, Document 1.

Republic of Viet Nam and the United States should meet to prepare the content of the talks in Hanoi.

Please accept, Mr. Secretary of State, the assurances of my high consideration.

Minister for Foreign Affairs  
 Socialist Republic of Vietnam  
 Nguyen Duy Trinh (S)  
 His Excellency Cyrus Vance  
 Secretary of State  
 United States of America. Unquote.

3. Oral Points. Do Thanh said that he had been asked to convey to us orally the following two points:

(A) Dates of Visit. The SRV has suggested March 6 to 11 or March 16 to 19 because during these two periods the Foreign Minister and his colleagues will be free to devote nearly full time to the American Commission. It would be possible to arrange the visit at another time during March but then the visit would conflict with visits of other delegations and the Vietnamese side would be unable to make itself totally free for conversations with the President's Commission.

(B) Members of the U.S. Delegation. Hanoi wishes to have ASAP the names of the principal members of the U.S. Commission. While it will wish to know all members including support personnel prior to the actual visit, it would like to know soonest the names of the President's representative and his principal colleagues. EmbOff said he hoped to have a response concerning the dates and names of the principal members of the delegation for Do Thanh soon.

4. Paris Preparatory Meeting. Do Thanh noted the suggestion that representatives of the two countries in Paris meet a week prior to the visit "to prepare the content of the talks in Hanoi." He said that they had in mind a meeting between DCM Gammon and their First Counselor Than Hoan along the lines of the November 12 meeting.<sup>6</sup> They would be prepared to consider a different kind of contact here if Washington prefers. Do Thanh said that the preparatory meeting would be designed to set forth the ideas of the two sides about the principal matters to be discussed (i.e., the agenda), and would not attempt to decide on such things as the response which each side would make. Do Thanh said his government understood the Secretary's proposal was one for an exploratory meeting, and Hanoi viewed it in the same light.

---

<sup>6</sup> See footnote 2, Document 2.

5. Do Thanh implied that FonMin Nguyen Duy Trinh would be the principal member on the SRV side, but clearly Hanoi is waiting to see the composition of the U.S. delegation before indicating the names of the persons with whom they will principally deal.<sup>7</sup>

Rush

---

<sup>7</sup> In a February 24 memorandum to Carter, Brzezinski stated that Carter needed to decide upon the dates of the visit, when to announce the visit, and the composition of the delegation. Carter approved March 16–19 as the visit dates and approved February 25 as the announcement date. Brzezinski also recommended that Carter approve Woodcock to head the delegation. Carter approved the recommendation and added the following handwritten notation, “will decide after talking to 1) Woodcock, 2) Mansfield, 3) Yost, 4) Montgomery (Speaker O’Neill), 5) ?.” (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 56, Vietnam, 1977)

---

## 7. Telegram From the Embassy in France to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Paris, March 8, 1977, 1844Z

6795. Subj: US-VN Relations: Preliminary Meeting in Paris, March 8—Flash Summary Report.

1. Preliminary meeting between US and VN sides took place as scheduled. Meeting went well, with controversial issues raised but relatively muted. Much of meeting was devoted to reading of prepared statements by both sides and logistic and administrative details of Presidential Commission’s forthcoming visit to Hanoi. Vietnamese assured that Commission would receive an excellent welcome and that all necessary arrangements would be made within technical facilities available.

2. Major substantive discussion centered around agenda for Commission’s talks in Hanoi. Vietnamese asked whether Commission would be willing to discuss question of US aid to Vietnam as a matter of Vietnamese concern to match Vietnamese promise to discuss MIAs as matter of primary US concern. US side indicated from prepared

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, N770001–0780. Secret; Flash; Nodis.

statements that Commission's primary purpose was to obtain MIA information and return of remains, to listen to what Vietnamese had to say on any issues they wished to raise, and to report Vietnamese views back to the President for his consideration. Vietnamese finally proposed that Commission discuss substantive agenda in more detail on arrival in Hanoi.

3. Vietnamese did reiterate formulation in FonMin Trinh letter Feb. 21<sup>2</sup> and VNA broadcast March 3 that US should be prepared to examine and solve with good will their primary concern re aid. They indicated that if there is not a desire by each side to solve the problems of the other side, good intentions will not be sufficient.

4. Other main substantive question was the issue of the Commission's mandate. Vietnamese asked whether it would be empowered to negotiate, to sign agreements, etc. US reps replied from prepared guidance to indicate exact scope of Commission's mission. After several exchanges, Vietnamese appeared to understand clearly what this will be.

5. Vietnamese provided names of officials who will deal with Commission in Hanoi (led by Phan Hien, Deputy Foreign Minister), promised to look into problem of aircraft landing capability, asked whether Commission would want press conferences in Hanoi, offered to transmit cypher material for Commission during stay via commercial means, and generally were very forthcoming on arrangements to assure good reception for Commission.

6. US reps raised informally the matter of US press covering the Commission's visit in Hanoi. Vietnamese replied that some journalists had already approached them here. They described their lack of facilities to accommodate large numbers of press but would be willing to propose to Hanoi that four or five US newsmen, whose names might be communicated to them by the USG, be permitted to go to Hanoi to cover the event.

**Rush**

---

<sup>2</sup> See Document 6.



**8. Letter From the Presidential Commission on Americans Missing and Unaccounted For in Southeast Asia to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, undated

Dear Mr. President:

The Presidential Commission has completed the visit you asked it to make to Vietnam and Laos to obtain an accounting for our personnel missing or unaccounted for in Southeast Asia. Our trip was long and arduous but worthwhile. We were well-received by our hosts in both countries.

We carried out your instructions to seek means of resolving the issue of our missing personnel, and we believe we achieved some concrete results in this regard. As you requested, we also obtained the views of the Vietnamese and Lao Governments on other matters of mutual concern, particularly the matter of normalization of relations between these countries and the United States.

We respectfully present for your consideration the attached report on our trip. It contains our observations and conclusions as well as certain recommendations which we hope will be useful in achieving a satisfactory resolution of the tragic problem of our missing personnel. We also hope it will be helpful to you in considering appropriate further steps toward normalization of relations with these two countries.

Sincerely,

**Leonard Woodcock  
Mike Mansfield  
Charles Yost  
G.V. Montgomery  
Marian Wright Edelman**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 56, Vietnam 1977. No classification marking. Carter initialed the top of the page. A stamped notation at the top of the page also indicates that Carter saw it. The members of the Commission (also known as the Woodcock Commission) were Leonard Woodcock, Michael Mansfield, Charles Yost, G.V. Montgomery, and Marian Wright Edelman.

## Attachment

### **Report by the Presidential Commission on Americans Missing and Unaccounted for in Southeast Asia<sup>2</sup>**

Undated

*Report on Trip to Vietnam and Laos  
March 16–20, 1977*

#### *I. Mandate of the Commission*

On February 25, 1977, the State Department announced that the President was sending a Presidential Commission of distinguished Americans to Southeast Asia to help him obtain an accounting about missing Americans in that region.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Leonard Woodcock, President of the United Auto Workers, was chosen by the President to head the five-member Commission. Other members were: Former Senator Mike Mansfield, former Ambassador Charles W. Yost, Congressman G.V. Montgomery, and Mrs. Marian Wright Edelman, Director of the Children's Defense Fund.

The Commission was charged with traveling to Vietnam and Laos to meet with representatives of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Lao People's Democratic Republic to seek information on our missing personnel, including the return of recoverable remains. The Commission was also instructed to receive from these governments their views on matters affecting our mutual relations. The Commission was requested by the President to report its findings directly to him on their return.

The Commission was not a diplomatic mission in the usual sense, in that it was not empowered to negotiate on behalf of the U.S. Government on matters involving relations between the U.S. and the two countries which it was to visit. However, the Commission was given authority to reach agreement with the Vietnamese and Lao authorities on matters pertaining to the question of our missing personnel in order to obtain information and recoverable remains.

Both White House and State Department announcements made clear that the U.S. Government remained concerned about all Americans lost in Southeast Asia, those still listed as missing as well as the larger number who have been presumed dead with no accounting being provided. The fact that a man has been declared dead for legal

---

<sup>2</sup> No classification marking.

<sup>3</sup> See Department of State *Bulletin*, March 21, 1977, p. 258.

purposes did not affect the U.S. Government's determination to seek information about him and to arrange for the return of his remains if they could be recovered.

The announcements also stated that the naming of the Commission and its trip to Indochina was a further, measured step which the U.S. Government was taking to put the recent conflict behind us and to establish more normal relations between ourselves and the countries of that area.

## *II. Preparations for the Trip*

After receiving the Presidential mandate for its mission, the Commission immediately initiated a series of actions designed to insure careful preparation for its trip.

The Departments of State and Defense provided briefing material on the background and history of the MIA issue,<sup>4</sup> including details on missing individuals and on past efforts to obtain information on them, as well as a review of U.S. relations with the countries of Indochina.

On Monday, March 7th, the Commission held its first formal meeting and briefing session at the Department of State.<sup>5</sup> This briefing included discussions of previous dealings with the Vietnamese and Lao, in particular the Vietnamese position of linking their action on MIA's under Article 8b of the Paris Agreement<sup>6</sup> to what they claim was the remaining U.S. obligation to help heal the wounds of war to Vietnam by providing aid as stipulated by Article 21 of the same accord. The Commission concluded that it would be better to approach the Vietnamese in a humanitarian spirit of mutual cooperation, looking to the future, rather than to engage in sterile, legalistic debate of the past which focused on the war. Dr. Henry Kenny, former staff member of the House Select Committee on Missing Persons in Southeast Asia, described that Committee's 1975 trip to Hanoi and Vientiane<sup>7</sup> to obtain the return of three American pilots and to discuss the MIA problem with leaders of both countries.

In cooperation with the Commission, the Department of State arranged for U.S. representatives to meet with Vietnamese representatives in Paris to prepare further for the Commission's visit to Hanoi. Mr. James D. Rosenthal, Director of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia Affairs, and chief of the Commission's staff for its visit to Southeast

---

<sup>4</sup> Not found.

<sup>5</sup> No minutes of this meeting have been found.

<sup>6</sup> Reference is to the "Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam." For the text, see the Department of State *Bulletin*, February 12, 1973, pp. 169–188.

<sup>7</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. E–12, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973–1976, Document 83.

Asia, attended this meeting and reported back to the Commission in Washington prior to its departure.

The Commission also met with non-governmental organizations and individuals who were concerned with the MIA problem and other matters pertinent to its mission. On March 7th, the Commission met with representatives of the National League of Families of Americans missing in Southeast Asia. The League said that they recognized an accounting for all the missing was impossible but that some men still missing were known to be alive at one time and the American people are entitled to know what happened to them. They urged the Commission to seek all possible information on these men. Chairman Woodcock and the Commission members assured the League representatives that this was the primary purpose of the trip and the Commission would do the best it could.

A meeting was also held on March 11th with representatives of the American Friends Service Committee, who briefed the Commission on their recent visit to Vietnam and urged it to consider humanitarian aid to that country. Mr. Richard Dudman of the *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, who had been captured and released during the war in Cambodia, urged the Commission to approach Cambodia on the MIA issue, particularly in regard to the 25 international journalists missing in that country, four of whom are Americans. The Commission agreed to contact the Cambodians to try to arrange a meeting with Cambodian representatives during its trip.

Commission members also met or talked individually with persons and groups with a specific interest in their mission, such as MIA family members.

The Commission was fortunate to have the recently-published final report of the House Select Committee on Missing Persons in Southeast Asia,<sup>8</sup> which documented in detail past military and diplomatic efforts to obtain a resolution of the MIA problem and which included recommendations for future action. All Commission members read this report thoroughly and were told later in Vietnam by SRV Deputy Foreign Minister Phan Hien that he had also read it.

On Saturday, March 12th, the Commission met with President Carter and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance.<sup>9</sup> The President expressed

---

<sup>8</sup> Not found.

<sup>9</sup> The meeting took place from 10:17 until 10:50 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. (Carter Library, Presidential Materials, President's Daily Diary) The memorandum of conversation of this meeting is in Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968-1991, Lot 94D430, Viet Nam Normalization of Relations (SRV). The President's statement after the meeting is in *Public Papers: Carter, 1977*, Book I, p. 377.

his deep concern about obtaining a satisfactory MIA accounting and his hope for eventual normalization of relations with Vietnam and Laos. The Commission was directed not to apologize for past relations, but to emphasize the President's desire for a new beginning with these governments on the basis of equality and mutual respect. It was instructed to seek all MIA information and to obtain all recoverable remains from the Vietnamese and Lao and to listen carefully to the concerns of these governments on other matters of mutual interest. The President asked Mr. Woodcock to deliver personal letters from him to Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Van Dong and to Lao President Souphanouvong.<sup>10</sup>

On March 13th the Commission departed Washington for Hawaii, where it received briefings by the Department of Defense, the Joint Casualty Resolution Center (JCRC) and the Central Identification Laboratory (CIL). The DOD briefer indicated there were 2,546 Americans who did not return from the war in Indochina, of whom 758 are still listed as MIA or POW. "We have no evidence", he said, "to indicate that any American servicemen are being held as prisoners in Southeast Asia, but whether a man is alive or dead does not relieve us of the responsibility to seek an accounting for him." The briefings described the many efforts made to obtain information and recover remains, since the end of U.S. involvement in the Indochina War and the Paris Agreement of January 1973. The Commission was impressed by data showing that the number unaccounted for in Indochina is about 4% of those killed in that conflict. As indicated in the House Select Committee Report, this contrasts with the 22% unresolved cases in World War II and Korea. This impressed upon the Commission the need to be realistic in its expectations for a further Indochina accounting. The Commission also visited the CIL where it reviewed procedures for identifying recovered remains. The Commission was impressed by the CIL's capability of identifying even partial remains and noted that CIL expertise is one reason why there is not yet an unknown soldier from the Vietnam War.

The Commission departed Hawaii on March 13th for the Philippines, where it remained overnight to rest and prepare further for its visit to Hanoi and Vientiane. U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines William H. Sullivan met with the Commission<sup>11</sup> and provided it with

---

<sup>10</sup> The March 12 letter to Lao President Souphanouvong is in the Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Laos, Box 12, President Souphanouvong, 3/77. The March 12 letter to Prime Minister Pham Van Dong is in the Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Vietnam, Box 21, Vietnam Prime Minister Pham Van Dong, 3/77.

<sup>11</sup> No record of this meeting has been found.

the benefit of his many years of experience in negotiating with the Vietnamese.

### III. *Visit to Vietnam*

#### *Program in Hanoi*

The Commission arrived in Hanoi at 2:45 p.m., March 16, 1977 aboard a U.S. Air Force C-141 from Clark Field and departed at approximately 10:00 a.m. March 19, 1977 aboard the same aircraft for Vientiane.

Deputy Foreign Minister Phan Hien greeted the Commission at Gia Lam Airport upon arrival. The Commission and staff were housed in the official Government Guest House as guests of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

The Commission was received by SRV Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Nguyen Duy Trinh two hours after arrival. There were formal meetings on March 17 and 18 between the Commission and the Vietnamese delegation led by Deputy Foreign Minister Phan Hien, a meeting with Prime Minister Pham Van Dong in the afternoon of March 17, and a separate meeting between technical experts concerned with the development of MIA information and recovery of remains.<sup>12</sup> Representative Montgomery was the only Commission member who attended the latter meeting.

In addition, Minister Trinh hosted a formal dinner and cultural performance for the Commission on March 17 and attended a dinner given in turn by the Commission on the next night. Other Commission activities included: a visit to the Hanoi City cemetery, located in Ha Dong Province roughly 20 kilometers from Hanoi, to see the remains of the 12 pilots which the Vietnamese agreed to turn over to the Commission; and a dignified ceremony upon reception of the remains at Gia Lam Airport on March 19 just prior to departure.

Members of the Commission also undertook individual activities. The Chairman had two private meetings with Deputy Foreign Minister Phan Hien, and Ms. Edelman visited a kindergarten and had a meeting with Mrs. Nguyen Thi Binh, Minister of Education.

#### *Atmosphere in Hanoi*

A significant aspect of the Commission's visit to Vietnam was the cordial atmosphere which prevailed throughout its stay. The Vietnamese Government appeared to have made a major effort to ensure that the Commission's stay was both pleasant and productive and that the

---

<sup>12</sup> No records of the meetings in Hanoi have been found. Woodcock sent a summary report of the meetings in telegram 581 from Vientiane, March 20. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850070-2771, P840084-1307, N770002-0114)

Commission was treated with respect and dignity. This point is of importance because in Asia the form of a visit and the level of attention given to a delegation often conveys an essential political message. Using this standard, the Commission concludes that the Vietnamese leadership was indicating by this treatment the importance it attached to the Commission's visit, and its genuine desire for a new and improved relationship with the United States. This did not, of course, mean that the Vietnamese were ready to concede on substantive issues, but it was—and is—an encouraging beginning to serious discussions on them.

The spirit of cordiality carried over into meetings as well. Phan Hien, an urbane and sophisticated diplomat, spoke in a spirit of conciliation during both of the formal meetings. While always forcefully representing the positions of his government, he interspersed his presentations with humorous asides and conveyed an obvious sincere desire to put the war behind us. There was a conspicuous absence of polemics or harsh rhetoric on either side.

Prime Minister Pham Van Dong also received the Commission for a special meeting at which the President's personal letter was delivered to him. The talks with him were candid; he expressed his government's policy firmly but without rancor or harshness despite the recent bitter past. He expressed particular appreciation for the President's message and later asked the Commission to convey back to the President a letter from him in reply.<sup>13</sup>

There were sporadic attempts to restrict individual movement around Hanoi, but in general Commission members and staff were permitted to go where they wished. This was usually—but not always—under escort. Protocol officers explained that this was for security reasons, citing possible hostile acts by the populace which still remembers the "destruction caused by U.S. bombing." These restrictions eased as the visit progressed. This point is important because it reminded the Commission that, despite all the good will and cordiality which marked the visit, there will for quite a while be an element of reserve toward us because of the long period when we and the Vietnamese were adversaries.

#### *Substance of Talks in Hanoi*

The essential elements of the Vietnamese position as expounded during the visit were contained in an *Aide Memoire* handed to Chairman Woodcock during the second formal discussions on March 18. The text

---

<sup>13</sup> Not found.

of this *Aide Memoire* is attached.<sup>14</sup> Further discussion of the major issues follows:

—*Missing in Action*

The highlight of the Commission's talks in Hanoi was the SRV's formal undertaking to give the U.S. all available information on our missing men as it is found and to return remains as they are recovered and exhumed. This new commitment was spelled out in Vice Minister Phan Hien's remarks and his *Aide Memoire* and in the more general comments by Foreign Minister Trinh and Prime Minister Pham Van Dong. It was further refined in the Technical Sub-Commission meeting with officials of the Vietnamese agency responsible for seeking information on the missing and recovering remains.

The key elements in the Vietnamese statements were as follows:

a) The remains of the 12 U.S. airmen announced last September as killed in action would be returned to the U.S. and could be taken back by the Commission if desired.

b) All living U.S. military POW's have been returned.

c) All U.S. civilians remaining in South Vietnam after April 30, 1975 who registered with the Vietnamese authorities have left the country.

d) The SRV has established a specialized office to seek information on missing Americans and to recover remains. Although terrain and the tropical conditions of Vietnam have hindered search efforts, this office is actively seeking information and the remains of missing Americans.

e) The SRV will give the U.S. "as soon as possible" all available information and remains as they are discovered.

f) The Vietnamese would welcome U.S. assistance for this work in the form of information and documents, as well as material means helpful to the search efforts.

Although the MIA undertaking was stated in unqualified terms, the Vietnamese made clear that they still considered this subject and other aspects of U.S.-SRV relations to be "inter-related." They stated that their actions on MIA's were in conformance with Article 8b of the Paris Accord, for example, and cited the need for comparable U.S. fulfillment of its alleged obligation under Article 21 to "heal the wounds of war" and provide reconstruction aid. Phan Hien also raised the issue of normalization of relations in this context. He was careful to say that none of these three points (i.e., MIA's, normalization, and aid) should

---

<sup>14</sup> Not attached. The March 18 Vietnamese Aide-Mémoire is in the Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 56, Vietnam, 1977.



be considered as pre-conditions to the other two and it was not the SRV's intention to raise the question this way. But he did note that they were closely related to each other and that both sides should take them in an overall context and apply their position in a flexible way. This appeared to go farther than previous SRV statements in reducing the specific linkage between Vietnamese action on MIA's and U.S. agreement to provide aid. But it still suggests that actual Vietnamese performance on MIA's will probably be subject to our willingness to move concretely to implement the spirit of good will displayed by the Commission's visit.

The Technical Subcommittee meeting was requested by the U.S. side and agreed on by the Vietnamese for the morning of March 18, prior to the second formal session with Phan Hien. Rep. Montgomery attended for the Commission with staff support by Mr. Sieverts, Dr. Shields, Dr. Kenny, and the JCRC representatives. Leading for the Vietnamese was Vu Hoang, Director of the Consular Department of the Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Director of the Office Responsible for Seeking Information on the Missing and the Recovery of Remains. He was supported by two specialists.

The Vietnamese described their MIA office as organized from central to provincial levels and said it relies on local citizen groups for much of its information. They noted that the forested and mountainous terrain of Vietnam hindered searches, and that even where a plane had been seen coming down it was often hard to find it. Pilots who bailed out might come down many miles from the downed aircraft and were often lost, unless they landed in populated areas. Other impediments to successful searches noted by Mr. Hoang were the lack of specialized tools and transportation, the "attitude of the people" reluctant to help with U.S. MIA's when so many of their own relatives had been lost, and the fact that in the South the search had only recently been organized.

The Vietnamese noted that they had substantially increased their budget for this work and confirmed that they would be pleased to receive materials to aid the search process, including case folders, anthropological books, tools, medical supplies and antiseptics, and transportation equipment. They also said they would look into the possibility of providing items such as dog tags, aircraft numbers, and personal effects, as well as remains of Americans lost in the South.

Mr. Hoang proposed that information and other materials be exchanged directly with him at his address in the Foreign Ministry. He asked with whom he could correspond and was given Mr. Sieverts' name at the State Department as a point of contact.

The Sub-Commission also worked out procedures for the return of the 12 remains. The full Commission later visited the cemetery where the remains were being kept following their exhumation.

In a brief private meeting following the final dinner, Phan Hien told the Commission that American citizen Tucker Gougelmann had died in Saigon in June 1976, and that his remains would be returned as soon as they could be hygienically exhumed. The Commission had asked Hien in its initial meeting about Mr. Gougelmann, the last known American remaining in Vietnam following the communist takeover who wished to leave. Hien also told the Commission at this final meeting that the Vietnamese believed another American may be buried in the Hanoi cemetery and promised to return his remains as well. Although they almost certainly have at least some additional MIA information available, they did not provide it to the Commission during its visit.

—*Normalization of Relations*

Pham Van Dong and Phan Hien both expressed a strong desire to move toward normal relations with the U.S. Their *Aide Memoire* states that "The Socialist Republic of Vietnam is prepared to establish diplomatic relations with the United States." At the same time Phan Hien, in his remarks, noted that obstacles still exist on the road to normalizing relations, although expressing hope that with goodwill they could all be removed. He said Vietnam is prepared to normalize on the basis of sovereignty, mutual respect, non-interference in each other's affairs and peaceful co-existence. Regarding diplomatic relations, he said Vietnam is prepared to establish them, but then added that this will depend on the attitude of the United States and "whether it will give up its erroneous policy of the past". He stated that the Vietnamese view is that actions such as the U.S. economic blockade and the veto of Vietnam's entry into the UN stem from this erroneous policy. Finally, he said that there are three key areas of discussion between us: the MIA's, normalization, and aid. Phan Hien said we should not consider any one as a pre-condition to the other two, but noted that they clearly are inter-related.

Both Phan Hien and Pham Van Dong proposed negotiations between diplomatic representatives of the U.S. and SRV to discuss the elements and process of normalization. Phan Hien suggested talks at the level of special ambassador or higher in Paris. The Commission said it would convey this proposal to the President for his consideration.

Vietnamese leaders expressed clearly to the Commission their Government's foreign policy, in particular regarding their neighbors in Southeast Asia. Phan Hien presented to the Commission Foreign Minister Trinh's "Four Points" as the basis for their policy:

"1. Respect for each other's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality, mutual benefit and peaceful co-existence.

2. Not to allow any foreign country to use one's territory as a base for direct or indirect aggression and intervention against the other country and other countries in the region.

3. Establishment of friendly and good-neighborly relations, economic cooperation and cultural exchanges on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. Settlement of disputes among the countries in the region through negotiations in a spirit of equality, mutual understanding and respect.

4. Development of cooperation among the countries in the region for the building of prosperity in keeping with each country's specific conditions, and for the sake of genuine independence, peace and neutrality in Southeast Asia, thereby contributing to peace in the world."

Hien complained about the negative attitude of the new Thai authorities toward Vietnam and advised the U.S., as friends of Thailand, to urge the Thais to better their relations with the SRV by living up to the Thai-Vietnamese joint communique of last August 6. The Commission expressed the new U.S. Administration's desire for a stable, peaceful, and prosperous Southeast Asia.

—*Economic and Humanitarian Assistance*

In both the Commission's meetings with Phan Hien and Pham Van Dong as well as in the *Aide Memoire* which they presented, the Vietnamese emphasized their strong interest in receiving aid from the United States. In the *Aide Memoire* this was expressed as an American "responsibility" and "obligation". In the formal meetings, aid was generally categorized as something the United States "should" do.

In Phan Hien's initial presentation, he cited three ways of looking at the U.S. "responsibility" to contribute to post war reconstruction: legal, humanitarian, and on the basis of reciprocity. Under the legal, he noted the U.S. obligation under Article 21 of the Paris Agreement, pledges allegedly made in President Nixon's February 1, 1973 message to Pham Van Dong, and a letter sent in mid-1973 by Maurice Williams (U.S. Representative to the Joint Economic Commission) to his Vietnamese counterpart "acknowledging" U.S. responsibility to provide aid. Pham Van Dong also made reference to this legal aspect of the problem. Both stressed, however, that if the U.S. did not wish to consider the problem in a legal context, they are perfectly prepared to deemphasize such references. They said they were ready to be flexible in discussing the modalities of how we might provide aid to them. The Commission found their willingness to deemphasize references to the Paris Accords and legal obligations of the United States to be a somewhat encouraging sign. At the same time, the Commission recognizes that it does not represent any fundamental changes in their position.

In place of the legal basis for our providing assistance, Phan Hien and the Prime Minister turned to a discussion of a humanitarian basis

for aid. Suggesting they were performing a humanitarian act in working to alleviate the suffering of the MIA families, they stated that in fairness we should be willing to act humanely to repair some of the destruction caused during the war. Phan Hien indicated that Vietnam has a pressing immediate need for food aid, fertilizer, farm machinery, building materials for schools and hospitals, raw materials for its factories, and medicines. He later presented the Commission as part of the *Aide Memoire* a specific list of these items along with quantities they need over the next five years.

In the third aspect—reciprocity—Phan Hien made the point that actions cannot come from just one side. Obliquely referring to their accounting for the MIA's and providing aid, he indicated that each side must take steps which address the concerns of the other. As noted earlier, he did not specifically link the two issues, although at a later point he noted that aid, an MIA accounting, and normalization are "interrelated."

At other times, the Vietnamese referred to our providing aid to them as a matter of conscience or as a moral obligation. Pham Van Dong said aid is an "obligation we should fulfill—an obligation to be fulfilled with all your conscience and all your sense of responsibility." He added that "In brief, we have obligations which are related to each other. So we should start from this position."

Phan Hien also indicated his government's willingness to be flexible regarding the form aid might take. While not specifically stating which they might prefer, he referred to discussion with previous U.S. administrations in which various forms of aid were mentioned, including concessional, bilateral and multilateral. He called on us to put forth some ideas by saying "our intention is that the U.S. make substantial contributions to healing the wounds of the war and to the reconstruction of Vietnam. As to the forms and measures, you may make suggestions."

#### —*Refugees and Family Reunification*

The Vietnamese said they would be "generous" with regard to their citizens wishing to join relatives in the U.S., and to those wanting to return to Vietnam from abroad, providing they follow proper procedures. The Commission welcomed this statement and suggested continued efforts to resolve this problem through the Red Cross. Phan Hien also took the occasion to express concern about alleged activities of refugees in the U.S. which "undermine" the improvement of relations. Chairman Woodcock responded that no such group could affect the freely-chosen policies of the U.S. Government.

The UNHCR representative in Hanoi told the Commission staff he was hopeful the Vietnamese would agree soon to the departure of

children and other relatives of U.S. citizens who remain in South Vietnam.

—*Social Problems*

In response to her request the Vietnamese arranged for Ms. Edelman to visit a kindergarten-child care center, and to meet with the Minister of Education, Mme. Nguyen Thi Binh (formerly Foreign Minister of the PRG). In discussions with Ms. Edelman the Vietnamese described their efforts to care for orphans (who they said numbered 500,000 including those with one parent) and to rehabilitate “street children” in South Vietnam. The Vietnamese said nutrition was their main child care problem, reflecting their overall concern about their current food shortages.

With Ms. Edelman and in discussions with the Commission, the Vietnamese referred to their continuing efforts to rehabilitate up to 400,000 former prostitutes, 100,000 drug addicts, and to treat venereal disease. They also noted that over 4 million of their population remained unemployed, mainly in South Vietnam.

*IV. Visit to Laos*

Some 550 Americans are listed as missing or dead in Laos. The President therefore asked the Commission to visit that country as well to seek the cooperation of the Lao authorities in resolving these cases. Secretary of State Vance addressed a letter to Phoune Sipaseuth, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the Lao Peoples Democratic Republic (LPDR) on February 24, 1977 asking that the Commission be received in Laos. Minister Phoune replied on March 12 accepting the Secretary’s proposal.<sup>15</sup>

*Program in Vientiane*

The Commission went from Hanoi to Vientiane, capital of Laos, early March 19 by U.S. military aircraft and remained until late afternoon March 20. The Commission met for two hours in formal talks with the LPDR delegation headed by Noupnan Sitphasay, Secretary of State (Deputy Foreign Minister) on March 19.<sup>16</sup> The next day the Commission was received in separate meetings by Foreign Minister Phoune and by LPDR President Souphanouvong, to whom Chairman

---

<sup>15</sup> Vance’s letter was transmitted in telegram 41182 to Vientiane, February 24. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P900105–0843, P850070–2785, P800033–1154) Phoune’s reply is in telegram 493 from Vientiane, March 12. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850070–2781, N770002–0044)

<sup>16</sup> No records of the meetings in Vientiane have been found. Woodcock reported on the meetings in telegrams 581 and 583 from Vientiane, March 20. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850070–2771, P840084–1307, N770002–0114 and D770099–0973)

Woodcock delivered a personal letter from President Carter. The Commission was honored at a dinner given by the Lao Government March 19 and returned the hospitality with a luncheon March 20 attended by Minister Phoune and other high-level Lao officials.

*Atmosphere in Vientiane*

Although the U.S. maintains a small Embassy in Vientiane ably led by Chargé d'Affaires Thomas J. Corcoran, Lao-American relations have been cool since events in the spring of 1975 and the subsequent establishment of the LPDR in December of that year. However, working in cooperation with our Embassy, the Lao arranged a warm reception for the Commission and made it evident throughout the visit that the Commission was welcome. The Commission was greeted at the airport by Deputy Foreign Minister Noupnan and escorted to accommodations provided by the Lao government in Vientiane's largest hotel. In the Commission's meetings with President Souphanouvong and Foreign Minister Phoune, both expressed the view that the Commission's visit was evidence of a new American attitude toward their country, and a demonstration of the President's desire to improve relations with Laos.

As in Vietnam, the tone and atmosphere of the Commission's visit to Laos was important. Chairman Woodcock made the point that the Commission had come not to replace the work of our Embassy but to underscore the President's desire to improve relations with Laos on the basis of mutual respect and benefit. He relayed the President's desire to help remove the obstacles to improved relations, such as the MIA question. This new spirit was apparently understood and accepted by the Lao, whose leaders responded in a similar vein.

*Substance of Talks in Vientiane*

The Commission made clear to the Lao authorities the great importance the President and the American people attach to obtaining the best accounting possible for the Americans listed as missing or dead in Laos. The Chairman stated that the Commission would welcome any definite information or remains the Lao may have on these men, and indicated U.S. willingness to cooperate fully with the Lao in casualty resolution. He expressed the hope that the two parties could agree, during the Commission's visit, on an orderly procedure to resolve the issue. He noted to all the Lao leaders that progress on this issue would be a significant step toward improvement of U.S.-Lao relations.

The Lao expressed to the Commission their sympathy with the MIA families and their wish to relieve the latter's suffering. They noted the great difficulty of finding MIA information and remains in the rugged terrain of Laos, particularly given the country's small population and lack of material means. The Lao did assure the Commission that there are no Americans who have been captured and are alive in

Laos, and that all Americans captured during the war had been returned to the U.S. They stated that the Lao Government had ordered before, and will now order again, the people of Laos to seek information and remains. But they regretted that they had no such information or remains now to provide the Commission.

In both formal and informal meetings, responsible Lao officials agreed to receive further MIA case files, as well as other material that we could provide to assist their search. Commission members stressed that we understood the difficulties involved in Laos and were realistic in our expectations of what information could be developed. The Commission nevertheless emphasized the importance of all information, such as aircraft tail numbers, ID cards, dog tags, and even partial remains, as being helpful to the United States.

The Lao made clear to the Commission that they connected the MIA problem with that of U.S. assistance to “heal the wounds of war” and rebuild their country. They expressed the belief that the two problems should be resolved together, since both resulted from the war. They noted that if one speaks of humanitarian concern for the MIA’s, one must also think of the damage Laos suffered at U.S. hands during the war. They said the Lao people could be expected to search for MIA information only when they see that the U.S. Government is interested in healing this damage and helping reconstruct the country. In more general terms, they indicated that the MIA problem can be resolved when there is a new relationship between the two countries and when U.S. policy has changed from hostility to friendship.

The Commission was informed during its visit of the problem of unexploded ordnance in Laos. The UNHCR representative in Vientiane, who recently visited the Plain of Jars, reported that 15 persons had been killed during the past year in one village of 3400 people by such unexploded war materiel. The Commission believes the U.S. could provide advice and technical assistance on how to defuse such ordnance, and that the American people would understand and support such an effort.

In this regard the Lao, in the formal talks, laid great emphasis on difficulties caused by what they termed “reactionaries” engaged in hostile activities against their government. They expressed particular concern at what they claimed was Thai hostility toward them and Thai support for anti-LPDR elements both within Laos and in Thailand. They noted that the previous U.S. administration had been hostile toward Laos, and charged that it had supported some of these elements. They said that in any case, the U.S. Government has provided aid to the Thai, thus enabling the latter to support such elements. They expressed the belief that the U.S. should resolve this problem in order to provide a new atmosphere for relations between Laos and the U.S.



The Commission assured the Lao that the U.S. has no hostile intentions toward them and does not support elements hostile to the LPDR either within Laos or outside the country. Senator Mansfield made a particularly forceful rebuttal of the Lao charges, based on his experience and previous visits to Laos. The Lao took careful note of these assurances, and both President Souphanouvong and Minister Phoune welcomed them as an indication of a new attitude on the part of the U.S. Government toward their country.

The Commission concludes from its visit to Laos that the Lao probably have considerably less information on MIA's than the Vietnamese, and are less able to develop additional information or locate remains. They probably could produce some, however, and could gather more if they so desired. For example, there are a very few MIA's who were known to be in Lao hands in the 1960's and there are recent reports of scattered aircraft parts in the countryside which may resolve a few more cases.

The Commission feels that this will most likely happen in the context of a general improvement of relations with Laos. The Commission's visit helped considerably in this regard, not only as a demonstration of the new Administration's interest, but also as a means of assuring the Lao that we have no hostile intent toward them. The Commission took note of the formal LPDR statement that no Americans are alive and prisoner in Laos, which though tragic seems true in light of all the evidence available. The Commission finds encouraging the Lao expression of willingness to accept further case files and other materials from us, and to cooperate more closely with us through our embassy on the MIA problem. Thus, while disappointed that it was not able to obtain further information and remains from the Lao during its visit, the Commission feels the trip was worthwhile in that it set a new tone for U.S.-Lao relations, emphasized to the Lao the importance we continue to attach to the MIA issue, and helped establish procedures for obtaining further information. One press report after the Commission's departure indicated that the Lao were setting up a committee to search for information, though this could not be confirmed at time of writing.

#### *V. Cambodia*

Due to the current lack of communication between the U.S. and the Cambodian Government and the apparent unsettled situation in Phnom Penh, the Commission decided it was best not to try to go to the Cambodian capital. Instead, it was decided to attempt to arrange a contact with an Ambassador of Democratic Cambodia at a location in Southeast Asia. It was hoped that should such a meeting be possible, it would be a significant first step toward opening a dialogue with this



new government, thus possibly improving our chances of obtaining information on those missing or killed in Cambodia, including the 25 journalists of various nationalities (four of whom are Americans). A representative of our Liaison Office in Peking delivered a formal request for such a meeting to the Democratic Cambodia Embassy in Peking.<sup>17</sup>

On March 19 Radio Phnom Penh carried the text of a press communique issued by the Cambodian Foreign Ministry refusing our request and hurling harsh invective at the U.S. (the text is attached).<sup>18</sup> The Commission therefore was unable to meet with any representatives of the Cambodian government and was unable to provide any information about our people missing or killed there.

#### VI. *Press*

American media viewed the Commission's trip as a major news event. The MIA issue was still generating widespread interest, the prospects for normalization reflected a significant foreign affairs initiative, and a visit to Hanoi, the first by American newsmen in five years, offered obvious human interest angles.

At the Commission's request, the State Department called Vietnamese attention to our media's strong interest in the visit and sought approval for their entry. Despite our effort to increase the number, the Vietnamese approved only five, who were selected by the State Department Correspondents' Association. NBC's John Hart served as pool reporter for American television and radio networks; CBS's Willis Brown was the pool TV cameraman. *Time Magazine's* Strobe Talbott represented the American news-magazines. AP's Peter Arnett and UPI's Richard Growald served their own companies.

Because the Vietnamese insisted that our press accompany the Commission, the trip proved unusual. Aboard the plane throughout the 24,000 mile journey, the press, the Commission and the staff mixed freely. Both in Hanoi and Vientiane, the press was considered part of the delegation, was housed and ate with the Commission and staff, and attended all events except the talks themselves. The accessibility and frankness of the Commission with the press comported with the American public's great interest in the mission, and reflected the openness which characterizes the Administration's approach to public affairs.

---

<sup>17</sup> The request was delivered via telegram 467 from Beijing, March 14. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840084–2065, N770002–0062)

<sup>18</sup> Not attached.

American media coverage for the Commission was extensive, both in print and broadcasts. The Commission believes the public has received a fair and full account of its activities which should aid in developing the public support necessary for future Administration actions. A continuation of this openness is recommended as we move ahead.

The Vietnamese developed a fine appreciation of the importance of the American media during the war and afforded our accompanying press unusual cooperation. Special interviews were provided to them by the Vietnamese Prime Minister and the Deputy Foreign Minister for Press and Information.

In their meeting with the latter, the newsmen requested approval to remain in Vietnam to cover developments in greater detail. They were told that adequate facilities were not available at this time, but the Deputy Foreign Minister also pointed out that while over the years there had been about a dozen American newsmen in Hanoi, no Vietnamese journalists had ever been to the United States. The American newsmen offered to initiate an invitation. Should the Vietnamese seek visas as a result of this invitation, it will present the Administration with an opportunity to make a meaningful positive gesture by permitting them entry into the U.S. Although the Vietnamese media obviously reflect the constraints of a communist society, reciprocal visits would be in the interests of the normalization process generally.

While in Hanoi the American newsmen were usually free to walk around the immediate downtown area. At first, this had to be done in the company of English-speaking guides, but this gradually eased and enterprising newsmen found themselves able to explore their own interests on their own, when they chose to do so—within the obvious limits of language, and lack of familiarity with the local scene.

#### *VII. Military Support for the Commission*

Military support for the Commission was excellent. In addition to arranging briefings in Washington and Honolulu, the Defense Department and military services provided excellent transportation and billeting arrangements. Both the VC-135 which carried the Commission to the Philippines and the C-141 for the trip to Indochina were well equipped for the extensive work which was done on board. Arrangements at CINCPAC and Clark Air Base were also fully satisfactory.

#### *VIII. Commission's Conclusions*

##### *Missing in Action*

Although the Commission was able to obtain only the 12 remains as well as information on Tucker Gougelmann and a promise to deliver another set of remains during its brief stay, the Commission's visit did

appear to create a new and favorable climate for improved relations with both Vietnam and Laos. In the Commission's view, the best hope for obtaining a proper accounting for our MIA's lies in the context of such improved relations. The Commission believes that the creation of this new spirit is the most significant contribution to the accomplishment of the mission assigned it by the President.

The Commission also believes it impressed upon the Vietnamese and Lao our realistic attitude on the MIA issue and our intention to resolve it on a reasonable basis in order to remove it as an obstacle to normalization. The Commission believes this approach is more likely to elicit further information and remains than continuing past policies of confronting the Vietnamese and Lao on the issue.

On the basis of its talks with Vietnamese and Laos officials at the highest level, and on other information available to it, the Commission specifically concludes:

1. There is no evidence to indicate that any American POW's from the Indochina conflict remain alive.

2. Americans who stayed in Vietnam after April 30, 1975, who registered with the Foreign Ministry and wished to leave have probably all been allowed to depart the country.

3. Although there continue to be occasional rumors of deserters or defectors still living in Indochina, the Commission found no evidence to support this conjecture.

4. The Vietnamese have not given us all the information they probably have, in part because of their concentration on the return of remains. The Commission believes it succeeded in making clear to the Vietnamese the importance we attach to receiving all kinds of information, however slight or fragmentary it may be.

5. The Vietnamese gave a clear formal assurance that they would look for MIA information and remains and that they would provide such information and remains to the U.S. They did not make this specifically contingent on our provision of aid, but they do see action on MIA's as related to resolution of other issues of concern to them.

6. For reasons of terrain, climate, circumstances of loss, and passage of time, it is probable that no accounting will ever be possible for most of the Americans lost in Indochina. Even where information may once have been available, it may no longer be recoverable due to the ravages of time and physical changes.

7. A new procedure has been established for the continuing exchange of MIA information between the U.S. and the SRV. The U.S. will use this mechanism to furnish additional information and materials to assist MIA searches.

8. The Lao authorities called attention to the difficulty of MIA search efforts in view of the difficult terrain in their country, but undertook to provide information and remains as they were found.

9. The Commission was unable to meet with representatives of the Cambodian Government. That government has repeatedly denied that it holds any foreign prisoners, and the Commission considers it unlikely that additional MIA information will be forthcoming from that country.

#### *Normalization of Relations*

1. Both the Vietnamese and Lao leaders are clearly interested in establishing a new and friendlier relationship with the United States.

2. They indicate that they are willing to look to the future rather than the past in such a relationship, although they consider that the U.S. has remaining obligation to repair the damage caused by the war in their countries. This is likely to continue to be an important factor in working out new or improved relations with these two countries.

3. Both Vietnam and Laos have a clear interest in such a new relationship. Vietnam in particular apparently looks forward to benefits in such matters as trade and other long-term economic arrangements.

4. The Vietnamese are willing to enter into immediate high-level diplomatic discussions with the U.S. on normalization. They made clear their interest in establishing formal diplomatic relations as quickly as possible. They indicated their desire to see past "erroneous" U.S. policies on such matters as UN membership and the trade embargo changed.

5. Both the Vietnamese and Lao leaders appear to view the present U.S. intentions toward them as more positive than in the past. They have a positive attitude themselves toward the new U.S. administration. They were pleased to understand that the U.S. is prepared to deal with them on the basis of equality and mutual respect, and that the U.S. has an interest in the stability and prosperity of Southeast Asia.

6. The Lao appreciated the Commission's assurances that the U.S. government has no hostile intentions toward their regime and is not supporting elements trying to overthrow it, but they are likely to remain sensitive and suspicious as long as indigenous insurgent activity continues to give them significant problems.

#### *Economic and Humanitarian Assistance*

1. The Vietnamese clearly expect a significant U.S. contribution to their postwar economic reconstruction.

2. At the same time they indicated flexibility about the form this aid might take and the basis on which it could be given. They listed concessional aid, bilateral aid, multilateral aid and long term loans as forms of aid which have been discussed in the past, although they did

not specify which of these they preferred or whether any one form alone would be acceptable.

3. The Vietnamese seem prepared to deemphasize references to this aid as coming from U.S. obligations under the Paris Agreement. This remains clearly their own position, but they appear willing to discuss aid instead in humanitarian and moral terms. They indicated that they understand our domestic political constraints on this issue.

4. While not specifically linking provisions of U.S. aid to either an MIA accounting or normalization, the Vietnamese stated that these three issues are “inter-related” and indicated that they would expect both sides to take actions regarding the other’s concerns. They did state that none of these three issues was a precondition to the other two. Nonetheless, it remains to be seen how forthcoming the Vietnamese may be in accounting for the MIA’s if the U.S. does not take some steps on aid.

#### *IX. Recommendations*

1. The Commission believes that resumption of talks in Paris between representatives of the U.S. and Vietnamese governments would be a most useful way of continuing the dialogue begun during its mission to Hanoi.

2. The Commission believes that normalization of relations affords the best prospect for obtaining a fuller accounting for our missing personnel and recommends that the normalization process be pursued vigorously for this as well as other reasons.

3. The Commission believes it most important to continue the technical exchanges with the Vietnamese Agency on Accounting for MIA’s which were initiated in Hanoi.

4. In addition to talks in Paris, consideration should be given to proposing that a U.S. representative personally bring such information to Hanoi, and to inviting Vietnamese representatives to visit the U.S. Central Identification Laboratory in Honolulu.

5. In view of the Vietnamese statements that they would be glad to receive material assistance to aid their search for U.S. remains, the Commission recommends that this subject be considered promptly within the U.S. Government with a view to quickly providing whatever assistance is appropriate.

6. Consideration should also be given to offering technical advice and assistance on defusing unexploded ordnance, which the Commission understands continues to be a serious problem in some areas. An international agency such as UNHCR could be helpful in arrangements for providing such information.

7. Another possible action would be to encourage private American groups to increase humanitarian aid programs for Indochina, in such areas as food and medical supplies, including prosthetic equipment.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> For President Carter's March 23 statement to reporters on the Commission's report, see *Public Papers: Carter, 1977*, Book I, pp. 489–490.

---

**9. Memorandum From Michael Armacost of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 12, 1977

SUBJECT

U.S.-SRV Negotiations in Paris

We have been talking with the people at State in recent days about the strategy we should adopt in the Paris negotiations with the Vietnamese. As you know, we have proposed that these talks resume on May 3 with Dick Holbrooke as our representative.

Our objective in the discussions will be to seek the establishment of normal diplomatic relations with Vietnam, together with continuing movement on the MIA issue. Diplomatic relations would include an exchange of embassies and normal trade, travel, and exchange between the two countries.

In talks with the Vietnamese, we believe establishment of relations should not carry the U.S. obligation or promise of economic aid. Therefore, a negotiating objective will be to separate the aid question from that of normalizing relations and to place it in the category of a long-term issue to be discussed after relations are established.

Our negotiating approach will therefore be to:

—Begin the talks with an offer to establish diplomatic relations without pre-conditions;

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 85, Vietnam, 1/77–12/78. Top Secret. Sent for information. Brzezinski wrote, "Fine. ZB," at the top of the first page.

—Combine the offer with the removal of our objection to Vietnamese membership in the U.N.;

—Indicate that we intend to lift our trade embargo as soon as embassies are established in both capitals (this latter point is designed to avoid a repetition of Japan's experience of having Vietnam frustrate its desire to open an embassy until it had signed a forthcoming aid agreement).

The Vietnamese will surely raise the issue of aid at the outset. I expect they will insist that some action on aid precede full normalization. I think we should respond to this by reiterating the President's stated desire to look ahead and his rejection of U.S. responsibilities for reparations or a U.S. apology. We would also emphasize that the Congressional restrictions on aid cannot be realistically removed unless normal diplomatic relations have been established. Privately, we would presumably indicate to the Vietnamese that they would never have a better chance to normalize with us, considering the current open attitude of the Administration toward them.

Our current thinking is that if the Vietnamese reject this proposal after one-or-two additional meetings, we might wish to leave further sessions in abeyance while both sides reconsider. We would then be in a positive public position of having offered full diplomatic trade relations and withdrawn our objection to U.N. membership, and could afford to wait Hanoi out a while to see if they would adopt a more reasonable position.

While we want to establish diplomatic relations, we have no serious need for rapid movement. A measured pace would probably best suit our interests at home and in Southeast Asia. Eventually Hanoi may come to see its interests in trade and other interests as outweighing its ideological needs.

There are two possible drawbacks. Unless we receive other additional MIA information, this could be interpreted as going somewhat farther than the President's public position—namely, that if the Vietnamese show good faith in the negotiations and try to help us on the MIAs, *then* we would move to normalize. Second, it leaves us nothing to offer except aid, should the Vietnamese refuse our proposal.

If you have any serious misgivings about this approach, I will be happy to raise them with State before they send over a formal proposal.

## 10. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to President Carter<sup>1</sup>

Washington, April 27, 1977

### SUBJECT

US-Vietnamese Talks in Paris

Dick Holbrooke will be leaving Sunday<sup>2</sup> to start talks with the Vietnamese in Paris May 3. Arrangements have proceeded smoothly so far.

Our objective will be to establish relations as soon as possible, leaving certain other issues for later resolution once we have embassies operating. We do not wish to see this become another drawn-out "Paris round" such as the one I lived through in 1968–69.<sup>3</sup>

There are a number of major issues which we will have to discuss during this first session. Subject to your confirmation, I believe we should adopt positions on them along the following lines, as consistent with your views and our overall foreign policy interests.

—*Basic Position*: Our position, in essence, would be to remove at the outset our objections to UN membership (Andy Young agrees); to continue our quest for MIA information; to offer to establish diplomatic relations and embassies as soon as possible; and to lift the trade embargo once embassies are in place. (This will preserve leverage for what other countries establishing relations with Hanoi have found can be a long and difficult wrangle, following agreement in principle to establish relations.)<sup>4</sup>

—*Aid*: We will not offer aid. We will point out legislative restrictions on such aid, note your own public statements that we owe no debt or "reparations" to the Vietnamese and, if necessary, reiterate our view that we have no further obligations under the Paris Accord. Without making any commitment, we will note if pressed the possibility of eventual unspecified humanitarian assistance if and as relations develop satisfactorily (and Congressional attitudes improve).<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 85, Vietnam, 1/77–12/78. Secret; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> May 1.

<sup>3</sup> For documentation on these Paris negotiations, see *Foreign Relations*, 1964–1968, vol. VII, Vietnam, September 1968–January 1969.

<sup>4</sup> Carter wrote "OK" in the left-hand margin adjacent to this paragraph.

<sup>5</sup> Carter wrote "OK" in the left-hand margin adjacent to this paragraph.



—*Claims and Assets*: We will say that agreement on U.S. private and official claims on Vietnam and unfreezing Vietnamese assets in the U.S. will be a time-consuming process which should follow rather than precede the establishment of embassies.<sup>6</sup>

—*SRV Actions in Southeast Asia*: We will make clear that we consider Vietnamese behavior toward their non-communist neighbors a matter of continuing concern in our relations with Hanoi.<sup>7</sup>

—*Human Rights*: While we do not intend to raise this formally in our initial presentation, we will find the opportunity either informally or in response to Vietnamese remarks to make known the Administration's position on human rights and indicate that this will have to be taken into account as our relations proceed.

This approach may not be accepted by the Vietnamese, who will probably still link diplomatic relations and aid. In such a case we would have established a strong and plausible public position on which we can stand comfortably. In time, the Vietnamese may decide that the tangible benefits of trade warrant reconsideration of their position.

*Recommendation:*

That you approve the policy positions set forth above.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Carter wrote "OK" in the left-hand margin adjacent to this paragraph.

<sup>7</sup> Carter wrote "OK" in the left-hand margin adjacent to this paragraph.

<sup>8</sup> Carter checked the approve option. Next to the other option, he wrote, "Minimize press statements—avoid excessive expectations." He initialed "J.C." below the options.

## 11. Telegram From the Embassy in France to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Paris, May 3, 1977, 1523Z

12924. From Assistant Secretary Holbrooke. Dept pass White House. Subj: US/VN Relations: First Meeting With Vietnamese.

1. Meeting lasted three and one-half hours, at Vietnamese Embassy. Following are highlights and our initial comments on meeting. Full report will follow.<sup>2</sup>

2. As previously agreed, Holbrooke opened with prepared remarks which conveyed our proposal to establish relations and exchange Embassies. Phan Hien then asked series of questions that focused on our sincerity in wanting normal relations and whether or not we would provide aid. He also asked what President Carter had in mind in regard to joint exploitation of oil resources in area.

3. In response, Holbrooke assured Vietnamese of President's sincerity re normal relations and cited congressional and other prohibitions on aid. He stressed present state of US public opinion on issue and fact that there were certain things that the President could not do in any case without congressional approval. At this point he also told Hien that we would no longer object to UN membership for SRV, and that trade embargo would be lifted when diplomatic relations were established and Embassies set up in both capitals.

4. During tea break which followed, Hien said that "we must find imaginative ways to solve problem of aid." Hien suggested that we could make secret agreement or understanding on aid as part of overall package deal which included UN membership, trade embargo, diplomatic relations, and MIA's. Holbrooke replied that "secret deals" are out of the question and that this administration considers congressional involvement not only unavoidable but desirable.

5. Hien returned to this theme after tea break. He also noted that UN issue was now resolved, but asked why we were withholding lifting of trade embargo until after establishment of Embassies. He suggested that trade embargo be lifted immediately. He said that since Woodcock Commission had visited Hanoi, SRV had made additional efforts to meet US concerns on MIA issue, and that the SRV would now increase their efforts further. (In tea break conversations, Frank

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968–1991, Lot 94D430, Box 17652, VN Talks—Telegrams, Reports. Secret; Flash; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> In telegram 13027 from Paris, May 4, the Embassy provided the full report of the meeting. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, N770003–0158)

Sieverts continued discussions on this matter, which will be subject of a separate telegram.)<sup>3</sup> Hien said that SRV could do even more, but this was related to our efforts on aid. He said his country wanted diplomatic relations, but that it would be very difficult for the American flag to fly in Hanoi over an Embassy until we had given some aid to Vietnam. He did not at this session refer to an aid obligation or to reparations or to the Paris Accords, or to any specific amounts but he repeatedly returned to the importance of this issue to his country. Holbrooke stressed again that President Carter wished to put the past behind us and move forward, and that this could best be done by a few simple steps that could be taken now.

6. Hien never directly accepted or rejected any of our proposals. He suggested meeting tomorrow<sup>4</sup> for his more considered statement (he characterized his comments today as “preliminary”). It seems unlikely that he will have new instructions by tomorrow, although it is not impossible. If he does not, then we propose to proceed as follows on several important issues:

A. Trade Embargo. We see no need to indicate we will lift the embargo immediately. Our present position gives us some leverage and is a reasonable one. Trade and diplomatic relations should go together.

B. Aid. On question of aid, we said today that while we understand their desire for reconstruction aid and their view of responsibility for providing it, a large number of Americans and members of Congress do not share this view which is based on past history. Their view is, rather, reflected clearly in current legislative prohibitions on aid, and the President’s position is also clear. Holbrooke added, “President has indicated willingness to look to future re relationships with Vietnam, including economic relationships, and we believe focussing on mutual efforts in this direction will be beneficial for both sides.” We noted private humanitarian assistance as well as US contributions to international organizations aiding Vietnam. We noted that President Carter has instructed USG to interpose no further objections to such multi-lateral aid.<sup>5</sup> We noted that “as relations develop, there is always the possibility that changing attitudes will lead to changes in present legislative and policy restrictions so as to permit modest amounts of other types of assistance, in keeping with US humanitarian traditions.” It seems clear that Hien is asking for some sort of commitment (in private if that is the best he can get) that we would go to Congress for some as yet undefined amount of aid. Unless otherwise advised, we will

---

<sup>3</sup> See Document 12.

<sup>4</sup> See Document 13.

<sup>5</sup> Not further identified.

simply repeat tomorrow, in as forceful a way as possible, what we said today.

C. Establishment of Diplomatic Relations. This is a tricky tactical question. It seems unlikely that Hien will accept our proposal tomorrow, but he will certainly not reject it. If he does not agree, we propose that we leave our offer on the table, and indicate that we are ready to return to Paris whenever his government wishes to begin discussions leading to the establishment of diplomatic relations. If he offers to establish relations without agreeing on Embassies, we will indicate that it has been consistent US practice that establishment of relations includes early exchange of Embassies.

D. Public Statements. We recommend that we explain to the Vietnamese that we must make public the general nature of our position, while avoiding details. We should make public fact that we have removed US veto of SRV membership in UN. We must be prepared if we follow this course to state publicly that we are satisfied that procedures now in train will lead to resolution of MIA question. In regard to all of foregoing, we urge special attention to congressional consultation.

9. We await further instructions as appropriate on above.

**Gammon**

---

## **12. Telegram From the Embassy in France to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Paris, May 3, 1977, 1611Z

12934. Subj: Vietnam Talks: MIAs.

Summary: MIAs and recovery of remains were discussed by both sides as a subject on which progress was continuing. Vietnamese cited presence of Vu Hoang, Director of their MIA agency, as indication of their goodwill on this subject. Vu Hoang and Sieverts held substantive discussion, and Vu Hoang accepted further letter and dossiers<sup>2</sup> in continuation of "permanent mechanism" established by Woodcock Commission. End Summary.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968–1991, Lot 94D430, Box 17652, VN Talks—Telegrams, Reports. Confidential; Immediate; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

1. Holbrooke and Phan Hien each referred several times to MIAs and recovery of remains. Holbrooke stressed importance of continued progress in this area, for its own sake and as essential element in normalization process. Phan Hien noted MIAs were one of the three main points covered in the Aide-Memoire given to Woodcock Commission,<sup>3</sup> and that “the process on this subject has started and is developing favorably,” although he noted this subject remains “interrelated” with other subjects such as diplomatic relations and US aid.

2. Phan Hien said his government would further intensify its efforts to seek MIA info and remains, but that the two mistakes that had been made in identification of the 12 remains had caused complications for them.<sup>4</sup> He said a major effort was being made to recover the Eaton and Golberg remains,<sup>5</sup> and that dozens of graves were being excavated in the process, which was causing some difficulties in light of traditional Vietnamese customs and attitudes on this subject, and in view of the amount of effort and expense involved.

3. On this note he again stated that the subject could not be separated from the question of a US contribution to healing the wounds of war, not in the sense of “bargaining,” but because the Vietnamese people being asked to help with the search effort would ask what the US was doing to help Vietnam.

4. Phan Hien called special attention to presence of Vu Hoang, the senior Hanoi official responsible for MIA efforts, and Frank Sieverts’ counterpart for exchange of MIA information, who had accompanied Pham Van Dong too and who had remained for these talks at Hien’s specific direction. Hien noted that Hoang and Sieverts were in frequent communication, and that the mechanism for exchange of MIA info discussed with the Woodcock Commission was “developing favorably.”

5. Sieverts and Hoang had extended private discussion covering number of questions raised in their correspondence. Highlights of Hoang’s answers were: (A) He confirmed that Tucker Gougelmann’s and Lt. Fryer’s<sup>6</sup> remains would be returned soon. (B) The search was continuing for other remains, including Eaton and Golberg, and it was hoped other remains would be recovered by the time the Gougelmann remains were ready to exhume. (C) Efforts were underway to find information on the cases already received. Hoang said the info was

---

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 14, Document 8.

<sup>4</sup> See “2 Returned by Hanoi Misidentified,” *New York Times*, March 24, 1977, p. A12, and “Error Found with Returned M.I.A.,” *New York Times*, March 25, 1977, p. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Two of the remains returned by the Vietnamese were mistakenly identified as those of Colonel Curtis A. Eaton and Captain Lawrence H. Golberg.

<sup>6</sup> Lieutenant Bennie L. Fryer.

usefully presented and said he would be glad to receive more cases. (D) Hoang said he understood the importance of so stating in cases where no information could be found. (E) Possibility of Tucker Gougelmann's adopted family coming to the US when his remains are returned was being looked into. Saigon authorities were in the process of contacting the family on this subject. (F) Vu Hoang appreciated the invitation to visit the Central Identification Lab and JCRC in Hawaii and said if he accepted he would want to bring some of his specialists along. If such a trip should take place, it might be possible to do so in conjunction with the return of the Vietnamese remains from the CIL. (G) Vu Hoang asked again about the possibility of material aid for their search effort. He said he had received the US Army publication on "Identification of Remains" and noted that in addition to providing useful info, the publication also referred to equipment and materials needed for search and identification. Sieverts said this was a subject that could be discussed during a visit to the CIL. (H) Hoang confirmed that henceforth the public identification of remains would be withheld until identities had been confirmed at the CIL. (I) Sieverts gave Hoang further letter as part of their continuing exchange summarizing several of the above points and conveying additional dossiers on Eaton, Golberg, and 12 other specific cases in North and South Vietnam.

6. Comment: Although the SRV clearly still hopes the MIA issue can be used to influence a US decision on reconstruction aid, they appear to have decided to have the search effort go forward with at least a modest degree of effort, and to return remains as they are actually recovered. They appear to be pleased with the Sieverts-Hoang "permanent mechanism" for exchange of information, as evidenced by Hien's favorable reference to it and by the decision to keep Hoang in Paris for these talks.

**Gammon**

**13. Telegram From the Embassy in France to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Paris, May 4, 1977, 1539Z

13101. Subject: US-SRV Talks: May 4 Session: Flash Report. Ref: Paris 13027.<sup>2</sup>

1. Second session of this round produced no further movement on part of Vietnamese. They neither accepted nor rejected our proposal for establishing relations and exchange of Embassies, stating their view that they consider the three problems of MIAs, US “contribution to healing wounds of war,” and normalization of relations as interrelated. They asked for immediate removal of our trade embargo.

2. US side reiterated our proposal and President’s position on question of direct official aid to Vietnam, citing other means by which US resources already are going to SRV (i.e. via private and multilateral channels latter expressly without any further US objections) or could go (i.e. through commercial channels once embargo is lifted). We also expressed appreciation for progress on MIAs so far and indicated that we consider continued movement as integral part of any new relationship.

3. Phan Hien said US aid would stimulate further the process of MIA accounting and at some point Vietnam will have basically fulfilled its responsibility on MIAs. He said next “phase,” process of US aid, should now begin. These would in turn stimulate 3rd process, i.e. normalization. He read into record the “shopping list” of suggested aid items originally given to Woodcock in Hanoi. Hien said SRV had never used the term “war reparations,” only “US contribution to healing war wounds and to postwar reconstruction.”

4. During break Holbrooke told Hien that now was time to seize initiative, if political circumstances were not to change and reduce possibility of movement. Hien replied he needed to be able to tell Hanoi roughly what aid levels we might be willing to agree to after normalization, even if figure is kept secret. Holbrooke said this was out of the question. On future meetings, Hien said he would want to consult with Pham Van Dong in Moscow first. It was agreed to meet again in about two weeks.

5. Following break, Holbrooke summarized positions of each side. Both he and Hien agreed that each side understood the other’s position

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968–1991, Lot 94D430, Box 17652, VN Talks—Telegrams, Reports. Secret; Immediate; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 2, Document 11.

and that there was unanimity on the important objective of normalization.

6. Discussion ensued of press handling following meeting, with working out of language for possible joint statement<sup>3</sup> to be made at press conference later in afternoon. (See septel.)

7. During this final exchange a few interesting items emerged. Hien showed particular concern with way we would handle press queries on aid. He indicated that a completely closed door response would make it more difficult for Hanoi to move. In response to final question on whether there was a difference in Vietnamese eyes between normalization and the establishment of diplomatic relations, Hien indicated that "normalization" was the process, establishment of relations the end result of that process. Holbrooke said the two were the same to us.

**Gammon**

---

<sup>3</sup> No joint statement was issued. In telegram 13210 from Paris, May 5, the Embassy transmitted the text of the May 4 American press conference. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770157-0497)

---

#### **14. Telegram From the Embassy in France to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Paris, June 3, 1977, 0621Z

16317. Subj: US/VN Talks: Summary of June 2 Meeting. Ref: Paris 16225.<sup>2</sup>

1. Vietnamese delegation was greeted by small 25-person demonstration upon arrival at Embassy. Ethnic Vietnamese demonstrators were peaceful and had already handed petition to Embassy representative demanding that Vietnamese Government abide by UN human

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850071-1788, N770003-0637. Secret; Immediate; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> In telegram 16225, from Paris, June 2, the Embassy provided a summary of the June 2 meeting with the Vietnamese. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850071-1763 and N770003-0630)



rights charter<sup>3</sup> and free religious figures allegedly held in prison. Press coverage of above as well as Vietnamese entry into Embassy was extensive and early wire service stories highlighted the demonstration.

2. Holbrooke began formal session by inviting Phan Hien to speak first. Latter began with pointed remarks regarding “unhelpful” public statements by US officials following first round of talks. Citing Holbrooke pledge not to let anything occur publicly which would unfavorably impact on the talks, Hien singled out Secretary Vance’s May 4 statement as particularly unhelpful.<sup>4</sup> Arguing that such statements by administration officials tend to harden opposition to aid within the Congress, Hien hinted that administration might be actively working to create unfavorable conditions. He cited our release of Nixon-Pham Van Dong letter<sup>5</sup> in close conjunction with Lester Wolff’s statement and Nixon letter to Wolff<sup>6</sup> as further indications of this problem. He added that Hanoi’s making public of additional documents was merely in reply to our release of the Nixon message and warned that Vietnamese still have a number of other documents which they will make public “when necessary”. Examples are Kissinger-Le Duc Tho communications on aid.

3. Hien then turned to lengthy discussion of validity of Nixon letter in rebuttal to US public statements that it is now only a historical curiosity. He stressed that the message was from the highest ranking representative of the USG to the highest ranking Vietnamese official and, therefore, a commitment of the greatest importance which cannot be simply ignored by succeeding administrations. Turning to the question of requirement of legislative action to implement “commitments” in the Nixon message, Hien indicated this is exclusively internal US problem in which the Vietnamese have no interest.

4. Turning next to normalization of relations, Hien reiterated Vietnamese readiness to have a new long-term relationship with US but restated their position that outstanding problems must be resolved first. Without directly acknowledging our original proposals to establish relations, Hien stated that the Vietnamese people could not understand

---

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. See *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1948–1949, pp. 524–553.

<sup>4</sup> See “Secretary Vance’s News Conference of May 4,” Department of State *Bulletin*, May 23, 1977, pp. 515–516.

<sup>5</sup> The Department released Nixon’s February 1, 1973, letter on May 19. See “Former President Nixon’s Message to Prime Minister Pham Van Dong,” Department of State *Bulletin*, June 27, 1977, pp. 674–675. See also footnote 15, Document 8.

<sup>6</sup> Nixon’s letter to Wolff is dated May 14, 1977. See “Text of Announcement by State Department and Two Nixon Letters,” *New York Times*, May 20, 1977, p. 17. For Wolff’s statement, see Graham Hovey, “He Calls ’73 Pledge of Aid to Hanoi Invalid,” *New York Times*, May 20, 1977, p. A1.

presence of American Ambassador and diplomats in Hanoi if US had not yet made a contribution to post-war reconstruction. He then made somewhat impassioned statement regarding continued existence of destruction and personal tragedies left over from the war, adding that if we don't do anything to heal these wounds, it would be very hard to do anything else. In his view "sooner or later there will be assistance;" and, therefore, "it would be more beneficial to do it now." Alluding to our often-stated problem of popular and congressional opposition to aid, Hien said that if there are people who do not understand this obligation, we must explain it to them. He also indirectly dismissed the problem of US acknowledging war guilt by providing aid by saying that we should allow each individual to have his own view regarding this and "let history be the judge."

5. Having outlined need for further progress in resolving overall problem, Hien then stated that he would provide US with a draft of a joint communique or agreement embodying the following points:

1) Vietnamese side would provide information on 20 additional cases of American MIA's and redouble its efforts to gather additional information;

2) The US would contribute to healing the wounds of war and post-war reconstruction in the following amounts—\$3.25 billion over the next five years and \$1–1.5 billion in other forms of aid. Of this the US would immediately provide \$500 million of goods to Vietnam on an emergency basis;

3) The two countries would agree to establish diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level.

6. Hien explained that their proposal made no reference to Article 21 of the Paris Accord or Nixon letter because "they understood" our difficulty regarding an aid demand based specifically on them. He then argued that the amount requested is actually small when compared to the huge amounts spent by the US in "devastating and destroying Vietnam and in supporting the Saigon administration." He indicated that the communique or agreement could be signed in Paris or, if we preferred, any other place including Hanoi or Washington. Hien ended his presentation by handing over an aide memoire<sup>7</sup> embodying the main points of his statement along with a copy of the aide memoire provided to the Woodcock Commission March 18 on economic questions.<sup>8</sup>

7. Holbrooke's response began by addressing events which occurred between the two meetings. He countered Vietnamese charge

<sup>7</sup> Not found.

<sup>8</sup> See footnote 14, Document 8.

that US “propaganda” is unhelpful by stating we were disturbed by some of the comments and commentaries carried in Vietnamese media during the same period. He noted that these propaganda statements have produced a wave of indignation, concern and opposition in Congress which has made it more difficult for us to realize our mutual goals. Stressing that we read very carefully what Radio Hanoi and *Nhan Dan* say, Holbrooke then showed Hien a list of 14 major Hanoi commentaries made over the last month which carried adverse comments about the US position. Holbrooke noted that he was called on the telephone by Members of Congress or called up to testify before committees of the Congress on the meaning of these verbal attacks.

8. Turning to the Nixon letter, Holbrooke noted that we had not discussed it in the conference room but that Hanoi was the one who had chosen to make it public initially and Hien raised it in his press conference May 4. Holbrooke stressed that we had released full text of letter in order to clear up misunderstandings which had arisen and to end unhelpful speculations which otherwise would have increased and adversely affected our negotiations. Rejecting Hien’s charge that administration had possibly colluded with Nixon and Members of the Congress to undercut talks, Holbrooke remarked that Nixon and Kissinger now speak only for themselves and that individual members of the Congress speak only for their constituencies and not for the administration. He added that administration has no control whatsoever over the statements of any member of Congress and obviously not over Nixon or Kissinger.

9. Holbrooke then noted the difference between the copies of the Nixon message which we had released and Vietnamese copy which did not include addendum regarding necessity to adhere to constitutional processes while fulfilling the agreement. Holbrooke asked Hien for explanation and latter replied that Vietnamese considered this note to be merely a unilateral expression of American understanding and therefore not something to which they need reply. Since no reply was necessary, they felt it acceptable to leave it out when publishing the letter. Hien explained further that in 1973 the two sides had discussed the Nixon message in draft and that the Vietnamese had objected to inclusion of the paragraph on adherence to constitutional processes. As a result, he said, the US transmitted it to the Vietnamese as a unilateral understanding. He explained further that Dong had replied to the Nixon message as well as to the “note” containing the “pledge” of 1–1.5 billion dollars of additional aid. He did not, however, refer to the US understanding and therefore the Vietnamese concluded that they need only make public those parts of the message to which a reply was sent.

10. Holbrooke replied that all of the discussions in the newspapers and Congress regarding the Nixon message have made it more difficult

for us to move forward and make progress in healing wounds of war. Holbrooke then noted that Congressman Wolff plans hearings on events surrounding the letter and will call US officials like George Aldrich to address the problem of the two versions of the letter not being identical. Stressing that our release of the Nixon/Dong letter was not intentionally linked to other publicity surrounding it, Holbrooke stressed that the Carter administration had no choice but to make it public since SRV had already referred to it and Nixon had posed no objections to its release.

11. Holbrooke reiterated the point that Congress speaks with an independent voice but emphasized that in our current negotiations we must agree to things which the Congress will support. Otherwise the administration will be repudiated by the American people. Holbrooke then noted this is time for special leadership and courage such as that displayed by President Carter on changing US position on Vietnamese UN membership<sup>9</sup> and removing other restrictions on our relationship. He then turned to Vietnam proposal that US provide almost \$5 billion of aid, terming it unrealistic "since neither American people nor the new President nor Congress are willing to accept such a request as basis for new relationship with your country."

12. Alluding to Vietnamese provision of new MIA information, Holbrooke labeled it encouraging and expressed US appreciation for those additional concrete results. He then asked Phan Hien his understanding that this information will be transmitted to us right away. Phan Hien nodded yes and shortly thereafter member of SRV delegation Vu Hoang presented list of names and other information to us.

13. Holbrooke then enumerated various steps US has taken to express new and positive attitude towards Vietnam, such as UN admission, abolition of travel restrictions to Vietnam,<sup>10</sup> and different approach toward SRV participation in various international organizations. He reiterated US readiness to remove US restrictions on trade as soon as Embassies are established. He cautioned that if we do not take this opportunity now to move ahead, it may be lost for sometime to come.

14. Hien made short rejoinder emphasizing that Hanoi had made numerous public statements only in reply to US propaganda initiative. He again argued that unhelpful statements by administration spokesmen had been largely responsible for adverse reaction House of Representatives. Citing the 2/3s vote against Vietnam on the Ashbrook amend-

---

<sup>9</sup> Vietnam became a member of the United Nations on September 20. See *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1977, pp. 370-371.

<sup>10</sup> See *Congress and the Nation*, vol. 5, 1977-1980, p. 57.

ment,<sup>11</sup> Hien argued that if the administration would make strong statements in support of aid to Vietnam, then outcome would be much different. Holbrooke replied by emphasizing that administration officials had told Members of the Congress that some present resolutions are not helpful.

15. Turning to US references to Hanoi media blasts, Hien stated that we should only consider official statements issued by the Foreign Ministry as being definitive SRV position. He added that on the matter of publication of various Nixon documents, this was to show the American public that there is a legal commitment which cannot be ignored.

16. Holbrooke urged Hien to recognize that Nixon communication to Dong must be considered in context of the way commitments are made in the US. If Congress does not provide the money then aid does not exist. Turning to the present, Holbrooke stressed that Congress has said clearly that they will not give the kind of money mentioned in the Nixon letter. He urged that they recognize this reality and take it into account as we continue to talk.

17. Hien said that in 1973 Kissinger had told Le Duc Tho that he would seek opinion of Chairman and members of House Appropriations Committee regarding the “commitments” in the Nixon letter. Hien again noted SRV view that question of congressional/executive relations is essentially internal matter of concern only to the US. Hien said present problem is that US must honor commitment to make a contribution. As to the forms and measures, Hanoi is prepared to be flexible and help solve US difficulties. He described problem facing SRV if no contribution is forthcoming. He alleged that upon his recent trip to Hanoi he had urged SRV MIA office to increase its efforts with the result that information on 20 new cases is available today. He stressed, however, that given statements and actions in the US during this period, it was not easy to achieve these results and it will be very hard to push these people again if no contribution is forthcoming.

18. Holbrooke then suggested break during which he took Hien aside to emphasize the necessity to understand the US position on aid and to urge that he communicate this clearly to his government. Holbrooke also explained how public statements by Hanoi regarding a US “obligation” to provide aid only serves to inflame feelings and worsen the prospects for successful talks.

19. Hien used tea break to probe further on possible indirect ways of providing US aid to Vietnam. He asked specifically whether it was possible for US to provide significant additional assistance through

---

<sup>11</sup> The amendment to the Foreign Relations Authorization Bill banned the use of funds for reparations to Vietnam.

international organizations and also inquired about food aid on “emergency” basis. Legal obstacles to such aid were explained to him. Amounts of aid already going to Vietnam via international agencies and financial institutions were also discussed.

20. Formal meeting did not resume after break. Both sides agreed to meet again at US Embassy on June 3rd at 0930.

**Gammon**

---

**15. Telegram From the Embassy in France to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Paris, June 3, 1977, 1950Z

16472. Subj: US/SRV Talks: June 3 Meeting.

1. Holbrooke opened the second meeting at American Embassy by saying we welcome information provided on the 20 MIAs and indicating that continued progress on this matter is important concern to US. He then repeated US willingness to receive Vietnamese representatives at Identification Laboratory in Honolulu and noted our additional appreciation for their providing us unidentified remains in accordance with Woodcock Commission request.<sup>2</sup>

2. Turning to Vietnamese “joint communique”,<sup>3</sup> Holbrooke made clear that we could not make any commitment on any amount of money such as was proposed in point two. Stating that while we understood the Vietnamese view regarding our “obligation” to provide aid, he emphasized that this view is not shared by the President, the Congress or a great majority of Americans. He doubted that economic demands based on the past will ever be acceptable to the American people.

3. He then indicated American willingness to look to the future in terms of any eventual economic relationship and diplomatic relations, emphasizing that the two sides must recognize the positive elements of the present situation and take those steps which are now possible. To this end, Holbrooke added, the US has proposed establishing diplo-

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850071-1773 and N770003-0643. Secret; Immediate; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 8.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 14.

matic relations and exchanging Embassies—which US believes is the best way to move ahead to resolve issues remaining between us.

4. Phan Hien began lengthy response by regretting that 30 days had transpired since last meeting<sup>4</sup> but US had not put forth anything new. He emphasized positive steps Hanoi had taken on providing information on 20 additional cases and putting forward overall solution in communique which he had full powers to sign with us now. This was in marked contrast to US lack of specific initiatives and actions. Claiming that SRV proposed communique is realistic and just, Hien said it represented only way for US to enter into long-term friendly relations with Vietnam. He began point by point enumeration of communique, asking rhetorically whether the US agreed with each or not. He presumed that US would generally agree with point 1 on MIA's.

5. On point two Hien began by saying Hanoi is prepared to be flexible on stating the exact amounts of aid desired and in response to Holbrooke statement that figures were obviously taken from Nixon's 1973 letter, said that Hanoi could change the numbers to make it easier for US. Hien reiterated Vietnamese readiness to assist US find appropriate forms and means to provide aid and added that Vietnamese are also prepared to accomplish those steps which can be taken this year and leave next year those which are more difficult.

6. Turning to question of US embargo, Hien cited recent communications from US business representatives inquiring about possibilities of trading with Hanoi. He argued that US embargo hurts only US companies since Vietnam can find [garble—sources?] in other places for all of their trade needs.

7. Moving on to point three, Hien noted that both sides have stated often that diplomatic relations should be established at the ambassadorial level. Hien then calculated that the US agreed to two of their three points in the communique—those which he felt were favorable to the US—but rejected that which addressed SRV interests.

8. Hien cited difficulty he will face in Hanoi when he reports US rejection of SRV draft. Given recent "efforts" to obtain information on the 20 MIA cases, US rejection will have effect of pouring cold water on that process. Hien ended presentation with call for renewed efforts to overcome these remaining difficulties.

9. Holbrooke disagreed with Hien's characterization of US response as having thrown cold water on their actions. Noting Vietnamese positive actions on MIAs, Holbrooke also charged that SRV had not begun to discuss in concrete terms proposals that US made in first round. He then added that US actions should not be viewed in context of what

---

<sup>4</sup> See Documents 11–13.



was done in past 30 days but rather in terms of changes that had taken place since January 20. He enumerated positive US actions such as on UN admission, lifting travel restriction, new attitude regarding SRV participation in IFIs, and US willingness to establish immediate diplomatic relations and lift trade embargo.

10. Turning to SRV aid request, Holbrooke noted this has made situation more difficult for US since Hanoi has now asked for specific amount of money which US cannot provide by law. Holbrooke then moved to point 3 and asked, in view of Hien's statement that we both agree on this as a goal, whether we can announce today that we have agreed to establish diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level. He then added US view that diplomatic relations are of mutual benefit to both countries. Turning to the trade embargo, Holbrooke again posed question whether US lifting of embargo prior to establishing of diplomatic relations would change anything on the part of the Vietnamese Government.

11. After summing up US position that US: agrees to the point SRV put forward on MIAs; appreciates step SRV has taken on MIAs; is prepared for diplomatic relations; but cannot accept at this time agreement concerning economic assistance, Holbrooke read to Hien text of amendment which Congressman Young is planning to introduce which would forbid all direct or indirect aid to Vietnam as well as funds channeled through or administered by international organizations.<sup>5</sup> Holbrooke stressed that administration will oppose this proposal but noted it is an expression of some of the opinion with which we must deal.

12. Hien repeated charge that US has not put forward anything new while Vietnamese have taken positive step on 20 MIAs even though atmosphere was dampened by unfavorable congressional resolutions and adverse publicity surrounding release of the Nixon message. He dismissed US unilateral actions on UN, travel restrictions etc., as being of the past and indicated lack of clarity regarding US position on SRV participation in IFIs. He asked what this means in concrete terms.

13. Holbrooke responded briefly by saying we had given Vietnamese great deal at last meeting and that we are still waiting for them to discuss details on our own proposal.

14. Phan Hien attempted to provide mathematical analysis of US position on SRV proposal. Assigning each point in the communique a numerical value of one, and agreeing that establishing diplomatic relations would be equally advantageous to both sides, Hien calculated the US to be seeking unfair advantages in its bargaining position by a

---

<sup>5</sup> See *Congress and the Nation*, vol. 5, 1977–1980, pp. 60–61.



score of one and a half to a half. Holbrooke upset Hien's calculations by noting that we had given them one additional unit of value when we removed our objections from UN membership.

15. Dropping mathematical approach to negotiations, Hien turned to US statement that American law prevented us from addressing aid question. Hien asked us to imagine what would happen if SRV National Assembly promulgated a law prohibiting further search for MIA information due to lack of US response. From this he deduced that discussions of each others' laws introduces difficulty into negotiations and urged that we instead follow international law.

16. Holbrooke responded by emphasizing differences between US system of government and Vietnamese unitary one. Hien rejoined that Holbrooke's understanding of Vietnamese system is not correct and that National Assembly holds real power over issuing laws. For example, he noted necessity for Assembly approval for recent extension of territorial sea and Vietnamese adherence to 1973 Paris Agreement.

17. Indirectly replying to Holbrooke's question of whether Hien was ready to agree today to announcing normalization of relations, Hien asked if Holbrooke agreed with point 2. If so, he was ready to make public points 2 and 3 but added saying that "there could never be 3 without 2." Holbrooke then retorted by asking whether SRV really thought US could accept point 2 when it was proposed. Hien again avoided direct response by returning question as to how US would like to see point 2 worded and urged that we make proposal.

18. Holbrooke cautioned that if American public were to learn that US was discussing request for such a large amount of money, adverse reaction would wipe out all the goodwill created by MIA gesture. Hien accepted Holbrooke assessment of American opinion but countered with observation that world opinion was important in negotiating process and it would be on the side of SRV. Then apparently accepting fact that no agreement could be reached on SRV communique, Hien noted that we must give careful thought to finding a way to continue progress and urged us to seriously consider SRV proposals and to explain to the Congress difficulties involved.

19. He then returned to Holbrooke's question regarding lifting of embargo. Characterizing it as an illegal matter which should be immediately abolished, Hien replied that its immediate removal would produce ability for two countries to trade normally and would be a good sign that the US was giving up an old policy. He concluded by arguing that politically and economically the embargo removal is advantageous to the US since it would encourage Vietnamese in search of MIA information and would allow US companies to do business.

20. Finally Hien asked what he was to say to his leaders in Hanoi when he returned "with an empty suitcase" after having brought the

20 new MIA cases to us in Paris. Holbrooke responded by urging Hien to inform his government that: the US Del comes with the goodwill and sincerity of the President; that we will operate in accordance with our laws; that we appreciate movement on MIAs; that we have made important progress in the Paris meetings; and that President Carter and Secretary Vance have taken forthcoming position towards SRV at considerable political risk because they believe it the right thing to do. Holbrooke added caveat that if we do not move forward now, we will be pushed backwards. He again pushed Hien's question of immediate announcement of establishment of diplomatic relations by asking him if he feels we could take that step today. Hien's response was "with point 2". Holbrooke then said we must agree to disagree and repeated caution regarding the publication of SRV draft communique and adverse reaction which could be expected in the US upon publication.

21. Alluding to Vietnamese push on US "obligations", Holbrooke noted that our view of the past differs from Hien's but that it does us no good to debate again the questions associated with the war. He noted that SRV proposal is in fact based on the situation in the past—a situation far different from what exists today. He urged that we not debate it but rather talk about how we deal with the future.

22. Meeting then turned to discussion of what would be said to the press and what information would be made public. Holbrooke again reiterated US advice not to make public existence of SRV communique because of unhelpful consequences in US. Actual press statement reported septel.<sup>6</sup>

23. Following discussion of press handling, Hien made additional comments on Holbrooke's ideas for his report to Hanoi. Emphasizing that he would indeed pass on Holbrooke's points to his leaders, he cautioned that they would ask him what new initiatives and positions the Americans had put forward or what actions US had taken. Hien concluded that situation can not move forward rapidly because the US has work to do with the Congress. He noted Vietnamese willingness to provide assistance in this regard when possible but considered US dealing with Congress an internal US affair.

24. Meeting then turned to discussion of time and place for next session. Hien asked Holbrooke for his suggestions and himself noted that any place in US is fine except Washington because "it is too soon" for him to go there. Noting that Paris would again be acceptable, Hien asked if Holbrooke wished to go to Hanoi. If so he would report

---

<sup>6</sup> Telegram 16360 from Paris, June 3. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770198-0715) The statement is printed in Department of State *Bulletin*, June 27, 1977, p. 675.

this to his government, which would probably extend an invitation. Holbrooke expressed uncertainty as to whether USG would give permission for such a trip but indicated that he would report Hien's comments and discuss it with the Secretary. Holbrooke then added that he thought one month would be the approximate time. Hien noted some scheduling conflicts of his which might necessitate moving meeting til the end of July. Holbrooke replied that August was probably not possible for him. Date and timing was finally left open with agreement that the two sides would be in touch about it. At this point Holbrooke suggested a tea break to be followed by both sides going out to meet the press.

25. During the break, Holbrooke discussed further with Hien the importance of informing his government fully of administration's intention to persevere in seeking normalization and the political problems it must deal with in doing so. Holbrooke asked Hien what we should do re MIAs in Laos, since our efforts there so far had produced nothing. Hien responded that Lao Government was flexible and should be approached in the context of a general improvement of relations. He said perhaps we should advise Thai to restrain some of their officials from supporting hostile acts against Laos. Holbrooke took this occasion to state strongly that the US is not involved in any hostile activities against Laos or any other countries in the region. Hien then raised question of Vietnamese-Thai relations and said SRV was ready to resume talks with Thai on normalization. He stated that talks could take place through respective Embassies in Vientiane as soon as Thai name Ambassador or sufficiently high-ranking Charge there. He said SRV wanted good relations on basis of their 4 points, to which Thai internal affairs. In response to Holbrooke's query, Hien agreed that US could pass this along to Thai.

26. Following the break Holbrooke and Hien met briefly with reporters. Statements reported septel.<sup>7</sup>

**Gammon**

---

<sup>7</sup> Telegram 16470 from Paris, June 3, reported the transcripts of Holbrooke's and Hien's statements. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770198–1030)

## 16. Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>

RPM 77-10243

Washington, September 21, 1977

### SUBJECT

Human Rights Violations in Cambodia

1. Our information on the harsh policies of the communist regime in Cambodia comes almost entirely from refugees. While their accounts undoubtedly are somewhat exaggerated, there have been enough reports from diverse groups over a period of time to provide a mosaic we find credible.

2. The death toll from war, executions, and disease is impossible to calculate. It is doubtful that even the Phnom Penh regime has a remotely accurate figure. Estimates by journalists and scholars range from half a million to 1.2 million deaths since the communist take-over in April 1975. Although there were widespread executions among selected sectors of society—members of the former government and armed forces and well educated professionals—most of the deaths were from the extreme privation caused by the massive relocation of the population in initial post-war period.

3. By the end of the first year of communist rule, Cambodian life had settled down into the spartan and rigidly disciplined mold imposed by the new rulers in Phnom Penh. The population shifts appeared to be completed with the populace resettled in agricultural communes. In the past year there have been few reports of executions other than those related to attempted escapes across the Thai border or political discord within the communist organization.

4. Although our information is sketchy, a purge apparently took place in northwestern Cambodia this past spring, the first we have heard of since the communist regime came to power. According to reports from refugees and defectors, there were mass arrests of party and military leaders in March and April. Many officials, accused of being Thai or American agents, were said to have been executed.

5. A wrap-up on conditions in Cambodia after a year of communist rule was produced in CIA about a year ago.<sup>2</sup> Since conditions appear to have changed very little since then, we have attached a copy of that article, which you may find useful.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 80T00071A: Production Case Files, Box 9, Folder 6: Human Rights Violations in Cambodia. Secret; [handling restriction not declassified]. Drafted in the Directorate of Intelligence.

<sup>2</sup> Attached but not printed is a June 29, 1976, paper entitled "Cambodia: The First Year."

## 17. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

New York, September 30, 1977

### PARTICIPANTS

#### *SRV side*

Nguyen Co Thach, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs  
Cu Dinh Ba, Counsellor, SRV UN Mission  
Ha Huy Tam, 2nd Secretary and Interpreter

#### *US side*

Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs  
Kenneth M. Quinn, Special Assistant to Mr. Holbrooke  
Timothy Carney, Acting Country Director  
Judith Johnson, Notetaker

*THACH*: I speak English very badly. Mr. Tam will translate. (The meeting continued in Vietnamese and English with Tam interpreting.)

Today we are very glad to receive you here. Mr. Phan Hien has talked to me very much about you. Phan Hien has good memories about you. Of course, the issue has not yet been fully settled but relations between the two persons are good. Yesterday Mr. Ngo Dien let me know you had the desire to meet me. That is why today I arranged time to meet you. I am ready to hear anything you have to say to me. Of course, I want to hear pleasant words.

*HOLBROOKE*: I am very glad we could find time to meet today. In my view it is not important who asked for the meeting, but what is said in the meeting. Yesterday I had a very friendly and useful exchange<sup>2</sup> of views with Mr. Ngo Dien during which I outlined some views which concerned our immediate relations and some longer-range concerns of our policy in Asia.

*T*: I have been informed of this by Mr. Ngo Dien.

*H*: In addition, in May and June I had 14 hours of extremely useful exchanges with Mr. Phan Hien.<sup>3</sup> And I appreciate your words concerning our personal relationship. I share those views entirely. Since I spoke yesterday at length, perhaps you would like to comment on those views, since Ngo Dien said that I would receive a reply at a later date.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968–1991, Lot 94D430, Box 17652, Transcript: 1977–1978 Nguyen C. Thach—Richard Holbrooke. Secret; Nodis. The meeting took place in the SRV Mission to the United Nations.

<sup>2</sup> No memorandum of conversation of this meeting has been found.

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 11–15.

*T:* I must say that it is quite strange, a surprise, what I heard from Mr. Ngo Dien from the talks yesterday. I do not want in our first meeting that we talk unsatisfactory words.

It surprises me because you wanted to meet us, and not us you. In Paris you put up to us the question of this meeting. You said you had three alternatives of meetings: 1) a meeting between the two Ministers; 2) a meeting between Ministers accompanied by Mr. Habib and on our side Mr. Nguyen Co Thach; and 3) the third possibility, a meeting between Mr. Habib and myself. We put the question as to why we did not choose to meet Mr. Habib? And why we did not choose the meeting of the two Ministers accompanied by their two assistants? The reason is that if now a meeting is held between Habib and me it is just like a meeting between Mr. Holbrooke and Mr. Phan Hien. The questions cannot be settled because the persons of Holbrooke and Phan Hien cannot settle it. It means we cannot settle the question. I think that this is not the case. On the contrary, Mr. Phan Hien told me that Mr. Holbrooke is a person we can speak to. So we think that if the meeting is held on the one hand between Holbrooke and Phan Hien or on the other hand between Habib and Nguyen Co Thach, then it is really at the same level. There is no difference between the two alternatives. Why should we replace a meeting between Phan Hien and Holbrooke with a meeting between Habib and Nguyen Co Thach? Could it be because Phan Hien and Holbrooke couldn't settle the problem? No, we don't think so. We think that now a meeting between the two Ministers at high level to settle the deadlock is the right thing. And if you have anything new, that would be a good thing. Otherwise the two sides may just meet and clarify their positions. That too would be a good thing. But it is not our request. You requested this meeting. (I ask) whether or not there is anything new for our side.

I am a man who is very straightforward and Americans who negotiated with me know this. I think Kissinger and Sullivan have that impression. That is why I want to say straight-forwardly . . . I want to clarify this thing. I regret that the first things we say to each other are very unpleasant, but I hope you understand. If it helps us to understand one another our meeting will be very useful. I want to add our Minister is very unsatisfied.

*H:* Mr. Minister, you have the reputation among Americans you have dealt with of being very frank, very direct. Today you have proved it to me.

*T:* I thought we demonstrated that to you.

*H:* The next time I see Ambassador Sullivan or Mr. Kissinger I will tell them you are the same—just as direct as ever.

I am a little unclear on what you have said. I would like to ask my associate to help me clarify it.

(Holbrooke and Quinn then conferred.)

Is his (Mr. Quinn's) Vietnamese very good?

QUINN: (In Vietnamese) It's not so much.

T: It is very good.

H: I think that we have two questions we should be discussing. One is whether or not our two Ministers will meet each other in New York during the General Assembly. That is a question which I think should be settled by the two Ministers. I understand your position as you have explained it to me.

The other question is that of a much broader relationship between our two countries. Here I am fully authorized by the President and the Secretary of State to discuss our position with you and explain and clarify the position we have taken in the past. If you will permit me I would like to add a few comments to what I have said in the past to Mr. Phan Hien and Mr. Ngo Dien.

T: Now about the first question. I have a question. I have already referred to the three possibilities which you mentioned in Paris. Before raising three possibilities that you raised in Paris, we put this question and you yourself answered the question. That is why you met with us in Paris: to have this meeting in New York, to have a meeting between our two Ministers in New York. So now, if you put the question of whether to have a meeting here, you put the cart before the horse. Because you thought it useful then, you raised it in Paris. Also we replied to you that we will have that meeting. We also thought the meeting would be useful and said we were ready. If we had had in mind that it would not be useful, we would not have been ready to agree to a meeting.

As for the second question, we are ready to hear you. We can spare the whole afternoon to receive you.

H: On the first question, I believe I understand your view more clearly now and I want to repeat it to be sure I understand exactly what you said.

You were saying that during our meetings in Paris I indicated to Phan Hien that there might be a continuation of our meetings in New York at one of three levels. You further understood that I proposed either the level of the Foreign Ministers, the level of Habib and yourself, or finally a continuation of meetings between Phan Hien and myself.

T: I think there is some confusion here.

H: That is why I asked to repeat your statements to you.

T: Mr. Pratt, your first secretary in Paris, met Mr. Do Thanh.

H: Now I understand. This is what Mr. Pratt said to your Mr. Do Thanh.



*T:* Yes, at the beginning of September. (Thach then said in English: "In the first half of September.")

*H:* I understand, and I want to confirm what I understand your position is. I understand that you feel that the mid-level is not a useful level. If problems arise that Phan Hien and I cannot resolve then the Foreign Ministers would be the appropriate level for discussion. I understand your position quite well. If that is your position, I have nothing more I can say this afternoon on this position. If you will allow me to go on to the second position.

*T:* I have some more to say. We do not want to have the misunderstanding that Mr. Holbrooke and Mr. Phan Hien cannot settle the problem at their levels, and that Mr. Phan Hien and Mr. Holbrooke must be replaced by the Habib and Nguyen Co Thach level. This is a misunderstanding. We want to respect the talks between Phan Hien and Holbrooke.

*H:* I am glad we took all this time to go into it because now I will be able to explain your position more precisely.

Mr. Minister, this is the first time we have met. Since your reputation for frankness, clarity of thought and decisiveness is well known, allow me to make a few remarks to you about US-SRV relations.

First, I want to repeat to you our government's warm welcome to the United Nations and to welcome your permanent delegation to US soil.

*T:* Thank you.

*H:* It is a source of gratification to the most senior members of the US Government that this long and bitter issue is finally and completely resolved. I know that you noted Ambassador Young's welcoming speech. He is a member of the Cabinet of the United States Government. You also noted the presence of senior American officials at Secretary Waldheim's reception for the Vietnamese delegation.

*T:* We understand your goodwill.

*H:* I mentioned yesterday to Mr. Ngo Dien that the President would be in New York next week and would be hosting a luncheon for Asian heads of delegations and permanent representatives to the UN and that Mrs. Johnson had issued an invitation to the Vietnamese Mission in the President's name through Mr. Kiet.<sup>4</sup> Did you receive that invitation?

*T:* (Thach and Ha Huy Tam conferred) Yes, Mr. Kiet. This morning Mr. Thach was in a meeting of the non-aligned countries but our associates may know that.

---

<sup>4</sup> Not further identified.



*H:* The US Government hopes that we will have a sound working relationship with the Vietnamese delegation to the UN. We will approach that relationship in the spirit of goodwill and mutual benefit and respect.

I know that you have a very busy schedule at the UN. I believe that in making time for this meeting today both sides are demonstrating their desire for an improvement in the atmosphere and the substance of our relations. For our part, that is certainly the case.

As I explained to Mr. Ngo Dien yesterday, we very much want to continue fruitful productive contacts with Vietnam. In this respect the US Government believes that my talks with Mr. Phan Hien were successful in making progress on some issues and in coming to better understanding of the positions of both sides on other issues. At the same time, we want to try to make future meetings beneficial so that we can continue to improve our relations. We wish to avoid sterile exchanges or meetings which might in fact harm our developing relationship. It was for this reason, Mr. Minister, that I wrote to Vice Minister Phan Hien during the summer.<sup>5</sup> It was my feeling that another negotiating session at that time would have actually hurt our relations. This judgment was made on the basis of my assessment of the mood and situation that existed in the United States at that time—among American public opinion and in the Congress.

(The meeting was interrupted by a telephone call from Mr. Oakley for Mr. Holbrooke. Mr. Carney took the call in the next room and the meeting continued.)

*T:* How long can we continue?

*H:* As long as we have things to say. If we run out of time today I can find time to continue our discussions tomorrow.

*T:* I think your assessment this summer not to have further meetings at that time was correct because at that time you were making trips through Southeast Asia and to the ASEAN nations which were against Vietnam, and that is not conducive to our relations. You also helped those countries against us.

*H:* Let me be very frank, Mr. Minister. The reason I wrote my letter to Phan Hien had absolutely nothing to do with ASEAN. It was based on the domestic political mood, and the mood in this country. There is simply no possibility that it was related to ASEAN. As I told Mr. Ngo Dien yesterday, our policy in Southeast Asia is directed against no country.

---

<sup>5</sup> Telegram 148802 to Paris, June 26, contains the text of Holbrooke's letter to Hien. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850071-1814)

*T:* Your arms and ammunition are used now against Laos and Cambodia.

*H:* We are not at all involved in military activities now taking place along the Lao-Thai or the Thai-Cambodian borders. ASEAN is not a military alliance. SEATO, which was a military alliance, officially went out of business on June 30 of this year. There is no longer a SEATO headquarters in Bangkok. The United States Government was in favor of the end of SEATO. ASEAN is not a replacement for SEATO. ASEAN is an economic block of diverse countries of Southeast Asia. You have different relations with each of the countries of ASEAN. The United States has different relations with each of the countries of ASEAN. But we want friendly relations with all the countries of ASEAN and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. We pose no threat to Vietnam. President Carter has stated that and I can reaffirm that here.

Phan Hien raised in Paris the question of American involvement in activities along the Lao-Thai border. I told him then that we were not involved there but, when I returned to Washington, I called all the US Government agencies which operate in the area and verified that fact. I repeat again today that the United States is not involved in such activities nor does it encourage these activities. I would hope both the United States and Vietnam could encourage our respective friends—that is, for us the Thai, and for you the Lao Government—to exercise the same restraint which your government and mine are exercising.

We have recently completed the first US-ASEAN discussions ever held.<sup>6</sup> These discussions were conducted by Under Secretary Cooper and other associates of mine. These talks centered on economic assistance, trade, commodity controls and other economic issues. I can absolutely assure you that there was no discussion of any issues of a security nature. No American in our delegation had the authority or competence to discuss these issues. If you have any doubts on this matter, I would invite you to ask the Foreign Ministers or Finance Ministers of any of the five members of ASEAN.

Last week I was in Manila on a very different issue. The purpose of my meeting in Manila was to explore with the Government of the Philippines on what basis the U.S. military bases in the Philippines will remain.<sup>7</sup> We did not reach final decisions but we did agree to a process which both sides believe will result in a mutually satisfactory outcome. The United States has a long-standing treaty commitment to the Philippines and we have two important military installations there. These installations and this treaty commitment are for the defense of

---

<sup>6</sup> The first U.S.-ASEAN Dialogue took place in Manila September 8–10.

<sup>7</sup> See Document 300.

the Philippines. But they are not a threat to any other nation. I am aware of the fact that your nation may have some doubts about what I have just stated. But history and common sense should demonstrate that these bases will never be used in a way that would threaten Vietnam.

What we seek in Southeast Asia, in the aftermath of a long and bloody war, is a peaceful and stable region in which the nations of the area, having resolved their differences, can live in peace and harmony on the basis of respect for their independence, sovereignty and integrity. Mr. Minister, I want to stress, as I did yesterday to Mr. Ngo Dien, that we are ready to do what can be done to demonstrate that this is our policy in this region.

Yesterday, Mr. Minister, I mentioned to Mr. Ngo Dien the atmosphere that existed in the U.S. Congress, and I want to mention this point to you. Since I first met with Mr. Phan Hien in Paris on May 4, a large number of amendments and laws have been proposed in the Congress which are, frankly, designed not only to prevent any form of American assistance to Vietnam, but also to demonstrate the strong feelings of many congressmen and members of the American public. In my letter to Phan Hien and again yesterday in my conversation with Ngo Dien, I drew your Government's attention to the fact that the Administration has opposed as many of these amendments as it could. But we have not been entirely successful because of the strong mood that exists. In Paris in June I said to Vice Minister Phan Hien that I hoped that if we moved forward to establish diplomatic relations, the mutual act, which benefits both nations, would result in an improvement of the atmosphere and mood. Even now, as we are meeting here in New York, our Congress is considering additional amendments.

In summary, Mr. Minister, I want to reaffirm our Administration's goodwill and its willingness and desire to continue to improve our relations. We have demonstrated this goodwill by action and we hope that both sides can find ways to move forward together.

May I add one more thing? Mr. Quinn reminded me, and he is absolutely right, that at this very moment your Government is turning over to our representatives in Hanoi the remains of 22 Americans.<sup>8</sup> We appreciate this action and recognize it as a move to improve relations.

T: Thank you very much for your clarification. But it makes it harder to understand—I take note of what you said that you want to demonstrate goodwill to us. But the words expressed by you and the words expressed by the Foreign Minister of Thailand are different. Our

---

<sup>8</sup> See "Vietnam Returns the Remains of 22 Americans to U.S.," *New York Times*, October 1, 1977, p. 3.

Foreign Minister, the Vietnamese Foreign Minister, asked the Thai Foreign Minister why he always caused those activities against Laos and Kampuchea. He replied candidly that they are still imposed on by much pressure from outside. I don't know what this comes from. Just yesterday he said this.

*H:* Did the Thai Foreign Minister say to you that the U.S. is pushing them into border incidents?

*T:* No, but we don't know where the pressure comes from if not the U.S. because you still give military aid to Thailand. If you want to put an end to border incidents with Laos, end your military aid to Thailand. We don't want to have a military threat from your bases . . .<sup>9</sup>

*H:* (Interrupting) There are no American bases in Thailand.

*T:* I recall a story when I had negotiations with the Philippines. I asked the Philippines, "When are you asking the U.S. to dismantle American military bases in your land?" They said those bases do not threaten you, and I replied that 50 million tons of bombs and shells we are not afraid of so the bases in the Philippines we are not afraid of. My question was just to know whether the Philippines' "change their position" (said in English); whether they want friendship with us or whether they want to rely on foreign military aid to threaten us.

So I want to say that we do not fear the threat from you. But I want to know whether you have changed your position toward us.

I find that in your way of speaking, you think only on what *you* are interested in, but do not think about issues we are interested in. I think you understand the feelings of the Vietnamese people on the destruction caused by you. We understand the mood of the U.S. Congress, but you must understand the mood of the Vietnamese people. If both sides want to develop good-will, we will need to solve these problems.

You want to settle the question of MIA in a very good way. So, if the feelings of our people are on such a level and we cannot alleviate them, how can we settle it?

When Mr. Pratt raised with Mr. Do Thanh three alternatives of meetings, we also raised three possibilities of the meetings:

1. The two Foreign Ministers meet; they are able to settle the three problems that both sides are interested in;
2. A second possibility is that nothing could be settled;
3. If the three issues could not be settled, one small step, a small issue could be settled.

---

<sup>9</sup> In the margin adjacent to this paragraph, a notation in an unknown hand reads, "Grant MAP in 1978."

*H:* May I ask you a very frank question? If a meeting were held, do you see anything positive resulting from it?

*T:* Even the contact between the two ministers will be a good thing. Even if nothing is settled the two sides would understand better the positions.

*H:* I am just speaking hypothetically, but suppose the meetings gave the American Congress the idea that we were discussing something that the Congress is against. That would hurt our mutual objective because Congress would be angry.

*T:* As for that, we thought that you had it already in mind when you put forth the three levels of meetings. Because when you put forth three levels you must have thought of something favorable. We already thought you said that if the meetings were held in July or August, they would not be fruitful. So that is why I thought that some kind of favorable thing came up so you set forth the three levels. Maybe the Americans already had a careful thought and examination, so that is why they put forth those three levels.

And I think now that if . . . while the two ministers may meet . . . if all the three issues are not totally settled, your side may make some proposal to settle a small step that you have proposed in June in Paris. You proposed diplomatic relations and the settlement of the MIA issue. As for the assistance, it would be discussed later. That was already rejected. Now it is also rejected. Tomorrow and the day after, in the future, we will also reject it. If you have any other proposal, because you have a lot of imagination, so we would consider it, because the Americans have a good sense of imagination. But if the two sides meet and cannot settle anything, so that is still a good thing. But if you think that now is an unfavorable time, even though it is something you suggested, you can withdraw that suggestion. But if you think it is better that we meet, our Foreign Minister may postpone for some days his return to his country.

*H:* I must say frankly that this is a very difficult time. But I appreciate the spirit of frankness you have shown in your discussions with us today and I will report what you have said to the Secretary of State. I think this has been a very useful exchange today. I had heard about you Mr. Minister for some years and am happy to have met you at last.

I do believe it will take imagination, on both sides, for us to resolve the issues between us. Let me say with great frankness that it was an act of political courage of the President of the United States to send a mission to Hanoi; to send me to Paris; to remove certain restrictions on the movement of Vietnamese officials in New York; and, above all, to welcome your admission into the United Nations.

I would just like to close with one personal comment, and I would like you to think about my comment and to convey it to your Foreign

Minister. That is, I have known President Carter almost three years and I have heard him talk about the US involvement in Vietnam many times. He is the first President since before Harry Truman who has not been involved in an American involvement in Indochina. Furthermore, his past background shows clearly that he was not involved in the tragic events of the past. He approaches relations with Vietnam in a spirit of goodwill. He does not believe that the American people can accept an obligation based on an interpretation of the past, but he does remain ready to seek an improvement in relations between our countries based on mutual respect and mutual benefit. You or your representative will have a chance to see him personally in New York on Wednesday,<sup>10</sup> so you will be able to judge for yourself.

*T:* Concerning the matter that President Carter was not involved in Vietnam, that is a favorable thing. Secondly, concerning his personal character, he should have done more than he has done so far in regard to Vietnam.

*H:* Mr. Minister, we have done as much as we feel is possible.

*T:* As you know, no other nation is in a situation like ours. No other nation has had as heavy devastation. In history, no other nation had that kind of destruction. And then we organized the search for the remains of your MIA's. That also took great courage. That also takes great confidence from our people. There are places where the people ask why people are living in those circumstances; and why the government does not settle this; and why they have to look for the remains of the men who bombed our country? They raise the question of why the United States did not compensate us and why we are now looking for American remains? Millions of Vietnamese were killed in the war and we have not found their remains. This is hard for us to explain. We have goodwill, and we have great difficulties. You have goodwill and difficulties. Under those circumstances, do you think we may move somewhat forward? That is the question before us in a realistic way.

*H:* I will have to leave in a moment, Mr. Minister, but I would just like to say we believe we have put forward a way of making progress: to begin the process of normalizing relations; to begin building bridges that must exist between two countries.

*T:* So now I would like to repeat that our Foreign Minister will be here until October 4th. He will be here until October 4th in case you want to meet with him. I myself will be here for some time longer.

---

<sup>10</sup> October 5.

**18. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 1, 1977

**SUBJECT**

Holbrooke's Negotiating Instructions for His December 7, 1977 Meeting with the Vietnamese

Attached at Tab A is Secretary Vance's recommendations with regard to Vietnam. Holbrooke meets December 7 with the Vietnamese in Paris. The session grows out of his October 3 UNGA session with Hanoi Vice Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach.<sup>2</sup> At that time, Thach stated, "(A)bout relations between our country and your country, before reaching diplomatic relations there might be a step of another kind."

Please note that State recommends a shift from our previous position. State now proposes that in addition to our current offer (dropping of the embargo upon establishment of embassies) we provide a second alternative: opening of interest sections with no modification in the embargo.

My concern about State's recommendation is a very simple one: this initiative gains us nothing internationally, while conceivably costing us domestically. Accordingly, I would recommend no change in our position for the time being.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That you instruct the State Department to maintain our current negotiating position with respect to the Vietnamese (dropping of the embargo upon establishment of embassies).<sup>3</sup>

If, however, you decide to accept State's recommendation to provide the second alternative (opening of interest sections with no modification in the embargo), I have these recommendations for you to make to Vance concerning the Paris meeting:

1. That Holbrooke be encouraged not to be overly appreciative of any positive Vietnamese responses concerning the three American

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 85, Vietnam, 1/77–12/78. Secret. Sent for action. A stamped notation on the first page reads, "The President has seen."

<sup>2</sup> No memorandum of conversation of this meeting has been found, but a summary of the discussion is in telegram 238369/Tosec 100084 to Vance in New York, October 4. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P84072–1226)

<sup>3</sup> Carter checked the disapprove option.

yachtmen they now hold. We need not praise them for civilized behavior.<sup>4</sup>

2. That Holbrooke be encouraged not to table the interest section proposal if the Vietnamese abuse the United States in their initial presentation—something Hanoi is unlikely to do. It would be demeaning for us to be forthcoming a second time if the Vietnamese scorn us.<sup>5</sup>

3. That Holbrooke be encouraged clearly to leave the ball in Vietnam's court at the end of the meeting, by telling them we have now made two offers and we will meet with them when they are ready to accept one of our alternatives or have a concrete reasonable proposal to make of their own. I see no reason why the burden should always be ours to make the proposals.<sup>6</sup>

## Tab A

### Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to President Carter<sup>7</sup>

Washington, November 29, 1977

#### SUBJECT

US-Vietnamese Talks in Paris

Dick Holbrooke will be leaving for Paris Monday to begin the third round of normalization talks with the Vietnamese on December 7.<sup>8</sup> I do not expect this round of talks to reach agreement, but it is important to proceed with the discussions while protecting ourselves from any domestic repercussions.

Since the last meeting (June),<sup>9</sup> the Vietnamese have become more interested in improving relations with the U.S. In Holbrooke's secret meetings in New York, they suggested that we explore forms of representation short of full normalization (exchange of embassies), and asked us to use "imagination" in resolving our respective "political" difficulties. Without abandoning their position on aid, the Vietnamese now seem to recognize three things: that they will not get it; that they need

<sup>4</sup> See "U.S. Yacht Off Vietnam Apparently Seized," *New York Times*, October 14, 1977, p. 10. Carter checked the approved option.

<sup>5</sup> Carter checked the approve option.

<sup>6</sup> Carter checked the approve option and initialed below the final recommendation.

<sup>7</sup> Secret; Nodis.

<sup>8</sup> The meeting was rescheduled for December 19–20.

<sup>9</sup> See Documents 14 and 15.



a relationship far more than we do; and that we are under no domestic pressure to normalize.

There are, of course, serious problems with Congressional reaction to anything involving Vietnam and we do not wish to offer the Vietnamese concessions or modify substantially our basic position. However, it is important to keep open the possibility for progress in future meetings. Vietnam, the 16th most populous country in the world, is already a major factor in Southeast Asia, and it is not in our interest to slip back into the pattern of animosity which existed prior to January 20, and which our actions have somewhat reduced despite Congressional constraints. In preparing this memo, we took in-depth soundings with carefully selected members of Congress to determine possible reactions to various negotiating scenarios.

Subject to your confirmation, I believe Dick should negotiate along the following lines:

—*Basic Position*: We would repeat our earlier (and publicly-known) position: that we are ready to exchange Ambassadors and lift the trade embargo. We would continue to reject flatly the notion of an aid “obligation.” We would explain our problems with indirect aid and how we have chosen to deal with them.

—*Brillig*: If the case of the three young American yachtsmen held by Vietnam since October 12 is not on the way to resolution by the time talks begin, Dick would raise this matter in his initial statement. We are informing the Vietnamese in advance that this will be the first order of business, and that it seriously affects our relations. (We have had a number of Congressional queries on this.)

—*Levels of Representation*: While not accepting our position, the Vietnamese may respond with an offer to exchange trade offices or some non-diplomatic form of representation, presumably on condition that we lift the trade embargo. We would reject any such offer, but, subject to the qualification in the next paragraph, say we would consider establishment of (1) interests section or (2) consulates (both of which are important steps but short of full diplomatic relations) *without* lifting the embargo. It would be valuable to have a lesser form of representation in Hanoi as long as we maintain the embargo intact as a bargaining chip in moving up to embassy level later. It is likely that the Vietnamese will not accept this proposal, but if they reject it, we will have made a constructive proposal which leaves the door open to future discussion. Even if they were unexpectedly to indicate acceptance, we would make no announcement in Paris, but ask Dick to return to Washington for additional consultation with us and with Congress before deciding how best to make an announcement.

I prefer interests sections. Congress is accustomed to the idea of interests sections for countries where we consider the political relation-

ship not good enough to warrant an embassy. After the United States and several Arab countries broke diplomatic relations in 1967 (and Congress passed a resolution endorsing this break), the United States had an autonomous, fully operational interests section in Cairo until diplomatic relations were finally restored in 1974. We opened an autonomous interests section in Syria in 1974, followed by diplomatic relations. We have or have had interests sections in a number of other countries (including Cuba). There have been no negative Congressional reactions to any of these, including the Cuban arrangement.

Our consultations with the Hill indicate wide-spread support for this approach—in fact, it was preferred to our original offer by everyone we talked to because it did not yet lift the trade embargo and did not mean full recognition.

—MIAs: We will continue to press for more information. However, I do not expect the Vietnamese to give us much additional information at the next round.

*Recommendation:*

That you approve the negotiating strategy set forth above.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Carter checked the approve option and initialed below the recommendation. See Document 19.

**19. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to Secretary of State Vance<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 1, 1977

SUBJECT

U.S.-Vietnamese Talks in Paris

The President has approved the negotiating strategy set forth in your memorandum of November 29, 1977, entitled "U.S.-Vietnamese Talks in Paris."<sup>2</sup> In addition, the President has directed that Assistant Secretary Holbrooke be given the following instructions:

1. We should not be overly appreciative of any positive Vietnamese responses concerning the three American yachtsmen they now hold. We should not praise them for civilized behavior.

2. We should not table the interest section proposal if the Vietnamese abuse the United States in their initial presentation. It would be demeaning for us to be forthcoming a second time if the Vietnamese scorn us.

3. We should clearly leave the ball in Vietnam's court at the end of the meeting, by telling them we have now made two offers and we will meet with them when they are ready to accept one of our alternatives or have a concrete reasonable proposal to make of their own. The burden should not always be ours to make the proposals.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 85, Vietnam, 1/77–12/78. Secret.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 18.

## 20. Intelligence Assessment Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>

GC 78-10037

Washington, March 1978

### THE THAI-CAMBODIA BORDER: THE INSURGENCY FACTOR

#### Key Judgments

Since gaining control of Cambodia in April 1975, the new Khmer government has been involved in a series of border clashes with neighboring Thailand. The earliest incidents stemmed from problems encountered by the Khmer Communists in consolidating their control and from apparent misunderstandings over alignment of the border.<sup>2</sup> The continuation of the clashes, however, suggests that other and more deep-seated reasons are responsible for the ongoing border troubles.

- Recent official Thai and Cambodian statements that the border clashes stem primarily from demarcation problems are probably “for the record” only, to divert attention from other causes.

- [1½ lines not declassified] evidence, clearly show that most clashes are rooted in clandestine operations that each country uses to support dissidents in the other. Specifically:

- Clashes in the Watthana Corridor area and increasingly along the Dangrek Range almost certainly are linked in part with Cambodian operations supplying Thai Communist insurgents operating in Thailand’s Prachin Buri Province.

- Most clashes at points along the southern third of the boundary appear to be associated with Thai support of Khmer dissidents occasionally operating in Cambodia.

- Given the likelihood that both Bangkok and Phnom Penh will persist in supporting insurgents operating in each other’s territory, border clashes can be expected to continue; neither side, however, is likely to allow them to escalate into more serious confrontations.

[Omitted here is the body of the intelligence assessment.]

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Transnational Issues, Job 79T01050A: Production Files, Box 7, Folder 5. Secret; [handling restriction not declassified]. Prepared in the National Foreign Assessment Center.

<sup>2</sup> The appendix provides a detailed examination of the border and its alignment variations. [Footnote in the original.] The appendix is attached but not printed.

**21. Paper Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, March 8, 1978

*The Vietnam-Cambodian Conflict:* Vietnam's incursion into Cambodian territory in late December and early January was almost certainly meant to halt persistent Cambodian border provocations. By mid-January, most Vietnamese military units had withdrawn from Cambodia, and Cambodian forces had infiltrated back into Vietnamese territory at several points along the border. Continuing Cambodian aggressiveness has resulted in subsequent clashes, but since 5 February, when the Vietnamese proposed a three-point peace plan, hostilities have remained at a relatively low level.

The plan includes provisions for a five-kilometer withdrawal from the border by both sides, negotiations, and "an appropriate form of international guarantee and supervision." It has been rejected by Phnom Penh, but even without negotiations, tensions along the border could be eased if the Cambodians reduce their provocations.

The conflict has intensified Chinese-Soviet competition for influence in Indochina. Chinese political support and military aid to Cambodia has heightened Sino-Vietnamese friction, although Peking has tried to appear even-handed in public remarks on the current fighting. The Soviets, who have made gains politically in Hanoi primarily because they have been able to supply the Vietnamese with about twice the economic aid that the Chinese have provided since the end of the war, hope to exploit the situation for further gains.

Hanoi's effort to force the Cambodians to negotiate a settlement was clearly less decisive than the Vietnamese leaders had hoped, but there are major restraints on further military action. Renewed incursions into Cambodia would undermine Hanoi's diplomatic campaign to present itself as the aggrieved party and would aggravate suspicions of Vietnam that already exist in the region. More importantly, they could compel greater Chinese support for Phnom Penh, even further setting back prospects for improving Sino-Vietnamese relations.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Armacost Chron File, Far East, Box 6, 3/1–9/78. Secret; [handling restriction not declassified].

**22. Memorandum From Michel Oksenberg of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 18, 1978

SUBJECT

Statement on Human Rights in Cambodia

Lest I go down in your book as a person insensitive to the plight of my fellow man, let me raise briefly with you why I demonstrate particular hesitancy to speak out on the human rights situation in Cambodia. Perhaps my views reflect the fact I attended a Quaker college, where I learned that upon occasion quietness is the highest expression of morality.

The Cambodian situation poses profound moral problems for the U.S. I have no hesitancy for us speaking out boldly concerning the appalling human rights situation in Uganda or South Africa or Rhodesia. I look forward to the day when we can speak more forthrightly about the situation in the People's Republic of China. But in none of those instances can one so clearly link current human suffering to previous actions of the U.S.

However, Americans bear direct responsibility for the sufferings to which the Cambodians are now subjected. In May, 1970, we chose to involve the people of Cambodia more fully in the Indochinese War than they previously had been. Then, in mid-1973, when it no longer suited our purpose, we chose to abandon that military theatre and leave the populace vulnerable to the barbarism of those whose vindictiveness and strength our previous actions largely had engendered.

There is, therefore, a certain hypocrisy in our easily speaking up about human rights in Cambodia today. It is a cheap act. It ignores the past. When it proved too costly, we abandoned a self-assumed obligation to act on behalf of the people of Cambodia, though we knew the consequences of our leaving. Now, we wish to speak out—to indulge ourselves—when it will cost us little.

I believe that the defense of human rights is a privilege which irresponsible nations should not seek to exercise. We behaved irresponsibly in Cambodia. Since we helped cause what has transpired in Cam-

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 42, Kampuchea, 1/77–10/79. No classification marking. Sent for information. A copy was sent to Jessica Mathews. Oksenberg wrote at the top of the page, "Zbig—I hope you'll read this memo when you're in a reflective + quiet mood. I'd like you to ponder this memo before responding. Mike."

bodia, I am loath to see us adopt a position of smugness and self-righteousness through the issuance of statements about what transpires there now. Quietness *on this issue* out of a recognition of our own inadequacies there—an exercise of Christian humility if you will—seems more called for in this particular situation.

Since the Carter Administration wishes to exercise moral leadership—as I am proud it does—we must teach our people the *discipline of quietness*—of not speaking out in certain instances—as a way of reminding ourselves about the responsibility we bear as a nation when we do speak out. Without that sense of discipline and responsibility, our words will be meaningless, for there will be no commitment to act upon them.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Brzezinski wrote at the end of the memorandum, “I agree with most of what you say—but not the conclusion. Our complicity cannot become tantamount to acquiescence in what is happening now. Because America was silent about the pogroms in the late 30s, should it have been silent later? I think we have a *duty* to speak—and not all of us were involved in the Cambodian war decision.” Carter’s statement on human rights violations in Cambodia, April 21, is in *Public Papers: Carter, 1978*, Book I, pp. 767–768.

---

### 23. Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>

RPM 78–1017C

Washington, April 24, 1978

#### THE VIETNAM-CAMBODIA CONFLICT

Vietnam’s incursion into Cambodian territory in late December and early January was clearly meant to halt persistent Cambodian border provocations. Although the intensity of the border fighting has declined since mid-February, however, Hanoi’s efforts to shut off Cambodian probes across the border by military reprisals have thus far been ineffective. Since the withdrawal of Vietnam’s forces from the Parrot’s Beak and other Cambodian salients in January, there have been

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 80T00634A: Production Case Files, Box 13, [unfolded material]. Secret; [*handling restriction not declassified*]. Prepared in the National Foreign Assessment Center. A note on the first page indicates it was prepared by the East Asia-Pacific Division of the Office of Regional and Political Analysis.

repeated outbreaks of border fighting, with Phnom Penh stubbornly spurning Hanoi's entreaties to work out a diplomatic solution.

Vietnamese-Cambodian tensions are rooted in historical animosities, and reports of armed conflict between Viet Cong and Khmer Rouge forces date from the early 1970s, with bloody clashes definitely occurring by 1974, even while the war against the Lon Nol regime was still underway. When Phnom Penh fell in April 1975, Cambodia's xenophobic new leaders almost immediately ordered Vietnamese troops which had been based in Northeast Cambodia off their soil. By June, Vietnamese and Cambodian forces were fighting pitched battles over disputed border claims and off-shore islands. High-level Cambodian and Vietnamese delegations exchanged visits during the summer, but clashes continued into the fall, and to a lesser extent into 1976.

Cambodian forces apparently stepped up aggressive patrolling in areas of overlapping border claims in 1977. In May, reacting to Cambodian raids in the Mekong Delta area, the Vietnamese attacked Cambodian positions with artillery and air strikes. Vietnamese ground forces did not fare well against the Cambodians, however, and Cambodian shelling forced the evacuation of several Vietnamese towns near the border.

Cambodian attacks in mid-September inflicted heavy casualties on Vietnamese units. During October and November, as Cambodian forces penetrated as far as 10 kilometers into Vietnamese territory, Hanoi began moving crack combat units toward the Parrot's Beak area. Vietnamese officials also complained to foreign diplomats about the Cambodian incursions, setting the stage for strong retaliatory action.

That action came in early December when Vietnamese forces launched an offensive in the Parrot's Beak area. By the end of the month they had dislodged Cambodian units from most Vietnamese territory and had penetrated at least 20 kilometers into Cambodia. On 31 December the Cambodians announced that diplomatic ties with Hanoi were being temporarily severed, and on 3 January they said that they would not negotiate until Vietnamese forces were completely withdrawn from Cambodian territory.

Vietnamese infantry units, supported by armor and artillery, advanced rapidly into Cambodian territory in late December. The deepest penetrations were made along Route 1 in the Parrot's Beak (Svay Rieng Province) and Route 7, north of the Parrot's Beak. As Cambodian forces began to mount harassing attacks on the Vietnamese, they withdrew. In a move apparently planned from the beginning of the operation, most Vietnamese units were withdrawn to Vietnamese territory by mid-January. Hanoi may have intended to retain shallow buffer zones on Cambodian territory at some points along the border, but these may have been given up under Cambodian pressure. Cambodian



harassment tactics were effective, and Cambodian units crossed the border at numerous points to attack villages and shell Vietnamese cities. Vietnamese air strikes and ground attacks were used to clear Cambodian forces from the Ha Tien and Chau Doc areas in late January and early February.

The current situation: since 5 February, when the Vietnamese proposed a three-point peace plan, hostilities generally have remained at a relatively low level, but there have been occasional flare-ups of more serious fighting. Last month, for example, the Cambodians were reported to have temporarily captured Ha Tien, a border town on the Gulf of Thailand. Hanoi no doubt realized that its peace plan, which included provisions for a 5 kilometer pull back from the border by both sides and for “an appropriate form of international guarantee and supervision,” would be unacceptable to Phnom Penh, but wanted to force a Cambodian response and place the onus for any failure to reach a peaceful settlement on the Cambodians. Phnom Penh’s domestic radio rejected the plan on 7 February. Cambodian statements have continued to express defiance of Vietnamese military superiority, and have reflected no interest in alternative proposals. Even without negotiations or a formal settlement, however, tensions along the border could be eased if the Cambodians reduce their provocations.

The Chinese and Soviet connections: both China and the Soviet Union have competed for influence in Indochina since the end of the war in 1975. The recent outbreak of large-scale fighting has intensified this competition. Peking has lost some influence to Moscow in Vietnam since the end of the war, but the Chinese are striving to keep from losing more ground. Their effort is impeded, however, by their decision to firmly support Cambodia against Hanoi’s long-term effort to dominate it. Chinese political support and military aid—in the form of equipment and advisers who are training Cambodians, but not fighting alongside them—has heightened Sino-Vietnamese friction. Moscow obviously hopes to use the present situation to further exacerbate tensions between the Chinese and Vietnamese.

Peking is now confronted with a dilemma. Increased Chinese support of Phnom Penh reduces its influence in Hanoi, and ultimately could drive the Vietnamese to adopt an even stronger tilt toward Moscow. On the other hand, reducing support to Cambodia could weaken the Cambodians even further and erode their usefulness as the chief counterweight to Vietnam. Moreover, Vietnamese military successes, if sustained, make the Chinese look bad by exposing Peking’s ineffectiveness with Hanoi.

This dilemma is reflected in Peking’s policy of trying to appear even-handed in public remarks on the current fighting. A Chinese Foreign Ministry official stated on 31 December that China “regrets”

the outbreak of fighting and "hopes" that the dispute can be settled through negotiations. Peking stressed Hanoi's offer to open negotiations "as early as possible at whatever level." Thus far, the Chinese have not officially acknowledged Cambodia's "temporary break" in diplomatic relations with Vietnam, suggesting that they are reluctant to see the break become permanent. In recent weeks, however, the Chinese have been increasingly outspoken in private about their unhappiness with Hanoi. [3½ lines not declassified]

We cannot confirm press reports of recent armed clashes along the Sino-Vietnamese border, but the Vietnamese are apparently concerned about Chinese road building and some [2½ lines not declassified]. Chinese concern about Vietnamese intentions toward Cambodia and other bilateral disagreements over conflicting territorial claims in the South China Sea may have prompted the Chinese to undertake some kind of posturing near the Vietnamese border, but neither side would benefit from a more serious confrontation. The most recent information, moreover, suggests that the situation along the border has quieted.

The Soviets have made gains politically in Hanoi since the end of the war primarily because they have been able to supply the Vietnamese with about twice the economic aid that the Chinese have provided. They clearly hope to exploit the situation for further gains. They have been able to improve their position in Laos as well, primarily through the help of the Vietnamese, but they have not made a dent in the solid diplomatic wall the Cambodians have erected to keep them out of their country. They have nothing to lose in supporting Hanoi openly against Phnom Penh.

Moscow's initial response was to replay Hanoi's criticism of Cambodia's breaking of diplomatic relations and its appeal for an early meeting to end the dispute. On 4 January, *Pravda* carried three articles on the fighting which reflected support of the key aspects of Hanoi's position, and *Izvestiya* the next day published an article with a similar slant. The commentary called for negotiations and denied Cambodian suggestions that Soviet personnel were fighting on Vietnam's side. Published materials have hinted strongly of direct Chinese involvement on Cambodia's side in the fighting. The "unofficial" Soviet Radio Peace and Progress accused the Chinese of being the real troublemakers in the conflict. The Soviets privately are portraying the Chinese as a threat to Vietnamese interests, and they may have been the originators of the rumor, spread in Peking by East European diplomats, that Chinese instructors had been captured by the Vietnamese in the fighting. Soviet propaganda attacks have subsequently intensified; an 8 February *Pravda* article sharply criticized Phnom Penh for inflaming the situation on the border.

Reaction from ASEAN: Vietnam's action against Cambodia has again raised questions in ASEAN capitals about Hanoi's objectives in

the area. The Thai, for example, despite their own distaste for the Khmer leadership, are inclined to accept some of the Cambodian charges against Vietnam as at least partially true. They see the root of the conflict in Hanoi's desire to establish an Indochinese federation under Vietnamese hegemony, and believe that Hanoi may indeed have been involved in an abortive coup attempt against the leadership in Phnom Penh. The Thai are disturbed, however, by Vietnamese willingness to turn to military force when political measures failed and what this may portend for future Vietnamese behavior. The other ASEAN governments share Bangkok's suspicions about Vietnam's long-range intentions, but they see advantages in the present dispute in its deflection of Vietnamese attention and resources, and they welcome the diplomatic efforts of both sides to improve their relations in the region.

Although Vietnam shows signs of increasing frustration, there are strong arguments against a major military offensive against Cambodia. Vietnamese forces could easily reach Phnom Penh, but the capture of the largely deserted capital would probably be an empty victory, leaving the Khmer Government at large in the jungle to continue guerrilla warfare against the long, exposed Vietnamese supply lines. Whether Vietnam could occupy and control Cambodia—even with a puppet regime in place—is questionable. Hanoi no doubt must be tempted by reports of extreme deprivation and repression throughout Cambodia and by the apparent reception of Vietnamese troops as liberators by some villagers in the Parrot's Beak last winter. But the intense ethnic animosity that has historically marked Vietnamese-Cambodian relations and the tenacity of the Cambodian forces now fighting the Vietnamese should dampen Hanoi's hopes of facing a grateful and cooperative populace.

A major military campaign in Cambodia would seriously tax the already strained resources of Vietnam. Although the Vietnamese Army remains at its wartime strength, it has been significantly reoriented to economic tasks. The fighting along the border has already caused some economic dislocation; a major offensive and prolonged occupation would inevitably result in a notable slowing of economic development in Vietnam—the primary goal of the Hanoi regime.

But the political restraints on Hanoi are undoubtedly the most compelling argument against a military offensive. As irritating as Cambodian raids across the Thai border have been for Bangkok, the Thai have made clear that they do not favor a Vietnam-oriented regime in Phnom Penh. And the ASEAN governments without exception regard a Vietnam-controlled Indochina as a threat to the stability of the area. Attempts to implant a friendly regime by military force would severely undermine Hanoi's postwar diplomatic efforts to establish an image as a nonaggressive power seeking peaceful relations with its neighbors

and would rekindle lingering suspicions of Hanoi's long-term goals in the region.

More important to Hanoi would be the further setback in its already strained relations with Peking. Hanoi clearly wants neither an angry and hostile China on its border nor unrelieved dependence on the Soviet Union.

These considerations argue against even another limited military thrust into the border area—a move that offers no guarantee of forcing Cambodia to the bargaining table but would mark Hanoi as an aggressor. Nonetheless, continuing Cambodian provocations could generate increasing pressure from the Vietnamese military for another punitive attack across the border, such as that conducted last December.

*[1 paragraph (13 lines) not declassified]*

The Khmer leaders have accused Vietnam of subversive activity in the past, but there is no hard evidence that such Vietnamese-supported activities are presently under way in Cambodia. Nevertheless, we believe that given Hanoi's increasing frustration with Phnom Penh's belligerent and uncompromising position on the border dispute, a Vietnamese decision to engineer and support a resistance movement in Cambodia cannot be ruled out.

The chances of a Vietnam-based resistance movement developing a viable base of support in Cambodia seem slim at best. The Vietnamese, however, have both experience and resources with which to work, including the Khmer now in Vietnam. Moreover, between 1970 and 1973, Hanoi engaged in a large-scale effort to develop the rag-tag Khmer Rouge insurgent movement into an effective and eventually victorious organization. During this period, Hanoi developed close associations with a broad range of personnel in the Khmer Rouge.

It is unlikely that pro-Hanoi cadre have survived the intensely xenophobic atmosphere in Cambodia, and indeed, last year's purge may have been aimed at cadre suspected of continuing ties with the Vietnamese. But there is an outside chance that there are elements in Cambodia, who—if given an opportunity—would cooperate with the Vietnamese. In any event, in view of the risks involved in overt military operations, Hanoi may see the mounting of a long-term subversive challenge to Phnom Penh as a relatively low-cost gamble that could in time pay off.

Developments on the border in the near future will depend largely on Cambodia's actions. Continued provocations would be consistent with the past behavior of Cambodia's intensely xenophobic leaders. It is unlikely that they will engage in serious negotiations with Hanoi in the near future. Although officials have claimed that they would almost certainly be more interested in the propaganda value of discussions

there than in reaching a settlement. Because the Vietnamese incursion and aggressive Cambodian response no doubt resulted in heavy Cambodian casualties, Phnom Penh might also find it convenient to reduce the level of hostilities at this point.

Without making any statement or official response, the Cambodians could ease tensions by reducing their provocations along the border. A stalemate, with no formal settlement but relatively low levels of hostility, would probably be acceptable to Hanoi. Even if Cambodian harassment continues and provokes new Vietnamese military responses, a stalemate of this nature could eventually result.

---

#### **24. Memorandum From the Special Representative for Economic Summits (Owen) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 24, 1978

##### **SUBJECT**

Food Aid for Laos

You asked me last night to check into the Laos food problem described in Mr. Schram's *Newsday* article.<sup>2</sup>

Laos has been suffering from a serious food problem, which reflects both drought and Communist mismanagement. In August 1977, Laos put out an international plea for 130,000 tons of rice. Many nations contributed; the US did not, for fear of adverse Congressional reactions, which could have jeopardized the foreign aid bill.

In January 1978, Laos made a direct appeal to the US to contribute. Secretary Vance reported this request to you on February 3;<sup>3</sup> you answered that you agreed in principle but that he should check out reactions on the Hill before proceeding. Subsequent soundings elicited a negative Congressional reaction, and State decided not to proceed

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Office of the Staff Secretary, Presidential File, Handwriting File, Box 12, 5/25/78. Confidential. Sent for action. Carter initialed the top of the first page of the memorandum.

<sup>2</sup> Not further identified.

<sup>3</sup> Not found. The Lao request was transmitted in telegram 17 from Vientiane, January 5. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780009–0619)

at that time for fear, among other things, of jeopardizing the Panama Canal Treaty.<sup>4</sup>

More recent soundings indicate growing support on the Hill for help to Laos; opposition persists, largely among members of the Congress who are opposed to aid generally. In light of these recent soundings, Secretary Vance recommends in the attached memo (Tab A)<sup>5</sup> that you approve a Title II grant<sup>6</sup> of \$5 million to ship 10,000 tons of rice to Laos. Jack Gilligan, OMB, and I concur. State points out that quick action is important, since it will take two to three months to get the rice to Laos, and the shortfall (now estimated at 30,000 tons) will begin to cause considerable human suffering in August.

The Congressional liaison staffs in State and the White House believe that if you make a decision approving this grant before the foreign aid bill clears the House floor in mid-June, this will add to our difficulties on that bill. They do not believe that this disadvantage should deter you from early action if inaction would cause increased human suffering, as State indicates would be the case.

We can ship \$5 million of Title II PL-480 within present budgetary limits. We could ship more after the start of the new fiscal year October 1, if it proves needed.

This food will be given through the World Food Program, which means we will have no direct check on how it gets used, although we can monitor its use indirectly through the UN. The 10,000 tons would probably go largely to urban areas, where its use would be more readily observed. Still, we cannot be sure that the food will always go to those who need it most.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That you approve the attached request from State for a \$5 million 10,000 ton Title II program for Laos.

Approve (recommended by Secretary Vance, Governor Gilligan, OMB, and me)<sup>7</sup>

Delay decision until after June 15

Disapprove

2. That I indicate to State Department that you will be prepared to consider a request for further US Title II assistance to Laos in FY

<sup>4</sup> The Senate approved the Panama Canal Treaties in March and April.

<sup>5</sup> Not attached.

<sup>6</sup> Title II of P.L. 480 permitted the United States to provide famine relief to foreign governments and donate commodities to religious and voluntary organizations for use in overseas feeding programs.

<sup>7</sup> Carter checked this option.

1979 depending (i) on future needs and on our judgment as to how this initial grant was used, and (ii) on our relations with Laos which, as you know, are now shadowed by Laotian uncooperativeness on the MIA question.

Approve (recommended by Secretary Vance, Governor Gilligan, OMB and me)<sup>8</sup>

Disapprove

The Department of Agriculture concurs in this proposed sale.

---

<sup>8</sup> Carter checked this option and initialed “J” below the recommendations.

---

**25. Memorandum From the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 23, 1978

SUBJECT

NSC Weekly Report #64

[Omitted here is information unrelated to Indochina.]

*3. Alerts*

*Vietnamese Initiative*

As Cy noted in his evening report recently,<sup>2</sup> the Vietnamese are signalling an interest in advancing rapidly their relations with us. They will be sending a group of experts to visit our MIA Identification Laboratory in Hawaii during the week of July 5–10. They have also hinted at a desire to renew contact with Dick Holbrooke to resume discussions on normalization. They will seek to involve you directly or indirectly in Congressman Montgomery’s likely visit to Hanoi in late fall. While accepting the MIA visit, we should restrain ourselves from responding to Vietnamese initiatives for two reasons: (1) the domestic political reaction would be quite negative; (2) given current

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Brzezinski Donated Material, Subject File, Box 41, Weekly Report (to the President), 61–71: (6/78–9/78). Secret. Carter initialed the top of the memorandum.

<sup>2</sup> Not further identified.

Chinese-Vietnamese animosities, efforts to improve relations with Vietnam, which would strengthen Hanoi's international position, could adversely affect our efforts to elicit some flexibility from Peking.<sup>3</sup>

[Omitted here is information unrelated to Indochina.]

---

<sup>3</sup> Carter wrote in the left-hand margin adjacent to this paragraph, "Do *not* send a negative signal. Just delay."

---

## 26. Memorandum From Michel Oksenberg of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>

Washington, September 22, 1978

### SUBJECT

Dick Holbrooke's Conversation with the Vietnamese

His adrenalin obviously flowing, Dick Holbrooke called me immediately after his three-hour meeting with the Vietnamese today.<sup>2</sup> Here is his rundown of the conversation:

—The Vietnamese opened with a tour d'horizon of the situation in Asia, stressing how much they sought peace in the region and good relations with all countries, including China—though they were preparing for war with China. (C)

—Holbrooke responded with a similar survey, mentioning our concern of the Soviet presence in Vietnam, the refugee issue, human rights, and IFIs. (C)

—The discussion then got down to normalization, where the Vietnamese repeated that they saw three linked issues—normalization, MIAs, and aid. Holbrooke replied that by saying the issues were linked,

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Oksenberg Subject File, Box 32, Chron, 9/78. Confidential. Sent for information.

<sup>2</sup> A draft memorandum of conversation of the September 22 meeting between Holbrooke and Thach in New York is in Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968–1991, Lot 94D430, Box 17652, Transcript: 1977–1978 Nguyen C. Thach—Richard Holbrooke. Telegram 242862/Tosec 100122 to Vance in New York, September 23, summarized the discussion. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780389–1056)



the Vietnamese had indicated their position had not changed and what else was there to talk about. (C)

—The Vietnamese then recommended a tea break. (U)

—When discussion was resumed, the Vietnamese acknowledged that we had rejected their linkage of normalization, information on MIAs, and provision of the aid. They then asked Dick a series of questions about our policy: What is our policy on aid? on credits? on loans? When could diplomatic relations be established? How can they be established? When would the trade embargo be dropped? (C)

—Holbrooke told me he went out of his way to make sure they held no hope for aid. On the other questions, he said he would have to study them before responding. (C)

—The Vietnamese then said that they understand the ball was in their court, presumably implying that they would have to drop their demand for aid.

—The two then agreed to meet next Wednesday.<sup>3</sup> (LOU)

### *Observations*

I believe the Vietnamese are going to drop their demand for aid, and we are going to be in the unpleasant position of having little bargaining room left. We may find ourselves, by pushing these negotiations forward, normalizing relations with Vietnam before we do so with China<sup>4</sup> and complicating our normalization process with China immeasurably. (C)

Holbrooke asked whether I wanted to attend his meeting next Wednesday, saying that he thought I would learn a great deal from it. I replied that while I might personally benefit from seeing how yet another Asian society negotiates, I would only participate if a discernible policy interest would be advanced. Obviously, this is something you should decide, but I see no benefit in having White House participation in these talks. (C)

---

<sup>3</sup> September 27.

<sup>4</sup> Relations with the People's Republic of China were normalized on January 1, 1979. For the text of President Carter's message to Premier Hua Guofeng, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XIII, China.

**27. Memorandum From Michel Oksenberg of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 28, 1978

SUBJECT

Dick Holbrooke's Meeting with the Vietnamese at the UNGA,  
September 27, 1978<sup>2</sup>

In a word, the Vietnamese have dropped their demand for reparation or a promise of assistance and are prepared to establish diplomatic relations with us without precondition. In fact, they are panting to lock up the deal. (S)

Given our previous position, the main choices that confront us involve the pace at which we move ahead and whether—as we move ahead—we decide that we wish clarification as to Vietnam's intent vis-a-vis the Soviet Union and Cambodia. (S)

You asked that I attend the meeting in part to keep an eye on Holbrooke. Holbrooke performed reasonably well, though I think he did more to seek to ingratiate himself with the Vietnamese than I would have done by going out of his way to point out the many nice things we have done for the Vietnamese in the past months. Since I personally believe we owe the Vietnamese nothing, I see no reason for our indicating to them that we have sought to facilitate the extension of humanitarian aid to Vietnam and to provide indirect assistance through international financial institutions. But I am talking here about matters of Dick's personal style and political convictions which did not adversely affect the course of the negotiations and perhaps even helped them somewhat. (S)

One could sense Vietnam's weakness during the discussions. Their economic difficulties, their conflict with Cambodia and their tensions with China place them in a very disadvantageous position. But we should not be lulled into thinking that the Vietnamese harbor anything but hostile feelings toward us. Until yesterday's meeting, I never thought I would meet any people who would surpass the Chinese in

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 85, Vietnam, 1/77–12/78. Secret. Sent for action. Brzezinski wrote at the top of the first page, "DA [David Aaron], Ask State for eval[uation] or paper. ZB." A handwritten notation at the top of the memorandum reads, "OBE." Inderfurth also initialed the top right-hand corner of the memorandum.

<sup>2</sup> No other record of this meeting has been found.

the art of false flattery, but the Vietnamese make the Chinese look like pikers. (S)

The question is, where do we go on Vietnam policy from here? Thus far, I would stress to you, our Vietnam policy has been set through the Secretary's Evening Items and the President's marginalia. I suggest that the time has now come for a serious Vance to the President memorandum outlining the options we now face with respect to Vietnam, with an assessment of how each of those options would impact on our relations with China, the Soviet Union, the ASEAN countries, Japan, and the emergence of a humanitarian and independent Cambodian regime. (S)

*RECOMMENDATION:*

That you sign the memorandum at Tab A<sup>3</sup> to the President authorizing you to obtain from State an options paper on Vietnam policy<sup>4</sup> which has been coordinated with DOD, CIA, and where pertinent, Treasury and Commerce.

---

<sup>3</sup> Not attached.

<sup>4</sup> Inderfurth underlined "an options paper on Vietnam policy." Underneath the recommendation, he wrote, "This is certainly needed. RI." Under Inderfurth's note, David Aaron wrote, "*I agree. DA.* But we also need an assessment of cumulative impact on China. I will meet with MO [Oksenberg] next week. The memo Mike proposes may be OBE? DA."

## 28. Letter From Secretary of State Vance to Representative Clement J. Zablocki<sup>1</sup>

Washington, September 30, 1978

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letter of September 8, suggesting that I refer to the tragic plight of the Kampuchean people in my speech at the United Nations General Assembly this month.<sup>2</sup>

I fully share your dismay at the pattern of gross violations of the most elementary human rights by the authorities in Kampuchea. President Carter and many US officials have spoken out in the past about their concern.

I seriously considered your suggestion, but concluded that focusing before the General Assembly on a single human rights violator—even one as gross as Kampuchea—would not be appropriate and would raise questions about the omission of other countries. I decided instead to refer to the need to end conditions everywhere which are tantamount to genocide.<sup>3</sup> This reference clearly encompasses what is happening in Kampuchea, as was made clear during the press backgrounding on my speech by senior Department officials.

In light of recent attempts by the Kampucheans to establish wider international contacts, I plan to try to broaden international human rights pressures on the Pol Pot government through private discussions at the UN and elsewhere with other governments likely to be in direct contact with Phnom Penh. I would hope in this way to ensure that human rights are raised with the Khmer authorities in the course of most of their bilateral discussions with other governments. We will

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Policy and Planning Staff—Office of the Director: Records of Anthony Lake, 1977–January 1981, Lot 82D298, Box 3, TL, 9/16–30/78. No classification marking. Vance's speech is printed in Department of State *Bulletin*, November 1978, pp. 45–54.

<sup>2</sup> In his September 8 letter to Vance, attached but not printed, Zablocki suggested that in order "to help bring about a solution in Cambodia and relieve the plight of the people there," Vance include in his upcoming UNGA speech "references to Cambodia." Vance delivered his speech to the UN General Assembly on September 29. See Department of State *Bulletin*, November 1978, pp. 45–48.

<sup>3</sup> In a September 29 action memorandum to Vance recommending that he sign the letter to Zablocki, Lake wrote, "After weighing the pros and cons, particularly Dick Holbrooke's strong recommendation that we not single out Cambodia by name, you decided instead to refer to the need to make a special effort to end 'conditions which are tantamount to genocide'—a reference that arguably includes Cambodia as well as other particularly brutal cases." (National Archives, RG 59, Policy and Planning Staff—Office of the Director: Records of Anthony Lake, 1977–January 1981, Lot 82D298, Box 3, TL, 9/16–30/78)

also, of course, speak out on the situation in Kampuchea as human rights problems are taken up during the course of the General Assembly.

I hope that this strategy will contribute toward moderating the violence and suffering in Kampuchea and will continue to seek ways of influencing the situation there.

Let me assure you of my appreciation for your counsel. I know of your great interest in seeing that the US implement its human rights objectives effectively and apply its human rights standards consistently and carefully in the broad context of our foreign policy goals.

Best wishes,

Sincerely,

Cy Vance

---

## 29. Report Prepared in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research<sup>1</sup>

No. 1064

Washington, October 2, 1978

### DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA: CAN THE POL POT REGIME SURVIVE?

#### *Summary*

The survival of the Pol Pot regime in Democratic Kampuchea is seriously threatened. Since mid-June 1978, Vietnamese ground and air forces have been involved in major offensive operations in Kampuchea's eastern provinces. Kampuchea's armed forces have put up stiff resistance but show signs of wearing down under continued Vietnamese military pressure.

Hanoi appears determined to end its border conflict with Phnom Penh and achieve its goal of a "special relationship" with Kampuchea similar to the one that Vietnam has with Laos. It plans to topple the Pol Pot regime through a combination of armed attacks, occupation of Kampuchean towns and territory adjacent to the border, and support to Khmer guerrillas who are operating widely in eastern Kampuchea. Increased Chinese military assistance may give the hard-pressed Kam-

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Intelligence Research Reports, 1953–1998, Lot 06D279, Reports No. 1057–1065, 1978. Secret; Noform.

puclean Army some relief, but it is unlikely that such aid will enable Phnom Penh to turn the situation around.

### *Current Military Situation*

Hanoi launched its current offensive into Kampuchea in mid-June, pushing Kampuchean forces back from adjacent border areas, securing vital road junctions, and occupying several towns, including Snuol, which is 16 kilometers from the border. Most of the fighting has been in Svay Rieng and Kompong Cham provinces, where Vietnamese units have managed to occupy territory on a wide front 15–20 kilometers deep into Kampuchea. Vietnam's army has also made similar thrusts into Ratanakiri and Takeo provinces and has moved across the border into Kampot province from Ha Tien, a Vietnamese coastal city previously attacked by Kampuchean forces. (See Map A, over.)<sup>2</sup>

Kampuchean forces have put up stiff resistance but may be having difficulty mounting counterattacks. Casualties on both sides have been heavy. Kampuchea's losses in men and supplies may be reaching the critical stage, requiring Phnom Penh to shift some of its units deployed along the Thai border to the eastern front.

The current Vietnamese offensive has lasted more than three months and shows no signs of abatement. While it is difficult to obtain precise and regular battlefield reports, it is becoming clear that Kampuchea's forces are steadily losing ground. They have so far been unable to retake a single captured town or recover lost territory.

### *Hanoi's Strategy*

The Vietnamese military offensive serves as an umbrella for expanded insurgent activity in Kampuchea and is probably seen by Hanoi as the most effective way to bring down the Pol Pot regime. Hanoi's frustration over Phnom Penh's past intransigence and savage raids inside Vietnam, its resentment of China's assistance to Kampuchea, and its deep concern over its inability to reconstruct Vietnam's wartorn economy because of the conflict apparently led the leadership in early June 1978 to make resolution of the Kampuchean war its No. 1 priority. In so doing, Vietnam is taking pains to limit the distance that its forces drive into Kampuchea in order to minimize international criticism and the challenge to China.

Vietnamese strategy appears aimed at destroying Kampuchean main-force units while providing support to Khmer insurgent forces already operating in eastern Kampuchea or freshly introduced from Vietnamese training camps. By seizing several Kampuchean towns,

---

<sup>2</sup> Map A, entitled "Vietnamese Military Incursions Into Kampuchea Since Mid-June 1978, is attached but not printed.

largely devoid of population, Hanoi probably intended to goad the Kampucheans into counterattacking, thereby exposing concentrations of Kampuchean troops to heavy Vietnamese air strikes and artillery fire. Moreover, the monsoon season, inundating the low-lying countryside, has made it difficult for the Kampuchean forces to disperse or to engage in effective counterattacks through raids, ambushes, and encirclement of Vietnamese positions. The main battles so far apparently have been fought on surfaced roads or around towns where the Vietnamese have a decisive advantage.

The above tactics differ sharply from those of previous Vietnamese incursions into Kampuchea. Hanoi's use of Khmer insurgents is another departure. At least four areas in Prey Veng province appear to be under the control of anti-Phnom Penh rebel forces, and additional anti-regime Khmers are operating in areas now occupied by Vietnamese forces.

*Kampuchea's Ability To Continue the Fighting*

*Strength of Kampuchea's Armed Forces.* At the outset of the fighting, the Kampuchean Army, recently equipped with Chinese long-range artillery, probably numbered in excess of 100,000 troops. At least 70,000, organized into 11 infantry divisions, were deployed along the Vietnamese border. The vastly superior Vietnamese Army, numbering more than 600,000, has committed more than 11 divisions (close to 100,000 troops) to the border conflict. They are supported by large quantities of armor, artillery, and modern fighter-bomber aircraft.

Kampuchean units are outnumbered in manpower, firepower, and materiel, and also lack medicines and medevac capability, which has further contributed to their high casualty rate. In addition to redeploying units from other parts of the country, Phnom Penh probably has resorted to large-scale conscription of teenagers, rushed into battle with little training. Recent visitors to the Vietnam-Kampuchean border have been struck by the youth of captured Kampuchean soldiers.

In past battles, Phnom Penh's much smaller and less sophisticated army was the equal of Vietnamese troops in motivation, combativeness, and training. Well-indoctrinated, bitterly anti-Vietnamese, provided with ample arms and food rations, Kampuchean forces more than once mauled their Vietnamese rivals while penetrating deep inside Vietnamese territory. While the Kampucheans have lost none of their tenacity, Vietnam's sheer numbers, superiority in weaponry, and now its use of its best main-force units have put Kampuchea on the defensive and may in the end be decisive.

*Political Stability.* So far, the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary regime has been able to hold on to power, successfully countering coup attempts and purging so-called dissidents and traitors in its ranks. There are no discernible factions at the Party Central Committee level. The country is run by a

small clique of xenophobic nationalists, most of whom have shared revolutionary experiences for more than two decades. An internal security system monitors the activities of all party and military cadre and the population at large at each level of administration. The grim conditions imposed on the population are in stark contrast, according to defectors, to the lifestyle enjoyed by the Kampuchean communist elite, including the military, who live apart from the people in a sort of frugal opulence denied to others.

*The Economic Situation.* The conflict with Vietnam has not resulted in any significant drain of manpower from agricultural production or damage to the main rice-growing areas of Kampuchea (see Map B, opposite).<sup>3</sup> While rice-rationing is severe, in some cases leading to malnutrition and starvation, this is deliberate government policy and not a result of insufficient harvests. Given favorable weather, Kampuchea's fertile riceland, coupled with the government's labor-intensive policies and a massive campaign to expand irrigated land by building dikes and digging canals, should enable the country to achieve self-sufficiency in foods within the next few years. Despite a severe drought in 1977, Kampuchea was able to export more than 100,000 tons of rice and probably intends to match that figure this year.

To build and expand the country's industries, irrigation works, and transportation routes, in addition to crop production, Phnom Penh makes widespread use of its youth. Light industry output, while small at present, is growing slowly with the help of equipment and advisers from China. China pays for Kampuchea's imports and provides basic commodities—fuel for transport, medicines, and tools for agriculture. Chinese civil and military technicians provide assistance and advice in aviation, health, agriculture, shipping, industry, and transportation.

In addition, China has furnished considerable military equipment, including air defense, radar and communications gear, and long-range artillery. Estimates of the number of Chinese military advisers in Kampuchea range from a few thousand to the undoubtedly exaggerated Soviet figure of 30,000. A more reasonable figure of 16,000 Chinese advisers and technicians was quoted recently by the Romanian Military Attaché in Peking.

*The Threat of Subversion.* Popular disenchantment with the regime is no doubt high. The party's brutal methods of population control, however, include dispersal of former urban-dwellers to countryside communes, summary executions, tight control of movement, a back-breaking daily regime of labor, and abolition of privacy, property, and

---

<sup>3</sup> Map B, entitled "Democratic Kampuchea (Cambodia) Economic Activity, Land Use, and Transportation," is attached but not printed.



money. The regime probably has neutralized for the moment any threat of a popular uprising, although there have been isolated acts of sabotage and armed violence during the last three years.

In addition, a few thousand members of a Khmer Liberation Movement, supported clandestinely by the Thai military, operate on both sides of the 800-kilometer border with Thailand. The Liberation Movement sends small teams into Kampuchea on propaganda and intelligence collection operations. Because it is loosely organized, ineffectively led, and short of food, medicine, and arms, the Movement is little more than a nuisance to the Kampuchean armed forces and internal security apparatus at this time. Should security in northern and western Kampuchea deteriorate, however, the Movement's potential for expansion would be great.

The developing resistance in eastern Kampuchea is the most serious danger to the regime. There is considerable evidence that Vietnam for some time has been training Khmers inside Vietnam for subversion of the Pol Pot regime. There is a large indigenous Khmer population in South Vietnam to draw from, in addition to more than 150,000 refugees, defectors, and captured soldiers from Kampuchea. Moreover, a few hundred-thousand ethnic Vietnamese were evicted or fled from Kampuchea during the last three years, and many of these are likely to be used by Hanoi because they have language skills and area knowledge.

---

### 30. Telegram From the Embassy in Laos to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Vientiane, November 3, 1978, 0237Z

1144. Subj: Holbrooke-Khamphay Meeting. Ref: Vientiane 1132 (Notal).<sup>2</sup>

Summary: The meeting's major development from the Lao viewpoint was Mr. Holbrooke's announcement of our willingness to respond to a WFP appeal for flood aid to Laos. The Lao also had an opportunity to hear categorically and authoritatively that the U.S. was

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968–1991, Lot 94D430, PREL United States—General (L), Permanent File. Confidential; Limdis. Sent for information to Canberra, Paris, Rome for FODAG, Hong Kong, Beijing, Tokyo, Moscow, and CINCPAC for POLAD.

<sup>2</sup> Not found. Holbrooke visited Vientiane October 29–30. His meeting with Khamphay took place on October 30.

not engaged in anti-LPDR activity. Holbrooke, in turn, was able to make our views known on the narcotics problem and to receive Lao assurances that they, too, wanted to discourage production and traffic. Holbrooke had a chance to express our human rights and MIA concerns clearly and forcefully, and he also let the Lao know we felt their restrictions on diplomats were inappropriate. Both sides described their regional interests in ways which implied no basic conflicts. The Lao chose not to make an issue of drought aid problems, and they defended themselves on the human rights issue. The Lao still want reconstruction aid, and we again pointed out that we were under no obligation to give it. End Summary.

1. Assistant Secretary Holbrooke's lengthy Oct. 30 meeting with Lao Acting Foreign Minister Khamphay Boupma provided both sides with an opportunity to cover a full range of Lao-US issues. Although there was by no means a complete concurrence of views, the stated objectives were in many cases similar. There will still be problems in Lao-US relations, but there will also be areas in which we can work together.

2. Regional Policy. Holbrooke expressed support for a stable and peaceful system of independent Southeast Asian countries. We particularly supported ASEAN and the improvement of relations between the Indochina states and ASEAN. We welcomed improvements in Thai-Lao relations. We sought normal relations with Hanoi and Peking. Khamphay said that Laos wanted good relations with its neighbors and with all countries.

3. Holbrooke said that the U.S. did not want to take sides in either the Sino-Vietnamese or Vietnamese-Cambodian disputes. Khamphay said that such conflicts should be settled by negotiations and not by fighting. Laos supported the SRV's call for talks. The LPDR sought good relations with the U.S. and with Thailand, though there were still problems with the RTG.

4. Aid. Holbrooke expressed regret that there had been misunderstanding in connection with our 10,000 tons of drought aid to Laos.<sup>3</sup> It was our intention that this donation should represent a new beginning in Lao-US relations. As for the current flood-related problems in Laos,<sup>4</sup> the U.S. had told the WFP that as soon as the WFP had issued an international flood aid appeal for Laos, we would authorize the use of a portion of our WFP contribution as Lao flood aid. We would need, however, assurances from WFP that our drought aid had been properly

---

<sup>3</sup> See Document 24.

<sup>4</sup> A devastating flood in the Mekong Delta caused a loss of this area's rice crop in October. See "Floods Ravage Southeast Asia; Vietnam and Laos Appeal for Aid," *Washington Post*, October 5, 1978, p. A22.

used. Holbrooke explained that direct U.S. aid to Laos was still prohibited by law.

5. Khamphay expressed appreciation for the initial U.S. drought aid donation. He said that the Lao Government did not care how aid came to Laos or through what organizations so long as it arrived. He specifically did not complain about the handling of our 10,000 tons of drought aid. He said, however, that the current flood aid need was greater than the drought need had been. Holbrooke said the U.S. would do what it could within the limits of the law and congressional sentiment.

6. Khamphay noted that the U.S. had been the only ADB member to vote against the recent wood industry loan to Laos. Holbrooke said that we would consider each such Lao proposal on its merits and with regard to our human rights policy. Khamphay said that the LPDR still hoped for U.S. aid in dealing with natural disasters and in repair of war damage, but Holbrooke pointed out that we recognized no obligation in this latter regard.

7. MIA's. Holbrooke expressed appreciation for the return of four sets of remains to CODEL Montgomery. Khamphay said that the LDPR was glad to have been able to do this but did not think it was necessary to send Lao officials to the CIL. Holbrooke explained that the U.S. did not consider that there was any direct connection between the MIA issue and any other issue, although progress on MIA's helped improve the overall atmosphere. We recognized that no final, perfect accounting was possible.

8. EOD. Holbrooke explained that direct U.S. assistance with explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) was not possible under the law but that he would explore the problem further with Congressman Montgomery when Congress reconvened. Khamphay said that Laos did not need EOD personnel but did need equipment.

9. Human Rights. Holbrooke spoke at length on human rights. He described the strong public and congressional concern in the U.S., particularly with respect to the Hmong and with respect to officials of the former regime and former Embassy employees in re-education camps. Khamphay explained that all Lao were attending political seminars, not just former RLG officials. After their studies, they went home and went back to work. He said that the LPDR's human rights record was much better than the RLG's. As for the Meo, the LPDR wanted to help them to lead a better life in the lowlands, but when Meo took up arms against the government, the LPDR had to enforce order. Some of these Meo had been trained and armed by the U.S. in the past.

10. Holbrooke expressed concern about shooting at people trying to cross the Mekong as refugees. This practice contravened the UN Charter. Khamphay said that anyone could ask permission and leave

Laos legally, but those who left without asking permission were usually criminals and outlaws. Trying to stop them was normal border control and normal police activity such as that which took place in the U.S.

11. U.S. Non-Involvement in the Lao Insurgency. Holbrooke particularly stressed that the U.S. was in no way involved in the Lao insurgency or with groups inside or outside Laos opposed to the LPDR. No proof of any such involvement had ever been forthcoming from the Lao. If the Lao did not accept his assurances of non-involvement, there was no good basis for improving Lao-U.S. relations. Khamphay said that the Lao had not wanted to go into specifics on this issue in order to avoid poisoning the atmosphere. He pointed out that press reports had linked Lao emigre groups in France with the U.S.

12. Narcotics. Holbrooke described the U.S. concern with the narcotic problem and expressed hope that the LPDR would cooperate in discouraging production and traffic in illicit drugs. Khamphay explained the LPDR's problems with the expensive and ineffective former UNFDAC mission in Laos. He said Lao policy was opposed to narcotics. The LPDR had programs to rehabilitate addicts and discourage production. The Meo and former RLG officials had been involved in this problem. The LPDR had done away with the corrupt RLG, and the Lao policy of resettling Meo in lowland rice-growing areas should help to reduce opium production. Holbrooke said he had taken note of the LPDR's interest in solving the international narcotics problem.

13. Restrictions on Diplomats. Holbrooke pointed out that LPDR restrictions on Vientiane-based diplomats appeared to be in conflict with the Vienna Convention. No such restrictions were placed on Lao personnel in Washington. Our note on this subject<sup>5</sup> had never been answered. Khamphay said that the rules had been made for the safety and convenience of diplomats and applied to all foreign personnel. Holbrooke said he hoped the restrictions could be relaxed.

14. Before leaving, Holbrooke said that he had noticed the unfortunate Radio Vientiane attack on him as an imperialist. No other country with which we had relations made such charges and they did not help the atmosphere.

**Roberts**

---

<sup>5</sup> The text of the Embassy's note is in telegram 368 from Vientiane, March 23. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780128-0052)

**31. Interagency Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>**

NI IIM 78–10024

Washington, November 14, 1978

**SINO-SOVIET COMPETITION IN INDOCHINA  
KEY JUDGMENTS**

- Indochina today is divided into two camps, with the USSR backing Vietnam and Laos, and China backing Kampuchea (Cambodia). This development is largely the result of the conflicting national ambitions of China and Vietnam, each of which wishes to exercise paramount influence in the area. This competition, although muted during the Vietnam war, has deep roots and is likely to intensify.

- The immediate cause of the present Sino-Vietnamese confrontation is the escalating border war between Vietnam and Kampuchea. China believes Vietnam is determined to replace the Pol Pot government with one responsive to Hanoi's direction. Although China is unhappy with some of the policies of the present Khmer regime, it considers an independent Kampuchea allied with Peking an essential buffer against the expansion of Vietnamese, and by extension Soviet, influence in the area.

—China hopes to thwart Vietnamese ambitions by providing strong support for Kampuchea while undertaking a diplomatic and propaganda campaign to portray Vietnam as a Soviet cat's-paw and arouse suspicions about Hanoi among non-Communist Southeast Asian states.

—China is the principal source of military and economic aid to Kampuchea. It has several thousand advisers in Kampuchea and has increased military aid since the escalation of the Kampuchean-Vietnamese border war. China's termination of all aid to Vietnam earlier this year will trouble but not cripple the Vietnamese economy because Chinese aid had already been reduced after the end of the Indochina war. China also supplies economic aid to Laos. Northern Laos has been a Chinese sphere of influence for many years as the result of a roadbuilding project in the area.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, History Staff Files, Sino-Soviet Competition in Indochina. Secret; [*handling restriction not declassified*]. A note on the first page indicates that the memorandum was drafted in the Office of Regional and Political Analysis and the Office of Economic Research and coordinated with the National Foreign Intelligence Board.

—China is trying to encourage the Pol Pot government to moderate its domestic and foreign policies in order to improve its international standing.

- Vietnam over the long term would like to establish a special relationship with Kampuchea similar to the one Hanoi has with Laos. Over the short term, however, Vietnam could tolerate a government in Phnom Penh with close ties to China so long as it ceased provocative actions along the Vietnamese border.

—Vietnam is unlikely to launch an all-out invasion of Kampuchea, although it might be tempted to move if there were an open breakdown of political order in Kampuchea. In the event of such a Vietnamese attack, China would have only limited ability to aid the Phnom Penh regime. Despite the excesses of the Pol Pot government, few Khmer would welcome Vietnamese intervention, and Vietnam would probably become bogged down in a guerrilla war.

—Vietnam is more likely to pursue its present policy of trying to secure its borders against Kampuchean attacks while seeking to raise an antigovernment insurgent movement inside Kampuchea.

- The USSR is the most likely to benefit, at least over the short term, from the developing situation in Indochina. The Soviets will take advantage of the opportunity to try to make Vietnam dependent on Moscow, thereby establishing a sphere of influence on China's southern boundary.

—Laos and Vietnam are the only countries in Southeast Asia to allow the Soviets more than a token presence. The Soviets probably hope that their position in Vietnam will aid them in extending their influence elsewhere in the area. If the Southeast Asians believe that Vietnam is acting as a Soviet stalking-horse, however, it will harm rather than help Soviet interests.

—Vietnam has already moved closer to Moscow by signing a friendship and cooperation treaty<sup>2</sup> and joining the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CEMA). The Soviets are the major source of aid to Vietnam, but most of it is still economic. Soviet military shipments do not appear to have increased since the confrontation with China, but this may change in the near future. The Soviets will take over some of the formerly Chinese aid projects.

—The USSR may hope eventually to obtain access to Vietnamese military facilities. Vietnam is unlikely to grant the Soviets formal base rights but might permit the Soviets access to air or naval facilities under certain circumstances.

---

<sup>2</sup> The USSR-Vietnamese Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation was signed in Moscow on November 3.

- The non-Communist states of Southeast Asia are concerned about the consequences of intensified Sino-Soviet competition in the area although they draw comfort from the prospect of Communist countries fighting among themselves. Thus far the main impact on the countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has been an intensive diplomatic campaign to court their favor by all sides. Since September a top official from each of the four major parties to the dispute has visited Southeast Asia.

- Vietnam's deteriorating relations with China have increased Hanoi's interest in establishing diplomatic ties with the United States. Vietnamese leaders believe an American embassy in Hanoi would serve as a symbol of Vietnam's international acceptance. Vietnam is also seeking aid and foreign investment from the West to help balance aid from the Soviet bloc.

[Omitted here is the Discussion section of the memorandum.]

---

## 32. Paper Prepared in the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Washington, November 16, 1978

### VIETNAM-KAMPUCHEA BORDER CONFLICT

#### *Background*

When Phnom Penh fell to the communists in 1975 the new Kampuchean leaders ordered Vietnamese troops based in northeastern Kampuchea out of the country. By June of that year the two nations were clashing over disputed border claims and offshore islands. Periodic clashes continued in 1976 and 1977.

In December 1977 major fighting developed in the Parrot's Beak, a border area only 30 kilometers from Ho Chi Minh City. This was followed by a new surge of fighting on December 31 in the same area. Although the combatants pulled back from their furthest advances by mid-January, fierce fighting involving artillery, air strikes, and helicopter gun ships broke out again in June. It has continued since and armed clashes and casualties occur regularly on both sides of the border.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Vietnam General Files for 1978, Lot 80D307, Box 6590, Briefing Papers (General) 1978. Secret. Drafted by Thomas P. Hamilton (INR/REA/SA).

The outbreak of serious fighting between Hanoi and Phnom Penh in December 1977 helped to catalyze the falling out between Hanoi and Peking and brought about increased Chinese military assistance to Kampuchea and greater tensions along the PRC-SRV border. Sino-Vietnamese tensions have increased during October and November with almost daily charges by Hanoi of Chinese encroachment on Vietnamese territory. Hanoi's most recent spate of accusations cannot be confirmed but they are symptomatic of escalating tensions between China and Vietnam as a result of the border conflict between Hanoi and Phnom Penh.

The international implications of the dispute took on added significance in early November with the conclusion of a Soviet-Vietnamese Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, followed immediately by a hastily arranged visit of a high-level Chinese delegation to Phnom Penh. Vietnam, aware of the increased political complexity of the dispute, will carefully calculate its future moves. Nevertheless, the Vietnamese are likely to take strong military action in the current dry season.

### *Military Build Up*

While we do not have full and precise information concerning the military situation in the Vietnam-Kampuchea border area, refugee reports and other sources, strongly suggesting the likelihood of increased fighting include:

—Armed clashes on both sides of the border have continued for well over a year with both sides taking heavy casualties. Reports of clashes dropped off somewhat in August and September, but picked up considerably in October and the first two weeks of November.

—In June and July 1978 the Vietnamese sharply escalated the level of fighting by conducting numerous air strikes some up to forty kilometers inside Kampuchean territory. During this period the Vietnamese apparently took and held the towns of Snoul and Mimot in eastern Cambodia. In recent weeks, the Vietnamese have moved aircraft from central Vietnam to bases closer to the major troop concentrations along the border.

—The prepositioning of supplies and equipment along with movement of additional troops to the border by both sides has continued throughout the summer and fall. We now estimate that Kampuchea has some 60,000 troops (14 understrength divisions) in place, while the Vietnamese have at least ten divisions totaling over 100,000 troops.

—Military recruitment of Vietnamese and Kampuchean youth has been stepped up including females 18–25 years of age. (Monthly draft calls are reportedly at their highest in years.)

—Reports from visitors to the border area indicate the Vietnamese and Kampuchians now regularly exchange artillery fire into each oth-



er's territory. Kampuchean forces are reportedly employing 130 mm guns.

### *Current Military Situation*

Battlefield activity has increased considerably during October and early November. Kampuchea has launched a number of attacks in the central highlands region of Vietnam in an apparent effort to keep Vietnamese forces off balance and forestall Vietnam's offensive. Kampuchean units planted mines, destroyed roads, and shelled Vietnamese forces in border areas along route 19 during the month. They have also initiated attacks further south in the Duc Minh area penetrating some ten kilometers into Vietnamese territory.

In mid-October Kampuchean forces were instructed to try to take advantage of Vietnamese weaknesses on all fronts stemming from disorganization caused by heavy flooding. Interestingly, several sources indicate that the Vietnamese plan to use a Kampuchean attack as an excuse to launch "counterattacks" in retaliation. Presumably an offensive in the guise of a "counterattack" would be calculated by the Vietnamese to be less alarming to neighboring ASEAN countries.

The most intense fighting over the past month has been in the Parrot's Beak portion of Kampuchea and adjoining portions of Vietnam's Southwestern Tay Ninh province. Vietnam claimed in early October that forces from two Kampuchean divisions were defeated near Ben Cau. During the first part of October the Vietnamese attacks along route one inside Kampuchea were supported by airstrikes.

Fighting in the Mekong Delta area has been restricted by flooding for much of the summer and early fall but gradually increased during late October. Hanoi claimed to have killed or wounded 400 Kampuchians in clashes along and near the Mekong in mid-October. Late last month the Kampuchians apparently again began shelling Vietnamese border towns provoking the first Vietnamese airstrikes in the Delta in over two months.

In addition to military preparations, recent Vietnamese propaganda has increasingly referred to uprisings in Kampuchea led by insurgents opposed to the Pol Pot regime. We have no evidence to support such wide scale activity, but reports of isolated incidents involving insurgents have increased. Hanoi is known to be training Khmer insurgents who will presumably be reinserted into Kampuchea in connection with stepped up military efforts by Vietnamese forces in the border area.

### *Vietnam-China*

Since mid-October Hanoi has repeatedly charged that Peking has sent troops to violate Vietnamese territory. Hanoi claims that major

incidents occurred on October 13 and November 1. These accusations which include charges of "1000" Chinese troops entering Vietnamese territory are almost certainly exaggerated and were probably designed to set the stage for the November 3 Soviet-Vietnamese Friendship treaty and help Hanoi project the image of a smaller country forced to prepare for the contingency of a Chinese attack. Nevertheless, as the Vietnamese continue to prepare for an offensive in Kampuchea the risks of more serious incidents on the Sino-Vietnamese border increase. Peking has indicated on numerous occasions that it will send material support to Phnom Penh but does not intend to send troops to bail out the Pol Pot regime. For this reason China may feel compelled to initiate incidents along the Sino-Vietnamese border in order to warn Hanoi against precipitous action against Kampuchea. Despite some minor skirmishes by border guards, until recently neither Hanoi nor Peking had moved main force units to the border area. This week however, Hanoi reportedly has moved elements of a division formerly engaged in economic tasks in central Vietnam to positions close to the border. In addition Vietnam has reportedly fortified air defense positions near the China border further demonstrating its concern over Peking's intentions.

---

### 33. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

New York, November 30, 1978, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

OAKLEY: Let me try to clarify our current thinking for you. I realize that we owe you a response and we are aware that we are now a little tardy in this regard, as your diplomatic note of November 24 delivered in Paris<sup>2</sup> so helpfully reminded us.

CO: Our note? Yes.

OAKLEY: But let me try to provide you some clarification. During our last meeting here in New York, on October 17,<sup>3</sup> we agreed that we

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968-1991, Lot 94D430, Box 17652, New York Meetings, 1978-1979. Secret; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> The note recalled the September 22 and 27 meetings between Thach and Holbrooke in New York (see Documents 26 and 27). After the meetings, the Vietnamese gave the U.S. representatives a draft accord on the normalization of relations. The November 24 note indicated that the SRV was ready to begin working group sessions on the modalities of normalization. (Telegram 38699 from Paris, November 24; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850103-1911)

<sup>3</sup> No record of this meeting has been found.

would continue our preparations for the working group discussions. This we have done, and our preparations are now in fairly good shape.

However in the meantime, several questions have arisen, which have created a certain amount of concern in my government.

First of all, we were somewhat surprised to learn from other governments with representatives in Hanoi, that your government has been describing our talks in New York in a manner not entirely consistent with the facts of what transpired.

We have heard that your government has said that we have reached agreement to normalize relations, and that we would normalize relations before the end of the year. In addition, your note of November 24 also said things that do not correspond with the facts of the matter.

This poses certain questions. It is, of course, normal to have consultations with other governments since a number of nations are interested in the status of our normalization talks, and we ourselves have had such consultations. But to lead others into error, whether intentionally or inadvertently, gives rise to concern.

For example, in your note of November 24 and the conversations you have had with other governments, you appear to have taken as agreed the piece of paper Mr. Thach gave us on October 17.<sup>4</sup> And yet I was not in a position to agree to such a piece of paper during that meeting. Mr. Thach recognized this, and said he hoped there could be another meeting soon at which agreement would be reached. And, of course, another meeting with Mr. Thach did not occur, so there was no agreement. We have heard this from other governments and it appears to be reflected in your note of November 24. That is one question.

But having said this, let me affirm to you once again our position on normalization. It remains unchanged. At this time, we are continuing to examine the practical questions involved in the establishment of relations.

However, the timing of further conversations between us on these issues has been affected by our need to have a clearer understanding of the future implications of present developments in the region.

CO: Would you please be specific?

OAKLEY: I should say that everything I am saying to you this morning has been approved by Secretary Vance. The Secretary continues to believe, as he told Ambassador Ha Van Lau, that our discussions have formed a good basis for proceeding toward normalization. But he has asked that we raise certain questions with you in order to

---

<sup>4</sup> Not found.

understand the foundation of your policies. Our position, I repeat, has not changed but we would like to receive clarification on certain points.

First of all, the escalation in military conflict between Vietnam and Cambodia threatens stability in Southeast Asia and causes us concern. This was reflected in our recent letter to the Security Council drawing attention to this situation.<sup>5</sup> In so doing, and in all of our actions in this regard, we have not wished to take sides nor have we assigned blame to one side or the other but simply expressed our concern that this situation endangers regional peace and stability.

This is also the case with the tensions which appear to be increasing between Vietnam and China. We have noted your reports of military clashes along this border, but we have not been able to confirm them. Again, we have never tried to blame anyone for this increase in tension because we know that the situation has long roots and is very complicated.

Perhaps you saw yesterday's article in the New York Times by Henry Kamm.<sup>6</sup> It said that Vietnam was stepping up its military actions inside Cambodia. This is not necessarily the U.S. Government's viewpoint, but we are concerned over the situation. There is a danger that the conflict will escalate, particularly since there are no indications that any efforts are being made to defuse the situation.

I would also like to raise with you your recent signing of a treaty with the . . .

CO: The Russians?

OAKLEY: Yes. The Soviet-Vietnamese treaty raises questions about the future role of the USSR in the region and about your assurances of maintaining your independence and sovereignty and not allowing a Soviet military presence in Vietnam. We do not question Vietnam's right to conclude such a treaty. That is fully in keeping with your status as an independent nation.

Nevertheless, this development inevitably poses certain questions regarding the assurances given by Mr. Phan Hien and Mr. Nguyen Co Thach regarding your country's attachment to an independent foreign policy. In this connection, I would note that we even have some reports that the Soviets have told other Southeast Asian governments its naval vessels intend to use Vietnamese ports, even to include Cam Ranh Bay.

CO: (Laughter). That's news to us.

---

<sup>5</sup> The letter was dated November 1. See *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1978, p. 281.

<sup>6</sup> See Henry Kamm, "Vietnam Expanding Drive in Cambodia," *New York Times*, November 29, 1978, p. A5.

OAKLEY: Yes, we also found these reports surprising. After all, we have consistently said that we have no information to confirm the existence of Soviet bases in your country. Therefore, we are concerned over such reports and over their implications.

As Mr. Holbrooke has told you on several occasions, we remain determined not to take sides in regional conflicts. But we remain gravely concerned over these cumulative developments because of the threat they could pose to regional peace and security.

For example, a number of people have compared the Soviet-Vietnamese Treaty and the Soviet-Indian Treaty of 1971.<sup>7</sup> But let us remember that India began a war against Pakistan shortly after concluding this treaty, which apparently gave them confidence that China would not intervene. There are obvious differences, of course, in these two treaties. Vietnam and the Soviet Union are both socialist states, whereas India shares few common traditions with the USSR. But we hope the similarity does not extend to a major conflict following signature of the treaty.

CO: In other words, as with the rumors of the Soviet fleet.

OAKLEY: We are concerned about the impact of the treaty and the effect it might have on the region. No people have more reason to be weary of the burdens of war. As things are developing, there is a danger you risk being caught in a struggle between other powers.

We do not wish our dialogue on normalization to become caught up in this struggle for regional influence but we must have a clearer view of what lies ahead.

We are eager to see tensions and conflict in the area reduced and eventually eliminated. Thus our hope is that a visit to the area by Secretary General Waldheim would help reduce tensions. As a sovereign nation, such a visit is a matter for decision between you and him. But your government has apparently not been able to confirm your invitation, which could make others think that you might have a hidden reason for not having Mr. Waldheim visit at this time. This could be misinterpreted, particularly in light of what is reported to be happening in Cambodia. We would welcome any clarification your government might be able to provide in this regard.

Regarding our own policy in the region, Mr. Holbrooke has asked me to give you copies of two speeches he gave recently on this subject.<sup>8</sup> He asked that you transmit them to Mr. Thach along with his very best wishes. Mr. Holbrooke greatly appreciated his recent talks with

---

<sup>7</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. XI, South Asia Crisis, Document 116.

<sup>8</sup> Not further identified.

Mr. Thach and wishes to reiterate his high respect for him and for his commitment to the goal of normalization.

I would like to raise another question, which though perhaps of secondary importance, is still of concern to us and relates to the military equipment of U.S. origin in Vietnam. Recently we have received reports which we want to bring to your attention which indicate that there is a former American helicopter at the airport in Havana, Cuba with Vietnamese markings. In addition, we are aware of continuing efforts by a foreign businessman to sell U.S. arms abroad.

CO: Do you mean Mr. Eisenberg?

OAKLEY: (Nods). As you know, we have continued to reaffirm that you have acted very correctly in this matter and that we have no information you have allowed any of these arms to leave your country. Now we have a specific report. This may be a small point, but it is of concern to us.

CO: Could you go into detail regarding the helicopter?

OAKLEY: (Provides details.) There could of course be a legitimate explanation but we would appreciate clarification. Your correct behavior with regard to this military equipment has so far been a reassuring sign of your sincerity.

Now I would like to raise a third matter which is refugees. As you know, Vice Minister Phan Hien complained during our meeting in Paris in December 1977<sup>9</sup> that the United States was inducing refugees to leave your country. But now we understand that Prime Minister Pham Van Dong expressed pleasure during his recent tour of Southeast Asia that refugees were being well received there.

The United States itself is of course a nation of immigrants, made up of all sorts of people who fled religious or political persecution. We have a firm commitment to free emigration and a humanitarian tradition of welcoming refugees to our country. In this connection, I would note that Vietnamese refugees have done particularly well after their arrival in the United States. You may have seen a November 27 article in *U.S. News and World Report* which said that 95 percent of the Vietnamese refugees have found work.

But, the present situation, with well over 10,000 persons per month leaving Vietnam, serves no one's interest. Some organization must be brought to this situation, as you have done with individuals departing for France and Taiwan. This need not necessarily be done on the basis of formal agreements. Tacit arrangements could also serve to resolve

---

<sup>9</sup> See footnote 3, Document 19.

this problem. This is the sort of problem which can be resolved, as was possible following World War II in Europe.

But the situation in Southeast Asia is reaching truly crisis proportions. Other governments in Southeast Asia are very disturbed over the manner in which this problem has become a nearly-unmanageable problem for them.

As you know, there will be a conference on this situation in December under the auspices of the UNHCR to discuss the Indochina refugee situation.<sup>10</sup> We realize that you yourselves face problems and that you are now caring for 150,000 refugees in cooperation with Mr. Hartling. We understand that you are doing a good job and that your efforts on behalf of the Cambodian refugees greatly impressed Congressman Montgomery during his visit to your country. But it strikes some as strange that you are unwilling to cooperate with Mr. Hartling and the UNHCR regarding refugees leaving Vietnam. This is very disturbing to others, especially the countries which Prime Minister Pham Van Dong recently visited.

We would hope that a means could be found whereby departures from your country could be better organized. It is particularly important to resolve the reports that individuals are required to make a payment to officials of your government in order to depart.<sup>11</sup> This has a very bad effect on Vietnam's international image.

CO: I would like to respond.

OAKLEY: I am raising these matters because they should be of concern to you, and because their continuation does not serve your interests or those of anyone else. We would hope that you would be able to attend the December meeting on refugees. For our part, we have pledged to redouble our efforts to find shelter for these refugees. Other countries are doing so as.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, if refugee departures could be better organized, it would serve the interests of everyone.

You may be aware of Attorney General Bell's testimony before the Congress on the numbers of refugees we would be admitting. He was asked over and over again why Vietnamese are fleeing their country. What kind of situation would make them leave in such large numbers? What information did he have that people were being forced to pay bribes to leave? In this last area, we do not have proof regarding how much involvement there might be on the part of the central Vietnamese

---

<sup>10</sup> The conference was held in Geneva December 11–12.

<sup>11</sup> See Document 133.

<sup>12</sup> See Don Oberdorfer, "U.S. Acts to Admit More Indochinese, Cubans, Lebanese," *Washington Post*, November 29, 1978, p. A1.

government, but the number of reports of local officials involved raises serious questions in the minds of many in this country.

CO: I have the impression that there are now several obstacles in the path of normalization.

OAKLEY: Our position on normalization is the same, but we seek clarification on the points I have mentioned.

CO: How do you think we can proceed in normalizing relations?

OAKLEY: We remain ready, but the matters I have raised have affected the timing and pace. As you know, we had hoped to begin discussions on the practical issues during November. This has been delayed by our need for clarification.

CO: I understand you are asking for clarification. Some of the questions you have raised concern normalization. But others are not related to normalization.

OAKLEY: Yes, I understand. But as Mr. Thach has said, it took many years for Vietnam to normalize relations with France and certain other countries and, as he agreed with Mr. Holbrooke, we need to avoid misunderstandings at the beginning of the process which might haunt us once normalization was possible. That is why I have come today to seek clarification. These issues which I have raised today may technically not be related to normalization, but they go to the foundation of our relationship nevertheless.

CO: What you have said I find reassuring. You have affirmed that your policy toward normalization has not changed. I will transmit what you have said to our Ministry of Foreign Affairs. But I can reaffirm for you today our position toward normalization. I can also reaffirm the essential basis of our foreign policy, which is still the same. It is based on our need to reconstruct our country following so many years of war, our desire for normal relations and cooperation with all nations including the United States. In Southeast Asia, our policy is to seek peace and stability. The ultimate goal of our policy is to safeguard our independence.

With all governments who share our goal, we are ready to cooperate and to have friendly relations. But we shall oppose those who seek to threaten our independence, either directly or indirectly. That is at the base of the questions you have raised. If you truly understand our policy, you will understand that our concern for independence answers the questions about our relations with China, Cambodia, the Soviet Union and others. I believe that Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Indonesia have a good understanding of our policy and goals.

OAKLEY: But they are more and more uneasy regarding the situation.



CO: That's it. (C'est ca.)

OAKLEY: As I have said before, it is not a question of assigning blame.

CO: We are certain we have common goals with the countries of Southeast Asia: Peace, prosperity, stability, all based on independence. We can cooperate with those who share these goals. But with others, those who menace our independence and who do not share these goals, there are problems.

OAKLEY: Perhaps a visit by Secretary General Waldheim to your country would be an opportunity to demonstrate your commitment to peace and independence.

CO: Since 1975, it is clear that we have sought peace. It is not the time to discuss the past. With regard to Cambodia we have done everything possible to resolve the conflict. You have our three point declaration. And with China, we will try to resolve our differences, in keeping with our policy of independence. But in our position, with the attitude and policies of China and with all that has occurred, to pursue this goal of national independence we need options. That's why we signed our treaty with the Soviets. This treaty is not aimed against any third country. We had to face a direct and urgent menace to our independence from a third country. That is why we concluded our treaty with the Soviets.

You have raised rumors about Soviet fleet visits.

If you raise questions like that, it will not be possible to make progress on normalization. I wonder if you are not raising this to delay our talks.

OAKLEY: We are raising these matters in order to seek clarification. After all, we have consistently been in the forefront in denying rumors about ship visits, bases, etc. in the past.

CO: When I met Montgomery in Hanoi, the first question he asked me on the road in from the airport was whether there were Soviet bases in Vietnam. He said he did not believe there were, but that he wanted to ask the question. I asked him where<sup>13</sup> this rumor had come from, and he said that he had heard it from the Chinese Embassy in Washington.

OAKLEY: I told Montgomery before he left for Hanoi there was no information to confirm Soviet bases in your country. And we are not accusing you of having such bases. I am merely bringing to your attention what others tell us in order to seek clarification.

---

<sup>13</sup> An unknown hand replaced "whether" with "where." See Document 21.

CO: I agree that we must discuss these matters in a spirit of frankness.

OAKLEY: I wish to affirm that we are not accusing you of having such bases.

CO: I think that for reasons of internal politics you wish to have clarification.

OAKLEY: We do not wish to see the region become polarized and we hope you will take care not to be drawn into a larger struggle. If means could be found to begin de-escalating the tensions, this would be reassuring for us. Speaking personally, we and the French<sup>14</sup> went through a situation<sup>15</sup> where it was difficult for us to be objective because we were so deeply involved, and we have been criticized because of our lack of comprehension.

CO: When I read Mr. Holbrooke's remarks<sup>16</sup> in Boston regarding the Soviet-Vietnamese treaty, I agreed with his statement that it is important that outside superpowers should not interfere in Southeast Asia. But by the same token, outside powers should also not threaten the independence of countries in Southeast Asia or attempt to interfere in internal affairs. If this happens, then there is instability. For example, Chinese policy since 1970 has not been conducive to peace and stability in the region. The reason for recent moves in Vietnamese policy is that China has not been playing by the rules of the game. If there has been a change in the situation, this has been because of a superpower outside the region. The cause of danger comes not from our treaty with the Soviets but from the Chinese.

But nevertheless, I believe that these matters should be clarified, and I will transmit what you have raised.

OAKLEY: You are a member of the international community and, speaking personally, I see advantage for you to seek broad support from the international community, not just support from the Soviet Union. You need international moral and material support. I hope you will think about this and seek United Nations support, and not act exclusively on a bilateral basis which can only complicate the situation. There is too much emotion tied into Soviet-Chinese relations.

CO: During our long struggle for independence, we learned many lessons. That is why we search for international support. As for Waldheim, it is not that we do not want him to visit. To the contrary. When our Foreign Minister was here, he invited him. We have taken the first

---

<sup>14</sup> An unknown hand inserted "both."

<sup>15</sup> An unknown hand inserted "in Southeast Asia."

<sup>16</sup> See Don Oberdorfer, "U.S. Accuses Vietnam on Refugees," *Washington Post*, November 17, 1978, p. A-1.

step, but when we invited him he was too busy to accept then. He said no, not this year but later. That is why we could not arrange a visit for this year.

OAKLEY: But that can be a subject for misinterpretation. Again, I would refer you to the article which recently appeared in the *New York Times* for an indication of popular opinion regarding your conflict with Cambodia. Where possible, you should take steps to avoid this kind of misunderstanding.

CO: Returning to Mr. Thach's statements in Hanoi regarding the prospects for normalization, perhaps these represented our hopes in this regard. But you should not use these statements or other rumors to pose obstacles to normalization.

OAKLEY: But your note of November 24 also says essentially the same thing as Mr. Thach was saying in Hanoi. There is the same confusion of facts and hopes.

CO: I am certain that our note was textually accurate. Mr. Holbrooke and Mr. Thach agreed that agreement would be reached on what could be agreed to. The only differences related to reaching agreement on words to express this. The concrete things were to be worked out later.

OAKLEY: But there was no agreement on principle; nothing was finalized. Both sides hoped to have an agreement.

CO: You are using this as a pretext to block normalization. Both sides agreed that working groups would work toward an agreed text on establishing relations and the details of setting up embassies and lifting the trade embargo.

OAKLEY: That is correct. But there was no accord on principles, only agreement that our desires were the same. Mr. Thach expressed surprise that the U.S. would not first agree in principle as other governments had done. But this is our position, so no agreement has been reached. There is a desire on our part to work this out. I don't want to exaggerate this problem and you should not attach too great an importance to it just because I raised it first.

CO: And regarding the other questions you raised?

OAKLEY: We would also appreciate clarification. Again, we are not accusing you. For example, with regard to reports of bases, your actions so far have been impressive in terms of substantiating your assurances to us.

CO: And regarding arms sales?

OAKLEY: Again, this may not be important, but we would appreciate some clarification.

CO: You know we need money, but we are not breaking our assurances to you.

OAKLEY: Well, there probably is not much money to be made from that equipment now. And in any event, we know that you are using it on a daily basis.

CO: Let me share with you several personal impressions of contemporary history. During the history of our contacts, it seems that we have always been the ones to take the first step toward closer relations. In 1941, during the second world war, we made contact with your military, and again in 1945. But you did not continue the relationship.

OAKLEY: If I might make a personal remark, I believe that was an error due to the death of President Roosevelt. We then became too concerned over France.

CO: And in 1946, President Ho Chi Minh even incorporated several paragraphs from the United States Declaration of Independence into our own Declaration of Independence. And in 1954, we also attempted to improve relations with the United States. In 1973, just after the terrible B-52 bombings we welcomed Henry Kissinger to Hanoi. However, we always suspected that previous administrations, which were engaged in war, did not have the will to change their attitudes toward us. That's why we expected other things from you. We welcomed President Carter's statement on normalization with pleasure, as we did his commission headed by Mr. Woodcock.<sup>17</sup> And then we agreed to meet in Paris and we have had our meetings in New York and, I believe our position on normalization has evolved.

OAKLEY: I agree, and for our part we have welcomed you into the United Nations.

CO: But it seems to me that we have always been the ones to take the next step. And we have done this not without objections and contrary opinions from some, including some of our friends, who have warned us that we were playing the American's game. They argued that the Americans give priority to the China card and to relations with others. They warned us not to expect anything.

OAKLEY: That is what we want to avoid—that our policy toward Vietnam would become caught up in our policy toward third countries. Nevertheless, perceptions in the United States are inevitably affected by such events as the SRV-Soviet treaty. That is why we are asking for clarification. There is increasing concern that the situation is inevitably progressing toward a disastrous turn of events. This is what we want to prevent, we want to avoid war.

---

<sup>17</sup> See Document 8.

CO: We can let the facts speak for themselves. Everyone should try to avoid the errors of the past. However, today I cannot hide a certain disappointment.

OAKLEY: When I was in Lebanon I witnessed the consequence of outside interference. Outside forces were manipulating the conflict<sup>18</sup> for their own benefit. But it was the people of the country who had to pay the price. We would like to see a situation like that avoided in Southeast Asia. In other words, a war being waged for the interests of outsiders who are able to avoid the direct costs. For them, it is not painful. And it is a difficult problem. How can this be avoided, in Asia or elsewhere?

CO: We do not want to go back to the past in our relations with the United States. We look to the present and to the future. We would like to move forward into a new era which is completely different. But I must confess to a certain disappointment ("deception"). I have the impression that you are being held back by the past. I think that your memories of the past are hampering your policy on normalization.

OAKLEY: The problem does not lie with our memories of the past, but in our serious concern for the future.

CO: I will transmit your thoughts and the account of our friendly conversations of today. We will contact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Once we have a response . . .

OAKLEY: Yes, that is what we want.

CO: And might we have a response also?

OAKLEY: To your note of the 24th? Yes, we will give you a response.

*NOTE:* As the meeting broke up, Co indicated that he would not be staying in New York much longer and would be returning to Hanoi soon. It was agreed that the Vietnamese response would come through New York or Paris and our response to their note of the 24th would be conveyed through Paris. Co wished us a Happy New Year as we left.

---

<sup>18</sup> An unknown hand replaced "conflict" with "country."

### 34. Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>

RPM 78-10490

Washington, December 15, 1978

#### *Another Cambodian War*

##### *Key Judgments*

The pace of military activity in eastern Kampuchea is increasing and a major commitment of Vietnamese forces could occur at any time. Given Kampuchea's military and political weaknesses, the constraints on Chinese ability to deter Vietnam and Hanoi's overwhelming military advantages, the prognosis for the Pol Pot regime is not good. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Hanoi, with a much better informed reading of the situation in Kampuchea than our own, appears hopeful that its impending military campaign in eastern Kampuchea will lead to a quick unraveling of Phnom Penh's military resistance, large-scale defections to its newly created Khmer National Front, and conditions of genuine civil war—in short, circumstances that would not require a highly visible, expensive and protracted Vietnamese military involvement in Kampuchea. [*portion marking not declassified*]

If the next several months do not produce such a scenario, we are not convinced that Hanoi necessarily will opt for an all-out military drive on Phnom Penh and the transparent imposition of a puppet government. Under such circumstances Hanoi could find itself involved in an indefinite occupation of Kampuchea in support of a puppet government encircled by anti-Vietnamese guerrillas possibly still supported by China through Thailand. Vietnam retains the option of a less exposed strategy—the gradual development of Khmer insurgent operations stiffened by limited Vietnamese military support and this could extend the conflict well beyond the dry season fighting period that ends in the late spring. [*portion marking not declassified*]

We doubt that Vietnam has committed itself to any absolute course of action or binding timetable at this point. If past performance is any guide, Hanoi will be ready to exploit to the hilt any opportunities. But, Hanoi also will be constantly reassessing Kampuchean military and political resiliency, the risk of Chinese counter-action, and the develop-

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 80T00634A: Production Case Files, Box 5, [unfolded material]. Secret; [*handling restriction not declassified*]. A note on the first page indicates the memorandum was prepared by the East Asia-Pacific Division of the Office of Regional and Political Analysis and was coordinated with the Office of Strategic Research in the National Foreign Assessment Center.

ment of their Khmer insurgent organization in deciding how far and how fast to push its campaign. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The Chinese hope that a sudden collapse of the Pol Pot government can be averted, but they clearly are attempting to position themselves for a major setback in Phnom Penh. We believe that the Chinese recognize their extremely limited capacity to deter Vietnam and that they currently are concentrating on reactive options that will limit the damage to their prestige and credibility. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Peking's fortunes in Kampuchea are not tied exclusively to Pol Pot. The Chinese apparently are considering supporting an anti-Vietnamese insurgency in Kampuchea whether or not Phnom Penh falls. Although we believe China is determined to avoid open conflict with Vietnam, it will take steps to demonstrate its determination to resist further Vietnamese expansion in the region. A propaganda offensive against Hanoi and its "hegemonistic" ally, the USSR, is already developing, but we may also see more tangible demonstrations such as stepped-up Chinese military presence on the Sino-Vietnamese border, or more aggressive patrolling in the South China Sea. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The manner in which deep-seated racial hatred, high emotion, and very real considerations of national interest and prestige intersect in the Kampuchean situation also argues for caution in attempting to precisely chart future developments. Heightened Sino-Vietnamese tension over Kampuchea could lead to miscalculation, outright conflict and larger consequences outside the realm of Southeast Asia that both sides would prefer to avoid. Our basic ignorance of internal political dynamics in Kampuchea and the resiliency of the Pol Pot regime also detracts from our confidence. We cannot rule out the possibility of sudden political change in Phnom Penh—the reemergence of Sihanouk or a descent into total anarchy and confusion—that could substantially alter our view and possibly cause a readjustment in Vietnamese strategy. [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *Hanoi's Perspective*

Unsuccessful in its efforts to attain a position of influence in Kampuchea through its involvement in the war against the former Lon Nol regime, Hanoi subsequently has even found it impossible to live alongside the successor Communist regime in Phnom Penh. Even before the war against Lon Nol ended, the Khmer Communist leadership was ruthlessly purging Vietnamese-trained and influenced Kampucheans and continued to develop ties with China, as Vietnam's own relationship with Peking deteriorated. The Pol Pot regime has been both intransigent and provocative in pursuing the border dispute with Vietnam. The resulting conflict has cost many Vietnamese lives while

draining away resources badly needed for Hanoi's economic reconstruction efforts. [*portion marking not declassified*]

It has been clear for some time now that Hanoi last spring abandoned any hope of reaching a *modus vivendi* with the present regime in Phnom Penh. Large-scale Vietnamese military preparations, Vietnamese-sponsored Khmer resistance activity in eastern Kampuchea, and Hanoi's new treaty with Moscow all point to this conclusion. Any lingering doubts on this score—if any existed—have been removed by Hanoi's announcement on 3 December 1978 of a "Kampuchean National United Front for National Salvation." By establishing and recognizing their own rival Khmer political alternative to the Phnom Penh regime, the Vietnamese, in effect, have inaugurated another Cambodian war. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Are the Vietnamese prepared to commit whatever level of overt military force may be necessary to install and maintain a friendly government in Phnom Penh? On paper the military solution, at first glance, seems simple; Vietnamese forces could easily be in Phnom Penh in a matter of days, if not hours. But in practice, the situation is not so simple. When political risks and larger strategic considerations are taken into account, the Vietnamese face a complex and potentially dangerous problem. Hanoi, well-experienced in the difficulties of maintaining military and insurgent operations in Cambodia, certainly understands the difficulty of imposing a "final solution." We believe this recognition will greatly influence the decisions Vietnam will make as their campaign against Phnom Penh unfolds. [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *A United Offensive*

Initial Vietnamese objectives will be largely limited to gaining the upper hand militarily in the region of Kampuchea east of the Mekong. In expanding and linking their existing enclaves, the Vietnamese will be attempting to preempt retaliatory Kampuchean strikes into Vietnamese territory and to secure and expand a base area for the development of a credible Khmer resistance force. We, as yet, do not have a clear idea as to existing insurgent capabilities. We do not have reports that some Khmer Communist troops have defected to the Vietnamese side. We doubt, however, that Hanoi's Khmer forces will be able to operate as more than an auxiliary force during this dry season. The Vietnamese, of course, will be passing off the fighting in Kampuchea as the work of anti-regime insurgents; for the record, Hanoi denies that its own forces are in the country. [*portion marking not declassified*]

As in last year's dry season campaign, Hanoi's principal objective east of the Mekong will be the destruction of as much of the Kampuchean army as possible. Hanoi will be attempting to draw the Kampu-



cheans into set-piece battles such as the one at Snuol in mid-November where the Vietnamese inflicted heavy losses on one of Phnom Penh's divisions. The Vietnamese probably hope that a series of similar defeats will lead to a general collapse of Kampuchean resistance east of the Mekong and wholesale defection of Kampuchean units—developments that would indeed allow the struggle in Kampuchea to take on the characteristic of a genuine civil war and allow the Vietnamese to remain militarily in the background in subsequent fighting. [*portion marking not declassified*]

*Or A Drive on Phnom Penh?*

Hanoi, of course, cannot count on conclusive and optimum results from the initial round of dry season fighting, especially if the Kampuchians can continue to avoid the trap of set-piece battles and rely on the guerrilla tactics which have served them well in the past. Less conclusive results will confront Hanoi with a difficult choice: on the one hand, the swift imposition of a Vietnamese client regime in Phnom Penh—a course of action that will require a bald Vietnamese military drive against the capital and possible protracted fighting against Khmer Communist forces throughout the country—and, on the other, a more patient struggle based on limited Vietnamese military action and a long-term nurturing and expansion of allied Khmer insurgent forces—essentially the strategy adopted by Hanoi during the first Cambodian war against Lon Nol. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Hanoi clearly would prefer a quick end to the conflict in Kampuchea. High desertion rates from Vietnamese combat units and intelligence reports both indicate that service in Kampuchea is highly unpopular. More importantly, a protracted conflict could delay by years the planned economic reconstruction and integration of southern Vietnam. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Hanoi, however, will find no guarantee that the results of an all-out military drive on Phnom Penh will prove more conclusive or less expensive than a more patient and protracted strategy. Although the Pol Pot regime would not survive such a Vietnamese coup de main, there would be substantial resistance to a swift and blatant imposition of a Vietnamese puppet government in Phnom Penh. Hanoi's Khmer force at this state would be in no position to provide the military underpinning for such an embattled regime. Under such circumstances Hanoi could find itself involved in an indefinite occupation of Kampuchea in support of a puppet government encircled by anti-Vietnamese guerrillas possibly still supported by China through Thailand. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The ASEAN states, Thailand in particular, see Vietnam's moves against Kampuchea as evidence of Hanoi's aggressive and ambitious

nature—a reaction clearly anticipated and discounted in advance by Hanoi. But in reaching a decision to proceed with an all-out military option, the Vietnamese must still factor in the possibility of escalating political and diplomatic costs. Thailand, alarmed by the prospect of Vietnamese troops on its border, has contingency plans to back Khmer resistance activity against a pro-Vietnamese government and is probably prepared to cooperate with China in the process. The repercussions of Vietnam's actions probably would ripple beyond Southeast Asia. Western aid would certainly decrease, chances of improving relations with the US set back, and Vietnam would be left even more dependent on the Soviet Union. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Hanoi must also factor the Chinese reaction into any decision to proceed with an all-out military effort, although they may now believe that [with] the treaty with Moscow, the chance of Chinese retaliation or intervention has been substantially reduced. In any event, we believe that the specter of a Kampuchean morass now is acting as a greater constraint on Vietnamese action against the Pol Pot regime than has the threat of Chinese counteraction. *[portion marking not declassified]*

#### *The Chinese View*

More, of course, is at stake than the continued existence of a Khmer government. China's credibility in playing a great power role in Southeast Asia, and the future course of Sino-Vietnamese and, by extension, Sino-Soviet rivalry could be affected by the outcome of Kampuchea. For at least two decades the cultivation of an independent Cambodia, responsive to Chinese influence, has been a central feature of Peking's policy in Southeast Asia. The imposition of a Vietnamese client regime there would be seen by the Chinese as a sharp Vietnamese and Soviet rebuff to Peking's security and regional interests. *[portion marking not declassified]*

China's geographic separation, its lack of adequate transport, and the xenophobic nature of its Khmer clients, however, sharply limit Peking's ability to influence events on the ground. In the past Peking has seen little recourse but to depend on a weak and discouragingly eccentric regime to protect China's interests in Kampuchea. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The Chinese still hope that the Pol Pot government can avoid a quick collapse and the resultant damage to Chinese prestige and interests. If the Pol Pot regime does not hold on during the course of this dry season, Peking's policies in the region would remain essentially as they are today. The Chinese would continue sea and air supply to the Kampucheans, perhaps increasing it at whatever rate the regime could absorb. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Peking's recognition that a major setback may now be at hand, however, is reflected by the increasingly pessimistic tone of private

Chinese comments on the prospects in Kampuchea. The signing last month of a Soviet-Vietnam friendship treaty, while probably not significantly adding to the considerations that already had limited China's options, almost certainly reinforced Peking's judgment that the Vietnamese were prepared to pursue a confrontation with Phnom Penh that China could do little to deter. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Accordingly, Peking now is trying to make the point that Chinese credibility and long-term influence in Kampuchea and Southeast Asia in general are by no means tied exclusively to Pol Pot. China's media reaction to events in Kampuchea has avoided enthusiastic support for Pol Pot or any direct threat to Hanoi. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Chinese officials, in fact, now are authoritatively ruling out the sending of combat troops to Kampuchea. The Chinese also have not attempted serious saber-rattling along the Sino-Vietnamese border or massive infusions of equipment into Kampuchea, probably because they recognize that these efforts would not constitute a serious constraint on Vietnam's intentions. [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *China's Options*

These negative indicators, in addition to reflecting Peking's pessimism about the prospects for Pol Pot, suggest that the Chinese now are concentrating on developing alternative *reactions* to a successful or partially successful Vietnamese campaign against Kampuchea, rather than on devising new, expanded means to save Pol Pot from military disaster. [*portion marking not declassified*]

If a viable, anti-Vietnam resistance develops after a collapse of the Pol Pot government, Peking clearly would attempt to stay in the game. Even if a substantial portion of Kampuchea falls to the Vietnamese, the Chinese could sustain supply lines to an insurgent force by air and sea (through Thailand if necessary), forcing the Vietnamese to divert resources to the Kampuchea fighting. Peking already has made some tentative arrangements with Bangkok for this contingency. [*portion marking not declassified*]

In short, Peking would seek to be in a position to assert that an independent Kampuchea still exists and that China was maximizing its efforts against Vietnamese "hegemonism." Chinese would step up their charges of Vietnamese "interference" in Kampuchea and their warnings of Hanoi's "expansionist" aims in the rest of Southeast Asia. Under these circumstances, the Chinese also could take satisfaction from their contribution to the Kampuchean morass into which Hanoi had fallen. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Depending on the pace and scale of Vietnam's moves in Kampuchea, Peking may want to demonstrate its unhappiness to Hanoi. Peking could intensify its saber-rattling along the Sino-Vietnamese

border by moving main force units to the region, stepping up air activity over the border, or provoking armed border incidents. Similarly, Peking could beef up its military presence on Hainan Island, on the Paracel Islands, and in the South China Sea generally. From these strengthened positions, the Chinese could attempt to harass Vietnamese shipping and naval activity, in or near the Tonkin Gulf. Peking could also strengthen its military presence in northern Laos or explore the possibility of supporting anti-Vietnamese forces there in a bid to harass the Vietnamese on a new front. *[portion marking not declassified]*

In pursuing this kind of activity, we believe China's deep commitment to economic modernization at home, diplomatic outreach abroad, and concern about possible Soviet reactions will cause Peking to stop short of prompting outright conflict with Hanoi. On the other hand, we cannot rule out the possibility that China, in seeking some psychological compensation for a defeat in Kampuchea, will pursue "punitive" operations against Vietnam that ultimately will have more far-reaching repercussions. There are always possibilities for miscalculation and over-reaction in a situation as emotion-laden as the current Sino-Vietnamese relationship. If the situation on China's southern flank deteriorates to anything resembling war between the two countries, Peking would find it extremely difficult to withdraw without suffering even greater damage to its credibility than it would over the loss of Kampuchea. The USSR, under the terms of its friendship pact with Hanoi, might then be driven to attempt to divert Peking's attention from Indochina, most likely by provoking some form of military confrontation on the Sino-Soviet border. *[portion marking not declassified]*

### *The Soviet Option*

The Soviets for their part see the Kampuchean conflict as an opportunity to inflict a significant setback to Chinese interests in Southeast Asia at a relatively low cost and risk to themselves. Moscow probably believes that, as the situation evolves over the next few months, it will be required to do little more than continue providing political support and aid to the Vietnamese. Moscow, of course, cannot rule out the possibility that Hanoi's move against Kampuchea could ultimately bring Sino-Vietnamese tensions to the point that some demonstration of further Soviet activity in support of its ally is required. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The Soviets could hold highly visible consultations with the Vietnamese under article six of their friendship treaty. The Soviets could step-up conspicuously the quantity and quality of their military aid to Vietnam. Moscow might also consider a naval portcall or show of force off the coast of Vietnam. Depending on events, the Soviets might ultimately consider engaging in some saber-rattling on the Sino-Soviet

border, possibly in the form of increased reconnaissance or exercise activity. Moscow, however, has welcomed the relative quiet there since the fighting in 1969 and would be extremely loathe to raise the level of tension to the extent of provoking a renewal of cross-border incidents. [*portion marking not declassified*]

*A Final Caveat*

Our basic ignorance of internal political dynamics in Kampuchea and the stability of the Pol Pot regime further detracts from our confidence in estimating the future course of events. Hanoi may be underestimating the political and military resiliency of the Kampuchean regime. On the other hand, our limited information suggests both considerable political flux over the past three years and Chinese disenchantment with the Pol Pot regime. We cannot rule out the possibility of a new Chinese-backed “government of national union” coming to power in Phnom Penh, perhaps headed by Peking’s old ally Prince Sihanouk, which would announce sweeping domestic reforms and a new willingness to negotiate the border dispute with Vietnam. Peking might believe, perhaps more out of desperation than logic, that such a government could rally enough domestic and international support to cause Hanoi to scale back its objectives and military operations in Kampuchea. Another possibility, and perhaps a more likely one, is an internal political collapse in the face of Vietnam military pressure leading to total confusion and anarchy throughout the country—a situation that probably would impel Vietnam to fill the political vacuum swiftly with its own Khmer government. [*portion marking not declassified*]

---

**35. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

New York, December 19, 1978

Tranh Quang Co: I understand you have recently returned from your trip to Geneva and Southeast Asia. We realize that this was the reason you were not able to meet with us earlier. But with Christmas coming up, we were a bit anxious to see you.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968–1991, Lot 94D430, New York Meetings, 1978–1979. Secret; Nodis.

Robert Oakley: Yes, I have recently returned from the UNHCR meeting in Geneva<sup>2</sup> where I had the opportunity to see Ambassador Sung,<sup>3</sup> who headed your delegation. I have also had an opportunity to see the reports of Foreign Minister Trinh's and Vice Foreign Minister Phan Hien's press conferences in Tokyo.

Co: Since our last meeting I have received instructions from Hanoi to respond to the points you raised during our last meeting.<sup>4</sup> Let me express myself in English. (Began reading from notes.)

Vietnam is astonished to see the U.S. linking the question of normalization of relations with the situation in Cambodia and with the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union, even though the two sides had agreed that normalization was an affair between the two countries and should not be subject to preconditions.

Normalization could have been concluded at the end of September or at the beginning of October, if the U.S. side had desired.

At that time, we asked whether your side did not deliberately try to delay. Now the U.S. is making a pretext of requesting clarification regarding recent developments which have no connection with normalization. It seems that your intention is to avoid moving forward, contrary to previous agreement.

This is utterly absurd. We strongly reject the U.S. request for explanations.

Concerning the questions raised by the U.S., it is necessary to say clearly that, first of all, regarding Cambodia, we reaffirm our longstanding policy is based on non-aggression and noninterference in the internal affairs of others.

We had wished that the Phnom Penh regime would have pursued normal relations, and would not have embarked on a policy of war toward Vietnam. We had hoped it would have followed policies of independence, neutrality, policies conducive to peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

Vietnam believes that the Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation is a positive factor, based on the aspirations of the Cambodian people.

Secondly, regarding the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union, we have the feeling that by raising this matter as a subject for concern you sound much like China. It is obvious that Vietnam has exercised restraint toward Cambodia. Vietnam signed

---

<sup>2</sup> The December 11–12 conference in Geneva sponsored by the UNHCR was attended by 37 nations and 5 NGOs. Newsom headed the U.S. delegation.

<sup>3</sup> Vo Van Sung, Vietnamese Ambassador to France.

<sup>4</sup> See Document 33.

this treaty with the Soviet Union only in order to assist our peaceful reconstruction and for purposes of legitimate self-defense. Public opinion recognizes this. Before and after the signing of the treaty Vietnam sought to normalize relations with the United States.

Thirdly, with regard to the refugee issue and Vietnamese policy toward Southeast Asia, Vietnam decided to follow a policy aimed at improving relations on the basis of friendship, cooperation and non-interference aimed at promoting peace and stability in the region in order to advance the peaceful reconstruction of our country, following 30 years of war. This is a long-term policy. As for the refugees, Vietnam gets no benefit from the continuation of the refugee situation, which is a consequence of the war. It is a problem which will be overcome gradually and with some outside economic aid.

Because of what the U.S. agreed on normalization, the Head of the North American Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has waited in New York over two months to work out the draft of the agreement to normalize relations and to resolve concrete matters.

Now Hanoi asks whether the United States envisages that in a short time the working groups can begin meeting as agreed. If so, then Mr. Co will stay. If there is a delay and the U.S. can not meet soon, Mr. Co will return home. We hope for a reply soon.

Lastly, Vietnam affirms its good will toward the question of normalization, as shown from the beginning. Vietnam is ready to settle the affair promptly, as agreed, to the benefit of both sides.

Oakley: Let me respond. What you have said is interesting and conforms to what Mr. Trinh and Mr. Phan Hien have been saying in Tokyo.

Your question about when working groups might meet is a fair one. We should provide you with a response, although I should say that I am not optimistic. I am not in a position to give you a definite answer at this time. I would hope to have a response in approximately one week.

I prefer your question regarding working groups, which is factually correct, to the statement you have made, which is similar to what Minister Trinh said in Tokyo, regarding an agreement to normalize relations. This is not factually correct. An agreement to normalize relations was never reached.

We are not imposing preconditions or deliberately seeking to delay normalization. There has been no change in our position on this question. We are merely seeking clarification on several recent developments of concern to us. Seeking clarification is not establishing preconditions; it is a legitimate way to proceed when moving toward a normal relationship.



Regarding the Treaty, we are not questioning the Treaty itself or your right to conclude such an agreement. We have simply requested clarification of its implications in a regional context. The Treaty does have military aspects, and, as we have told you before, we are concerned that this might lead to direct major power involvement in South-east Asia, as well as escalating rather than diminishing existing tensions—tensions we had thought might decline and even disappear after 1975. We hope that time will prove that your explanation of the Treaty, and that of Mr. Trinh, is correct, and that it will not lead to great power involvement and that tensions will indeed diminish. We have not yet reached a judgement in this regard. It is still too soon to make such a judgement.

Regarding your statement on Cambodia, I note that Mr. Phan Hien stated in Tokyo that the current conflict had grown into a “genuine border war.” You will recall that during the period earlier this year and late last year when this was indeed the case we took care to avoid any public or private statement on the conflict. We are not in a position to make a judgement on the border problem which we know is a very complicated one arising from conflicting claims dating back many years. It was only after we received reliable reports, which were confirmed by Radio Hanoi, that Vietnam was actively engaged in an effort to overthrow the Phnom Penh Government—through the use of military force deep inside Cambodia, not just in the border areas—that we expressed our concern over this threat to regional peace and stability—a concern shared by other Asian states. We did so not in an attempt to affix responsibility for the conflict—we understand the difficulties you have had with Cambodia—but to express our concern over the implications of this expanded conflict. Our concern has increased as Vietnamese military involvement inside Cambodia has increased.

Regarding the Kampuchean Front for National Salvation, you have said this morning and Mr. Trinh has said in Tokyo that Vietnam supports this organization because it espouses a negotiated settlement of the conflict. However, the objective of the Front, as described by its radio and Radio Hanoi, is to bring about the overthrow of the current Phnom Penh Government, a goal which we see as precisely the opposite of a negotiated settlement and an objective most unlikely to encourage negotiations with Phnom Penh.

We do not approve of the practices and policies of the Phnom Penh government. We were the first to express publicly our strong criticism of this regime. As a result we were criticized, by other Southeast Asian countries, by China and by other nations. But we were seeking a peaceful solution to the problems posed by this government’s policies.

We are concerned over an apparent contradiction in your position. On the one hand, Mr. Trinh, Mr. Phan Hien and you say that Vietnam



is dedicated to peace and non-interference in other countries. Yet you are supporting an organization dedicated to overthrowing the government in Phnom Penh, an objective which your radio says you share. This goes against Pham Van Dong's assurances to other Southeast Asian countries that you would not support subversion in their countries. This is a philosophical problem.

There is also a practical problem. If one seeks a peaceful, negotiated solution to a conflict, one should not call for the overthrow of the government involved. This is not peace.

This conflict causes us great concern, as it does other nations in the region. They, like we, do not support the overthrow of the Phnom Penh government, even if they do not approve of its actions.

We are concerned that the result of your present policies will be a prolongation of the war, which risks bringing about direct great power involvement. We would like to find some practical means of facilitating a solution. That is why we have encouraged Secretary General Waldheim to visit the region. Again, we are not encouraging the Secretary General to make this visit in order to make accusations. But given the difficulty which exists in establishing a dialogue among the governments involved, we would hope that the Secretary General could provide a channel for discussion and perhaps a solution. Such a visit is obviously up to the governments in the area and it is for the governments involved to decide if and when the Secretary General should visit. But the way things are now proceeding is working against a peaceful solution and contradicts a policy of the peaceful settlement of differences, non-interference in the internal affairs of others, and non-subversion.

Concerning the refugee problem, your government through the statement you provided us today and through remarks of Ambassador Sung in Geneva, has taken the position that it bears no responsibility for the causes of the problem and has no ability to influence the situation, and that it is unable to control or regulate people leaving. Speaking very frankly, this is difficult to accept. The number of refugees in September was four or five thousand. Suddenly in October the number jumped to ten thousand, then in November to 20 thousand. Reliable sources indicate that many Vietnamese officials are actively engaged in facilitating the highly organized departure of refugees. No one disputes your charges that outside organizations, perhaps made up of overseas Chinese, are also involved in assisting these departures. But the active participation of officials of your government in facilitating departures and who are receiving large amounts of money from refugees who wish to depart, raises very serious questions about your government's attitude and lack of responsiveness.

Why has the number shot up?

We are concerned also about a situation in which so many people feel they must flee at great danger. We are concerned over the seeming panic and fear which causes so many people to take such great risks.

The pattern of reasons given by refugees indicates that it is a sense of desperation rather than concern over the loss of certain economic advantages which prompts their departure.

We and others are not suggesting that Vietnam slam the door on people wishing to leave, but that your government exercise its authority—as a government—to work with the UNHCR to arrange orderly departures, as you have done and are now doing with individuals who have ties to Taiwan, Hong Kong and France. The UNHCR would be interested in participating in such procedures, but there has been no word from Ambassador Sung or others regarding such a practical approach.

We understand the economic difficulties which your society is undergoing and the extra burden posed by people in your new society. What we are suggesting is that you adopt a more orderly and humane manner of departure for those who want to depart.

We also hope that Mr. Phan Hien's remarks in Tokyo—as well as other statements you have made—regarding Vietnam's willingness to allow family reunification will soon show results. In the past, there has been a lot of talk that you were setting up "new mechanisms" to facilitate this process. Statements along these lines were made to Senator Kennedy, whose delegation last summer was able to arrange the departure of some 20 people.<sup>5</sup> However, this is the only time the "new machinery" has functioned. Since then there has been nothing. As our embassy in Bangkok recently made clear to Mr. Vu Hoang<sup>6</sup>—whom we believe is doing a good job—we are prepared to issue immigrant visas to more than 5,000 Vietnamese whose relatives are in the United States. The UNHCR and the International Red Cross have also made this point to your government but there has been no response.

We are prepared to give the dossiers on these people to your embassy in Bangkok or elsewhere. Then all that would have to be done would be for your government to agree to issue exit permits. The French Consulate in Ho Chi Minh City, or the UNHCR or another

---

<sup>5</sup> Kennedy sent a staff delegation to Vietnam August 7–9. Telegram 22785 from Bangkok, August 10, summarized talks between the American delegation and Vietnamese officials. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780327–0368) Telegram 23092 from Bangkok, August 13, provided observations made by Kennedy's staff while in Vietnam. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780331–0529)

<sup>6</sup> Telegram 36091 from Bangkok, December 8, described the December 6 meeting with Vu Hoang in which refugee issues were discussed. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780509–0466)

organization, would be able to provide them with some sort of travel documents to allow them to proceed to Bangkok where immigrant visas for the United States could be issued.

This would be a small but concrete step which would indicate your government's willingness to resolve the humanitarian problem of people wishing to leave Vietnam.

We understand, as Ambassador Sung noted in Geneva, that Vietnam is now in the process of caring for over 400,000 persons who formerly lived in Cambodia. We respect your efforts and what you are doing for them. The United States will provide funds through the UNHCR which are being used to help these refugees inside Vietnam as it has provided funds to assist refugees outside your country. This is a humane problem, not a political problem. Our hope is that, because it is in your interest as well as in the interests of other governments, an orderly process for the departure of refugees from your country can be found, to reduce and make more manageable this humanitarian problem.

Let me add one more point which you did not raise, but which Mr. Trinh mentioned in Tokyo. I would just call your attention to the Joint Communique which the United States and the People's Republic of China have issued to announce their decision to normalize relations.<sup>7</sup> As President Carter has noted, normalization of relations between the United States and the People's Republic of China should not be viewed as aimed at any third party. It also does not reflect any intention by the United States to support one side or another in current regional disputes in Southeast Asia. As Assistant Secretary Holbrooke has repeatedly told you and your colleagues, we favor a peaceful, stable system of independent states in the region and we will not take sides in current regional disputes.

United States policies toward Vietnam and China stand on their own merits. The establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and China will have no effect—one way or the other—on our policy toward normalizing relations with Vietnam. In this connection, I would like to say that we appreciated the point which Mr. Phan Hien made in Tokyo to the effect that he was certain that the United States would not allow China to affect our policies toward normalizing relations with Vietnam. Please tell him that he is absolutely correct.

Co: (In Vietnamese) First of all I think that we must return to the real fact of our presence here today. Concerning working groups and

---

<sup>7</sup> For the text of the joint communiqué, December 15, see *Public Papers: Carter, 1978*, Book II, pp. 2264–2266.

normalization, can we understand that there is no definite decision on timing?

Oakley: That is correct. I would hope to have an answer for you, perhaps next week. But I do not have a response today.

Co: So I can understand our question has not yet received an official reply?

Oakley: Yes.

Co: I shall stay here to wait for a reply.

Oakley: As you wish.

Co: The question of travel is not that important for us.

Oakley: The last time we were here we had the impression you would be leaving to return to Hanoi. Of course, whether you chose to wait here or in Hanoi is not for us to say.

Co: That is true. After our last meeting I intended to go home. But Hanoi wanted to know clearly from your side whether working groups could meet in a short time or whether you were going to delay. And for me personally, I want my first stay in New York to bring about productive results so that I will have a good first impression.

Oakley: I understand your feeling of frustration. In 1974, I spent many months in Geneva waiting for the Middle East Peace Talks to convene. The talks never took place.

Co: So I am waiting. I hope you will be able to give me a reply in a week.

Now I would like to return to the question concerning Cambodia. Concerning the first part of my statement, this constituted a reply.

Oakley: Fine.

Co: But let me add one point and some additional remarks. That is regarding your judgement of the Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation. You said you were worried that this organization threatened to overthrow the regime. And that our support for the front led you to the conclusion that we were supporting subversion.

Our policy toward other countries in the region is clear and is based on peace, friendship, cooperation and noninterference. The goals and objectives of the Front are their affair, not ours. We cannot influence the Front even if we wanted to. This is the same as the situation in Iran. Do you think that any country can influence those people not to overthrow the Shah? Neither the Soviet Union nor the United States can do that. This is the business of the Iranian people. The program of the Front reflects the wishes and aspirations of the people.

Oakley: But for Vietnam to say that it has no influence over the Front, just as it says it cannot at all control the refugee situation, ignores realities. Where does the Front receive its training? Where does it get

it arms? Whose troops are fighting alongside it? We remain concerned over the contradiction between the principles you espouse and the reality of your actions. As difficult as it may be to talk to the Phnom Penh government, we would hope that some way could be found to achieve a peaceful solution.

As you may know, the Organization of American States has been able to establish itself as mediator between the two sides in Nicaragua. There is a similar situation there with the two sides being armed and supported from outside the country, and strong feelings running against the government. Nevertheless, agreement was reached in the region that a mediated settlement would be best. And this is having some success. Instead of Costa Rica or Cuba at war with Nicaragua, peace appears to be emerging. This may result in a change in the government in Nicaragua. This is acceptable to us, even though we have long supported the current government. What is important is that a peaceful means be found to settle the dispute.

Co: I want to cite another example so you can better understand. After the Front was established by the Cambodian people, the first and strongest reaction was from Cambodian exiles in Western countries. Now we think that one organization can be considered as the center for coordinating with all Cambodian exiles all over the world . . .

Oakley: Yes, I know how active Ambassador Sung is.

Co: This is the "Voice of Free Kampuchea." You can ask your French friends. This organization has no sympathy for the Vietnamese or Cambodian communists. Nevertheless, this organization says that there is no other way than by the Front to save the Cambodian people. This is the best way for them to survive.

Oakley: We were among the first to criticize the bad state of affairs in Cambodia. We fully understand the fact that Cambodians in exile and still in Cambodia are unhappy, even angry at the current government.

But the aspect which causes us great concern is Vietnam's direct military and political involvement in this situation. We are not attacking you publicly on this. We are however calling your attention to our deep concern over this serious problem in the hope that a genuinely peaceful solution can be found. As the situation now stands, the conflict will continue, increasing the economic strains on Vietnam, tensions in the area and the risk of great power involvement. We are not angry but are sad. We feel that the current situation will not produce a peaceful settlement. That's all, nothing more.

Co: I think that your judgement about the Front is surprising. I think that the United States reacted a little late to the situation in Cambodia. But President Carter did say that Cambodia was the worst

violator of human rights in the world today.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, the United States did nothing to help change the situation. That is why the Cambodian people must find a way to rescue themselves. You don't want to understand this, so it seems that your motive must be one based on political support.

Oakley: One point: The Front itself says that Vietnamese troops are assisting it inside Cambodia. This is not an accusation made by the United States.

Co: We remain optimistic regarding the possibility of peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

Oakley: Perhaps time will justify your optimism. I hope so.

Co: We are optimistic because we believe that peace and stability are in harmony with the aspirations of other Southeast Asian nations, as well as the U.S.

Regarding refugees, I have already given our views. But I want to add one point. This concerns your allegation of participation of officials to some extent in organizing departures of refugees.

We fully reject this allegation because it is totally fabricated. It is very clearly reported in the U.S. press and elsewhere that in most cases money goes to Hoa agents still in Vietnam and that this money is paid to middle men.

Oakley: Paid to whom?

Co: Now, you see in our situation we are preoccupied with defending our western, southwestern and northern borders. We still have a coastline of 3000 kms, so how can we control the people who want to leave? But we do not think this is a fundamental problem. The main thing is to improve the living standards and to reconstruct our country.

Oakley: Indeed.

Co: Especially to raise the standard of living. We also must explain to the people in the south that their happiness is linked to that of the entire country. We don't believe that administrative measures can solve the entire problem. It is similar to the situation you have with Mexico where millions of people have left for the United States. And Mexico has not undergone a war.

Oakley: Yes, but with Mexico the people come to the U.S. to find work and run no risk. This is not the case with Vietnam where large ships leave from Danang, Vung Tau, Haiphong with no destination and run real risks at sea.

We also believe that the best long term solution lies in the integration of the economies and societies of your country. We understand

---

<sup>8</sup> See footnote 2, Document 22.

how difficult problems between different regions, religions and ethnic groups can be. All of us here have been in Vietnam and saw how difficult these problems were, even in the south alone, under the former government.

Co: Yes, and our country has only been unified for three years.

Oakley: It still might be possible to have an orderly approach. We hope so and will wait and see. Time will tell.

Co: One last point. As you mentioned, I did not raise the matter of your normalizing relations with China. This is because we consider this to be a normal thing . . . With the condition that it is not directed against any third country.

Anyhow, we believe that the present policy of China is a big nation expansionist policy. This runs counter to the aspirations of people for peace, democracy and progress in the world. That is why we must wait to see whether China's relations with the U.S. serves that policy or not.

I would also like to refer to an article in *U.S. News and World Report* which was an interview by Mr. Holbrooke.<sup>9</sup> In his interview, Mr. Holbrooke referred to the four principles of U.S. policy toward East Asia. The second principle which he mentioned was that the U.S. would not take sides in conflicts in the region. He gave examples of conflicts between Vietnam and Cambodia, Vietnam and China and China and the Soviet Union. I wonder whether the United States will at all times adhere to this principle. This is not only our worry. The American press is also worried. The *New York Times* reports Administration officials are saying that such statements prove that the U.S. has a pro-Chinese bias. That's why we must wait and see, especially after the normalization of relations between the U.S. and China.

To be frank with you, I recently read a commentary by AFP of Hanoi. I think the correspondent who wrote it followed normalization between the U.S. and Vietnam. Portions of the article say that the Vietnamese position is very clear and that they are not making preconditions. Vietnam is ready to normalize. But he says that it now seems that the U.S. is posing preconditions, such as the situation in Cambodia.

We hope this is not true. But what causes these journalists to think this way? It gives a misconception of our good will.

Oakley: Well, for one thing, this is the same thing that Radio Hanoi has been saying, and AFP might be listening.

We are not imposing preconditions but are asking for certain clarifications. We will have to see what emerges.

---

<sup>9</sup> Not further identified.



One small thing. Do you have any information on the helicopter we mentioned was in Havana?

Co: Not yet. We had thought you had indicated this was a very small problem as compared with Cambodia.

Oakley: Yes, that is true in terms of its importance to normalization. But an answer sometime would be useful.

Lyne: We are continuing to receive reports that efforts are being made to purchase former U.S. military equipment from you. And we have valued your reassurances on this point.

Co: So, I shall express your concern again to Hanoi.

Oakley: This is not a precondition.

Co: We will try our best.

### 36. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Bangkok, January 4, 1979, 1111Z

368. Subj: Deterioration of Democratic Kampuchea Situation. Ref: A. FBIS BK 021231Y,<sup>2</sup> B. USUN New York 0016.<sup>3</sup>

1. (S—Entire text) As indicated by intelligence reports, broadcasts from Phnom Penh and from Vietnam, the situation in Kampuchea is significantly deteriorating. In addition to the apparent takeover of Kratie by Vietnamese forces, Vietnam pressure is obviously mounting in numerous other strategic points, including Ratanakiri, Stung Treng, Kampong Cham, Kampot and Takeo. Latest reports indicate that Vietnamese forces have crossed the Mekong in strength.

2. One measure of the difficulties faced by Kampuchea is the unprecedented Kampuchean Government statement of January 2<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790004-1173. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information Immediate to USUN; sent for information to Hong Kong, Paris, Beijing, Stockholm, Singapore, Tokyo, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Vientiane, Bonn, Berlin, Moscow, and Warsaw. The Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea began on December 25, 1978.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> Telegram 16 from USUN, January 3, reported the Kampuchean request for a UN Security Council meeting to condemn Vietnamese "aggression." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790004-0119)

<sup>4</sup> Khieu Samphan made the statement in a radio broadcast. See Dusko Doder, "Cambodia Asks Aid to Halt Invasion," *New York Times*, January 3, 1979, p. A1.



which in contrast to previous bombastic expressions of confidence flatly states that “Vietnamese and Soviet expansionism . . . has most seriously threatened the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of democratic Kampuchea”. Another is the Kampuchean appeal to the Security Council.

3. The increasing gravity of the situation in Kampuchea curiously has been met with relative silence by those most immediately concerned, notably China and Thailand. While Peking and Hanoi’s slanging match has reached new heights, the Chinese for one reason or another have not attempted to mount an international campaign on behalf of Democratic Kampuchea nor have they sought any UN action on the issue.

4. The Thais are clearly worried by this serious turn of events in Kampuchea. Air Marshal Sitthi Sawetasila informed the Ambassador that yesterday they discussed with the Indonesian Ambassador the possibility of an ASEAN call for a cease-fire and mediation, but Sitthi doesn’t expect this to get very far. The Thais also asked the Chinese what they were going to do. The Chinese Charge, according to Sitthi, said “they would take steps”. However, stepped up Chinese warnings do not appear to be very effective steps.

**Abramowitz**

---

### **37. Telegram From the Department of State to the White House<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, January 7, 1979, 2231Z

4504. From Secretary, for the President. Subject: (S) Vietnam-Kampuchea Conflict.

1. (S–Entire text).

2. Hanoi Radio and Hanoi’s Kampuchean front organization claim that the front has seized control of Phnom Penh. Although our intelligence cannot confirm this claim, Phnom Penh Radio of the Pol Pot regime is off the air and previous intelligence pointed to the likelihood of Phnom Penh’s fall. According to press reports, Pol Pot regime leaders

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840125–1127. Secret; Niact Immediate; Nodis. Drafted by Dennis G. Harter (EA/VLC); cleared by Roger Sullivan (EA), Stephen R. Lyne (EA/VLC), Leo Wollemborg (S/S), George H. Mitchell (S), and Donald C. Tice (P); approved by Evelyn Colbert (EA).

have moved into the countryside to conduct guerrilla operations as they previously planned.

3. Former Chief of State Sihanouk and former Premier Penn Nouth who have been inactive in Kampuchean politics since 1976 are currently in Peking but we are uncertain if any of the other Pol Pot regime leaders have left the country. Sihanouk and Penn Nouth have been entertained at a banquet hosted by Vice Premier Teng. Teng condemned the Vietnamese, made little mention of the Pol Pot/Ieng Sary leadership, but paid tribute to both Sihanouk and Penn Nouth as world-known statesmen and outstanding patriots. In his banquet statement, Sihanouk also condemned the Vietnamese but he cited the achievements made by the Kampuchean Communist Party led by Pol Pot in its war of liberation earlier. Sihanouk is scheduled to make a major statement to the public on January 8 in the Great Hall of the People before he comes to New York as head of the Pol Pot government's delegation to the Security Council.

4. We are reiterating to the press the message I sent yesterday to Huang Hua and Gromyko expressing our interest in peace and stability and an independent state system in Southeast Asia and calling upon all like-minded countries to urge restraint, work toward a withdrawal of foreign forces from Kampuchea, and act to ensure the integrity of all frontiers in the East Asian region. We are stressing our concern about any expansion of the geographical area of the conflict.<sup>2</sup>

**Vance**

---

<sup>2</sup> The messages to Gromyko and Huang Hua were transmitted in telegram 4489 to Moscow, January 7, and telegram 4490 to Beijing, January 7. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840171-0316 and P840171-0427)

**38. Telegram From the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Posts<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, January 8, 1979, 1651Z

4604. Subject: Kampuchea SitRep.

1. Following is INR's assessment of the situation in Kampuchea. Except for paragraph 5, this may be shared with friendly governments.

2. According to Radio Hanoi and the clandestine radio of the Vietnamese-supported Khmer rebel front (the Kampuchean National United Front for National Salvation—KNUFNS), Phnom Penh fell to Khmer "rebel forces" on January 7. In addition to taking Phnom Penh, the Front claims to have liberated virtually all provincial capitals in eastern and southwestern Kampuchea and to have gained control of provinces further west including Battambang, Koh Kong and Siem Reap. We are able to confirm the capture of Phnom Penh and that Vietnamese forces have been active as far west as Siem Reap, but have no further details at this time concerning Vietnamese advances west of the capital.

3. Vietnamese forces had been advancing rapidly towards the capital on several fronts for forty-eight hours and by January 6 had effectively cut off the vital rail and road resupply routes connecting Phnom Penh with the deepwater port of Kampong Som. On January 7 Vietnamese troops advanced under cover of the heaviest air attacks since the conflict began, including sorties flown against the port city of Kompong Som and Phnom Penh itself. Although some Kampuchean forces are still operating behind the rapidly advancing Vietnamese, most appear to have withdrawn after offering only token resistance.

4. The fate of Pol Pot, Ieng Sary, and other Democratic Kampuchean officials is unclear at this time, although they probably evacuated the city in advance of its capture. Radio Hanoi has reported that Pol Pot and Ieng Sary were flown to Peking by the Chinese, but we are unable to confirm this. Pol Pot had pledged to continue to fight a guerrilla war if Phnom Penh were lost. If so, he may hope to marshal his remaining forces to launch a protracted guerrilla campaign against the Vietnamese and rebel forces possibly from a "temporary" headquarters in

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790009–1052. Secret; Immediate. Drafted by Thomas P. Hamilton (INR/REA); cleared by Melvyn Levitsky (IO/UNP) and Lyne; cleared in draft by Martha C. Mautner (INR/RSE); approved by David Dean (INR/REA). Sent Immediate to Bangkok, Canberra, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, London, Manila, Paris, Singapore, Tokyo, Vientiane, Wellington, and CINCPAC for POLAD. Sent for information Immediate to Hong Kong, Beijing, USNATO, and USUN.

western Kampuchea. It is conceivable that anticipating Hanoi's victory, the Kampucheans stockpiled weapons and supplies in the west to maintain their ranks until new supply channels can be established.

5. For US officials only: Since the Kampucheans have lost the port of Kampong Som, resupply of a guerrilla campaign would almost certainly require an agreement between China and Thailand to permit overland transit through Thailand of Chinese aid. During Deng Xiao-ping's (Teng Hsiao-p'ing's) visit to Bangkok last November, he reportedly indicated that at some point Peking might ask the Thais for such transit rights. This would be very difficult politically for Bangkok, but the Thai may not have ruled out the possibility. The Thai Government has considered various options of its own in the event of a Vietnamese takeover of Kampuchea, including the insertion of Khmer insurgents based along the Thai-Kampuchea border into the western border provinces to act as a kind of buffer. There is no indication the Thai have implemented this plan although press reports state that the Thai military is on alert along its five hundred mile border with Kampuchea. End For US officials only.

6. The structure of a new Khmer rebel government has not yet been announced.<sup>2</sup> We believe the most likely candidate to head it would be Heng Samrin, former division commander under the Pol Pot government and President of the fourteen member Central Committee of KNUFNS announced last Dec. 3. Our only indication of the policies to be implemented by such a government is an eight point policy statement issued by the rebel news agency on January 1.<sup>3</sup> Among other things the statement advocates the return of former city dwellers to the urban areas, reunification of families separated under the Pol Pot regime, and relaxation of restrictions on religion as well as the restoration and repair of Buddhist temples and pagodas damaged by the Pol Pot regime. Initially, local affairs are to be administered through a series of "peoples self management committees" to be elected throughout the country. The statement emphasizes that there are to be no reprisals against enemy troops although "reeducation" may be required in some cases.

7. Prince Norodom Sihanouk who arrived in Peking on January 6 is supposed to head a Kampuchean delegation to New York this week to "acquaint the world with Vietnam's aggressive attack on his country." In a January 8 press conference in Peking,<sup>4</sup> however, Sihanouk

---

<sup>2</sup> Communist rebels took control of Kampuchea on January 8. See "Rebels form new Cambodian regime," *Chicago Tribune*, January 9, 1979, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

<sup>4</sup> See Fox Butterfield, "Cambodia's Regime Reported in Flight," *New York Times*, January 8, 1979, p. A1.

seemed less certain of his travel plans saying that statements he made critical of the Pol Pot government appeared to throw doubt on whether he could represent it in international forums.<sup>5</sup>

8. Chinese Reaction: China has condemned Vietnam for its aggression against Kampuchea but it remains unclear what if any retaliatory action Peking may take. A People's Daily commentary on January 6 declared that "the Chinese people can never remain indifferent to the Vietnamese aggression against Kampuchea" and that the "Chinese people will continue to provide the Kampuchean people with various forms of support." A PRC official statement of January 7 denounced Vietnam's aggression, asserted continued support of the Kampuchean Government, and expressed hope that "all countries and people interested in peace and stability in Southeast Asia would take measures to stop the aggression." In a speech at the welcoming banquet for Sihanouk Deng Xiaoping (Teng Hsiao-P'ing) called upon the United Nations to uphold the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Kampuchea. This imprecise rhetoric and emphasis on the role of international organizations and other countries suggests that China has not yet decided what action if any, to take against Vietnam. At the same time, the Chinese are reportedly continuing military preparations along Vietnam's northern border, by augmenting air, air defense, and ground forces there.<sup>6</sup>

9. Soviet Reaction: Moscow has welcomed the KNUFNS victories. A January 7 TASS article alleged that "the birth of an independent and free Kampuchea will be an important factor for peace and stability in Southeast Asia", and condemned the "three years of barbaric genocide" in Kampuchea under the Pol Pot regime.<sup>7</sup> A KNUFNS victory would represent an extension of the influence of the Soviets' ally Hanoi while at the same time raising doubts in the minds of other Asian leaders, especially in Thailand, about the ability of the Chinese to support its ally. Should China take any military action against Vietnam, the Soviets would likely hold immediate consultations with Hanoi under the provisions of their recently concluded Friendship and Cooperation Treaty.

Vance

---

<sup>5</sup> Sihanouk did lead the Kampuchean delegation. For a summary of the Security Council meetings January 11–15, which considered the situation in Kampuchea, see *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1979, pp. 273–275.

<sup>6</sup> Telegram 92 from Beijing, January 8, outlined the Chinese reaction to the fall of Phnom Penh. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790009–0620)

<sup>7</sup> Telegram 537 from Moscow, January 8, summarized the Soviet media reaction to the situation in Cambodia. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790011–0481)

39. **Briefing Memorandum From the Acting Director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (Mark) to Secretary of State Vance**<sup>1</sup>

Washington, January 8, 1979

*Roles, Gains, and Losses of Vietnam, China, and the Soviet Union in the Vietnam-Kampuchea Conflict*

*Motivations for Hanoi's Push Against Pol Pot*

Hanoi's lightning victory over Pol Pot's Kampuchean regime attests anew to the effectiveness of the Vietnamese armed forces. These have absorbed much American equipment captured in 1975 and have lost none of their earlier prowess. Certainly, they are the premier fighting machine of Southeast Asia, and this fact is not likely to be lost on neighboring ASEAN states, especially Thailand.

It is certainly clear that the impetus for Vietnam's assault came from Hanoi itself, where a decision was probably made sometime early in 1978 to get rid of the one remaining unfriendly regime in Indochina, sooner rather than later. To the extent that "Democratic Kampuchea" initiated provocations against adjacent Vietnamese territory in the 1975-78 period, one can only say that Pol Pot contributed to his own fate by hastening Vietnamese action against him. However, given long-standing aspirations in Hanoi to dominate Indochina politically, it was only a question of time in any case before the much stronger and more numerous Vietnamese imposed their will on their neighbor, though they likely at first hoped to attain their goal by slow subversion and other pressures, rather than by *blitzkrieg*.

We believe that Hanoi's determination is the fundamental factor in explaining what has happened. Vietnamese hegemonic ambitions are rooted in Indochinese history, and the Communist Party which Ho Chi Minh established in the 1920s for all three countries was a unitary one. Hanoi's manipulation and ultimate control of the Pathet Lao Communist movement in Laos has gone on for 30 years, and is still reflected in the presence of 40,000 Vietnamese troops in Laos. The Vietnamese believed that they were enroute to the same relationship with Cambodian Communists when they infiltrated and backed the Pol Pot forces from the middle of 1970 on; but the quirks of personality and somewhat divergent ideological and political objectives led the two groups apart,

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 86, Vietnam, 1/79-1/81. Confidential.

with the Kampuchean regime's turning instead toward China for protection and aid.

In these circumstances, there is no need to ask whether Moscow might have pushed Hanoi to impose a new government on Cambodia. Hanoi had much stronger motivations to do that than Moscow. However, the Kremlin was undoubtedly enthusiastic about the project for its own reasons, which arose from the Soviet desire to embarrass China and to enhance the USSR's political position in Southeast Asia. The Kremlin will be less happy if Hanoi moves in the next few years formally to create some sort of closer association of the three states.

*Soviet-Chinese Rivalry in Indochina*

In retrospect, it is difficult to know what immediate problem drove Vietnam and China apart after 1975, but there were numerous incidents adversely affecting the bilateral relationship. However, the basic discord between the two states must be the traditional ethnic antagonisms that have existed between China and the Annamese of North Vietnam, which even showed through to some extent during the years of combat with US forces. The Annamese have for hundreds of years felt threatened culturally and politically by their oversized neighbor, and they have instinctively turned to outsiders for counterbalancing force.

In our day, the USSR serves that function, and Vietnam has not hesitated to turn to Moscow, which also, incidentally provided the bulk of the war materiel and economic aid needed by North Vietnam to defeat the South in 1975. The PRC, which had also backed the North, resented this abandonment of Hanoi's wartime "neutrality" between Moscow and Peking, and looked for other regional assets to undercut the Soviet position. "Democratic Kampuchea" has proven to be a vulnerable reed for China's policy goals.

In the last two years of maneuvering in Southeast Asia, Hanoi has done all that it could to make adequate political preparations for ousting Pol Pot. Although it required very little additional military support from the USSR, it did need the assurance of both large scale economic aid and impressive foreign policy backing.

The former, which has been necessary to cover the great internal economic difficulties still prevailing in Vietnam (and soon to be aggravated by military operations in Cambodia), came in the form of Vietnam's admission to COMECON (CEMA) in 1978. Under this umbrella sizable Soviet and East European economic resources have been transferred to Hanoi. The latter, essential for holding China at bay while Cambodia was mopped up, took shape as the Soviet-Vietnamese Friendship Treaty last fall. It is entirely possible that Moscow had long been importuning Hanoi to agree to such an accord, but that Hanoi had demurred to emphasize its independent position. This, however, became a less cogent factor under the new circumstances.

*The International Repercussions of Vietnamese Victory*

Vietnam's victory is a strong psychological setback for China and, correspondingly, some improvement for the Soviet political position in Southeast Asia, mainly because Vietnam, its client state, has so successfully again demonstrated military preeminence. For Peking, the loss is primarily in prestige, and the leadership will certainly feel that there is a score to be settled some day. The outcome has shown that China is strong enough neither to intimidate a small country (Vietnam) with one-twentieth of China's population, nor to protect a weak client state within a region where Chinese influence has long been significant. It may feel doubly humiliated that Vietnam decided that it could act with impunity, following the recent Hanoi-Moscow treaty. China's very small consolation is that it is no longer saddled with defending the obnoxious Pol Pot regime.

How Peking will seek now to deal with Indochina is less clear. It will surely step up efforts to convince the non-Communist countries of the area about the dangers of Soviet imperialism, and it will portray Vietnam as a menacing Soviet tool. Chinese leaders probably have no illusions about the possibility of reestablishing satisfactory relations any time soon with Hanoi; and, besides anti-Vietnamese propaganda campaigns, they may therefore consider efforts to organize and support anti-Vietnamese guerrilla movements in Laos and Cambodia, as well as possibly to help currently ineffective dissident groups in South Vietnam.

The Vietnamese government will certainly lose no time in reestablishing the facade of Cambodian sovereignty under new management. The latter, to justify itself, will most probably throw part of its energies into exposing the depredations of the Pol Pot government against the Cambodian populace. Both Hanoi and the new Phnom Penh will make reassuring approaches to the ASEAN states about pacific intentions. Thailand will be left in no doubt that it will suffer penalties for any moves to support opposition to the new regime. Hanoi will repeat its claims to being fully sovereign and independent, even vis-a-vis the USSR; and, indeed, it will not be without considerable leverage in this regard, since Moscow can ill afford to antagonize its one ally in the area by crude pressures. On the other hand, of course, there is for the time being an extensive coincidence of Soviet and Vietnamese political and security interests.

In fact, the Soviet Union's gains will derive mainly from its association with Vietnam's coattails, and from China's discomfort. The renewed evidence of Vietnam's military power will impress ASEAN states, but hardly endear Hanoi (or Moscow) to them more than before. Except for Thailand, none of the five is within the ready range of Vietnamese strength, and even Thailand may conclude that, if it is



circumspect in regard to Indochina, Vietnam will have too much on its military and economic hands for some time to come to be tempted by additional adventures in Thailand. The Communist insurgency in North and Northeast Thailand will probably sputter along much as before.

In short, Vietnam's 1978/9 war in Cambodia is not likely to lead to any major geopolitical changes in Southeast Asia, though it will bring a definite transformation within Kampuchea and in Kampuchea's relations with Vietnam. No careful observer doubted the military might of Vietnam in the local arena before the campaign, and this judgment has been proved correct. Everyone knew the crucial role of the USSR in deterring China from intimidating Soviet client states (including Vietnam), and this too has also been confirmed. China has had to "eat crow" in a political sense, but its drive to realize its huge potential strength has thereby become all the more urgent. The five ASEAN nations have been reminded again of their weaknesses, as well as of their dependence on outside powers (or, rather, on the jockeying and rivalry of outside powers) for their individual and collective security. The events have not revealed enough new Soviet-Vietnamese strength to intimidate ASEAN into kowtowing to the USSR; but all, particularly Thailand, will, as before, show prudence in their dealings with the Communist powers. Their desire for enhanced Western (US, Japanese, Australian, and West European) support will be further evidenced.

One final speculation is whether North Korea will draw some lessons from signs of Chinese military weakness in Southeast Asia and, in consequence, act to repair its frayed relations with the USSR. We would think that Pyongyang's moves in this regard will not be much affected. It has surely long been aware of the relative strengths of the USSR and PRC, and it has tilted toward Peking in recent years for other reasons. That policy, in any case, has probably been under some review, as China moved to bolster its Western (including American) connections. But the main determinant of Pyongyang's policies will be Moscow's decision about whether it wishes to make forthcoming overtures to North Korea.

#### 40. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Bangkok, January 24, 1979, 1220Z

2644. Subj: (S) Southeast Asia After Cambodia.

1. (S—Entire text)

2. Summary: Aside from the possibility of PRC-SRV hostilities, the implications of Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia can be profound for this area. Among them is greater likelihood that Soviets will establish military presence in Vietnam, which is being given further impetus by situation on Chinese border. Second is what might be called the Finlandization of Thailand. The latter has obvious long term adverse implications for Thai political development and for the future of ASEAN. Much depends upon how quickly the Vietnamese consolidate their position in Cambodia. End Summary.

3. Following are preliminary thoughts on some implications of developments in Cambodia for Southeast Asia. It is dangerous to pontificate given the unresolved situation in Cambodia and on the Thai border as well as the closeness of events, but I pass them along for what they are worth.

4. A case can be made that the Pol Pot regime made the situation in Cambodia a unique one, that the Vietnamese are militarily over-extended and beset with enormous economic problems, that they will act henceforth with great restraint, and that they will not threaten Thailand. Many will argue in the same vein that the SEA countries including Thailand will get used to the Vietnamese in Cambodia, that Vietnamese domination in Indochina is a natural historical development, that the Thais have existed with Vietnamese on the Lao border without any great trouble, that ASEAN cohesion has been significantly improved, and that Southeast Asian countries can relatively easily weather the present psychologically difficult situation. In short, basically a view that nothing has changed significantly in this part of the world. There is a good deal to this: Vietnam is very unlikely to pursue further military action in the short run and it has staggering problems. But the conclusion is too benign; the implications of Cambodia can be far-reaching for the type of Southeast Asia we would like to see. One of the critical elements is how quickly the Vietnamese consolidate their position in Cambodia.

What has happened?

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Cables File, Box 12, Far East: 12/78-1/79. Secret; Sensitive; Nodis.

5. We need to briefly review the past because of its implications for Hanoi's future behavior. With hindsight we can see the way Hanoi handled going to war. The decision to put itself in the position to destroy Pol Pot had to be made at least in early 1978 to provide easily for the necessary logistical framework. Against the background of this decision, Hanoi's subsequent moves over the rest of the year fall into place. It entered COMECON because of a recognized need for greater reliance on the Soviets for economic assistance. Pham Van Dong visited the ASEAN countries to try to sign friendship agreements so as to reduce the impact of the soon-to-be-signed SRV-Soviet pact and to make forthcoming Vietnamese actions in Cambodia appear less ominous. The agreement with Moscow was critical. Without protection of its rear with the PRC, the Vietnamese could not have invaded Cambodia. Finally, the Vietnamese dropped their preconditions and urgently tried to normalize relations with the U.S. before events in Cambodia made it again difficult for U.S. to normalize. World revulsion of the Pol Pot government led Hanoi to believe that, Peking aside, toppling of Pol Pot would not be severely criticized and might even be welcomed. In any event, the Hanoi leadership has resolved its long time struggle for dominance of the Khmer Communist Party, but its bill for Cambodia is still outstanding.

6. It is conceivable that China's way of upending the Hanoi leadership has been to draw them into a Cambodian quagmire. More likely the PRC has miscalculated and thereby suffered at least momentarily a severe setback. For the people of Cambodia the Chinese have been a disaster. In an early period, the PRC stiffened DK intransigence to a *modus vivendi* on the border. At the same time, it publicly deepened its commitment to Pol Pot, despite his weak position and China's limited ability to come to his aid. The PRC apparently did little to produce a more viable regime in Phnom Penh or one that the SRV could live with. Chinese policy toward Vietnam helped push Hanoi into a Soviet embrace and wiped out Peking's influence in Vietnam. Despite the widely appreciated special circumstances involved, Cambodia is more than the overthrow of a rotten regime whose own actions contributed importantly to its downfall. The nations of the region also see the Vietnamese with Soviet backing giving the PRC a thrashing. China has lost stature and credibility. Everyone in Southeast Asia is talking about it.

7. Moscow has demonstrated again to the countries of the area its willingness to support its clients, even on aggressive ventures. None of this increases love for Moscow in the region, but it does arouse fear and respect, which may be translated into some influence. The Soviet position in Southeast Asia remains limited, but it is certainly not diminished. The Soviets had to know of Vietnamese plans. The SRV could

not have undertaken their invasion without certainty that Moscow would support them if the Chinese sent military aid to Cambodia or directly attacked the SRV. Nor would Moscow let a client involve the Soviet Union in possible hostilities with the PRC without its approval. Like Vietnam, Moscow also thought that world might not mind being rid of Pol Pot. It is delighted at Chinese discomfiture.

8. The Thais had been enormously comforted by the bickering and hostilities among the Communist states and thought that all this would continue for some time. The events of January shattered this spell and intensified their feelings of being on the front lines. The Thais dislike and fear the Vietnamese. They have always wanted buffers and the last of the buffer states is now gone. After some confusion as to how to react to new situation, the Thais have chosen at least publicly to stay out of the internal Cambodian situation. They have adopted a neutral position and have so far avoided making trouble for Vietnamese forces in Cambodia. They have taken advantage of the occasion, however, to attack major CPT/TPLA elements who have used Cambodia as a safe haven.

9. Thankfully the United States has been able to stay out of this fighting in Indochina. While we have not been idle, we have largely focused on diplomatic activities, particularly trying to diminish the possibilities of trouble on the Thai border. Thailand and other ASEAN countries have welcomed our efforts. Nevertheless, our image in the area has continued to diminish. We are seen as a major power playing a helpful role vis-a-vis the other powers but increasingly ineffectual in determining events in this region. Soviet arms aid to its ally is contrasted with our limited aid to our friends. US-PRC normalization is now seen as having little impact on Vietnam or on the rest of South-east Asia.

What does it all mean for the future?

10. The principal uncertainty, PRC-SRV hostility aside, is the situation in Cambodia. Hanoi's armies have run into greater trouble than Hanoi probably anticipated. They are over-extended logistically and in a number of areas face significant DK opposition. Although Hanoi should be able to defeat remaining main DK forces reasonably quickly, it will need to retain troops in Cambodia, perhaps for a long time, whatever happens to the Pol Pot remnants. Despite its trouble finding capable people to rule the conquered south, Hanoi will have to largely run Cambodia since the Cambodian governing structure has been devastated. The SRV will also need to help reconstruct Cambodia. But its handling of these problems could be immensely complicated by the development of a sizeable and protracted guerrilla resistance in Cambodia. This war is already underway, indicating that the Pol Pot government made some advance preparations. Khmer nationalism will rein-

force these efforts. But whether they will succeed is uncertain. Much depends on the force Hanoi is willing to bring to bear as well as upon the ability of the Chinese and/or the willingness of the Thais to supply the Pol Pot remnants. The impact of all this on a Hanoi leadership already beset with numerous economic problems and difficulties with China could be profound.

11. The Vietnamese have continued to reassure Thailand and the other ASEAN countries about their benign intentions. They also show some sign of paying heed to Thai and U.S. warnings about their forces on the Thai/Cambodian border. They have not respected the 50 kilometer line the Thais wanted but appear generally to be staying about 10–15 kilometers from the border. But if DK resistance increases in the border area, it is doubtful that the SRV would continue to hold back its forces from the Thai border.

12. The PRC is unlikely to merely sit back and take a licking from Hanoi. Indeed it will not rest content while Hanoi is allied to the Soviet Union. Peking will want to make life costly for its neighbor in every way it can. This could include frequent harassment of the SRV border extending to some large scale fighting. The Chinese also may make things difficult for the Lao Government and for Vietnamese forces in Laos. The PRC might also find some means to supply DK guerrilla elements by sea, but PRC ability to supply the DK is critically dependent on Thai willingness to allow the Chinese to move goods through Thai territory. We would be wise to avoid associating ourselves too closely in Southeast Asia with such a weak, inflexible and unrealistic party as Peking.

13. The Soviets have gained enormous leverage in Vietnam and are closer to being able to establish a military presence in Vietnam. While Hanoi is an autonomous actor and recognizes the political fallout of a Soviet presence, it is more dependent than ever on the Soviets. Growing tensions or SRV fighting with the PRC may well lead to such a presence, a development that transcends Southeast Asia.

14. The Thais do not expect a Vietnamese invasion now, but they do worry about it in later years. Despite Pham Van Dong's repeated assertions to the contrary, they fear that the Vietnamese will try to take over the CPT and establish liberated areas. A Vietnamese-dominated party would be more dangerous for them and provides an invitation for Vietnamese direct involvement. The Thai love affair with the PRC has eroded and they are more realistic about PRC capabilities. While the PRC provides important political support for Thailand vis-a-vis Vietnam, the Thais will be wary of involvement with the PRC in supporting a guerrilla war in Cambodia. But the Chinese will continue to press Kriangsak to help out and the Thai may covertly provide a degree of support. Conceivably PRC action against the Vietnamese on their border might engender greater Thai enthusiasm in this regard.

15. Politically and diplomatically the situation for the Thais may be profoundly different. Cambodia and resultant uncertainties may well set back the development of a more open and hopefully more stable political process. While Kriangsak still plans for elections in April, the prospects for straight military rule has grown. There is now a more ready excuse for coups.

16. The Thais generally feel they cannot depend on other powers for their security *vis-a-vis* the Vietnamese. They appreciate that ASEAN has provided useful diplomatic help since 1975, but they do not look to ASEAN for security. Thus the way in which the Thais deal with Vietnam is perhaps changing. The restrained "friendship" may become less restrained. The Thais have bent over backwards to avoid any public confrontations with the Vietnamese. They have refrained from calling Vietnam invaders. They have hidden behind others. They have signed agreements with Vietnam at almost the same time they were joining in the ASEAN Foreign Ministers declaration<sup>2</sup> and privately urging others to cut aid to the SRV. In short, however distasteful, they have begun to adjust to Vietnamese on their borders. That adjustment involves movement toward neutrality and greater deference to Vietnamese concerns. Many Thais characterize this movement as a natural Thai inclination as they nervously laugh. Their fiber has been shaken. Even the Crown Prince talked to the British Ambassador in stark terms of five years before the situation in Thailand unraveled.

17. But how far the Thais go in this direction and the way that they get used to the Vietnamese, are critically important for Thailand and ASEAN. That will to a great extent depend on how quickly the Vietnamese consolidate their position in Cambodia. If it takes the Vietnamese a long time and even if it involves an occasional flare-up on the border the Thai sense of confidence should be restored. But if the Vietnamese can dominate and consolidate their position in the next three months or so, the Thais will move toward greater accommodation. The Vietnamese will step up their effort to improve their damaged diplomatic position and the Thais in their search for security are likely to respond. Over time we could see Thailand along with Malaysia try to provide Vietnam an entree into ASEAN, which would lead to its demise. Kriangsak even toyed with such a notion just before Pham Van Dong visited Bangkok in September. The Thai process of accommodation thus has great implications for the future of ASEAN. But how

---

<sup>2</sup> The ASEAN Foreign Ministers met in Bangkok January 12-13 to consider the situation in Cambodia. The joint statement issued on January 13 is in telegram 1370 from Bangkok, January 13. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790017-0845) For a summary of the statement, see Henry Kamm, "2 Cambodian Towns Reported Captured," *New York Times*, January 13, 1979, p. 1.

far they accommodate and the pace of the drift to neutralism depends in large part on events in Cambodia. One tip off may be Thai responsiveness to Soviet overtures to improve relations.

18. The U.S. can buck up Thailand psychologically through greater military assistance, strong rhetorical support and the like. But the ability of the U.S. to materially influence the situation in the short run in great part depends on our willingness to help disrupt Vietnamese efforts to gain control in Cambodia or our willingness to strengthen our security guarantee. None of them seem in the cards nor are they necessarily desirable. A neutral Thailand and a declining ASEAN is a situation we can live with but it is not the one we envisaged.

19. This is a rather gloomy analysis of the Thai situation. It may be overdrawn. Flabby Thai attitudes to the Vietnamese may be exaggerated by the present sense of shock. Moreover, the analysis looks down the pike and much can happen that could get in the way of the trend outlined above. Most important, the Vietnamese are more likely than not to be bogged down in Cambodia. Foreign investment could be a critical factor. There is no reason to diminish our efforts to reassure the Thais, attract greater investment, and restore a sense of dynamism and momentum. Our response, so far, the President's comments<sup>3</sup> aside, has been on the anemic side. Similarly, we should continue our efforts to build up ASEAN, but we should recognize the critical role Thai confidence and their handling of Vietnam has for the future of the Five.

**Abramowitz**

---

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to Carter's January 17 news conference. See *Public Papers: Carter, 1979*, Book I, pp. 53–54.



# 41. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>

Washington, January 26, 1979

SUBJECT

State Department Meeting on Indochina (U)

Cy, Harold, Stan,<sup>2</sup> and I met to assess the Indochina situation, particularly the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and the Chinese buildup along the Vietnamese border. We assessed the situation and concluded that we should undertake the following measures:

—Continue to keep the international heat on Vietnam and to discourage all aid to donors to Vietnam from giving aid until Vietnam withdraws its forces from Cambodia. (S)<sup>3</sup>

—Indicate to the Soviets in no uncertain fashion that we consider the situation in Indochina serious, that we are expressing our concern to the Chinese and discouraging them from undertaking any punitive action against Vietnam, and that we expect the Soviets to behave with restraint and not to seek military bases in Vietnam, or to make use of Cam Ranh Bay (Cy will deliver this message to Dobrynin tomorrow).<sup>4</sup> (S)

—Indicate to the Chinese that our common approach in the U.N. and our efforts to persuade others not to give aid to Vietnam are proving successful, that we have indicated to the Soviets our expectation that they will not make use of any opportunities to establish military bases in Vietnam, and that Chinese military action against Vietnam would jeopardize the gains we are making in isolating Vietnam in the international community. (We recommend that you make these points in your meetings with Deng Xiaoping.)<sup>5</sup> (S)

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 3, Asia, 1979. Secret. Sent for action. A handwritten notation indicates the date. Carter initialed the top of the memorandum.

<sup>2</sup> Harold Brown and Stansfield Turner.

<sup>3</sup> Carter wrote "ok" in the right-hand margin adjacent to this paragraph.

<sup>4</sup> Carter wrote "ok" in the right-hand margin adjacent to this paragraph. Marshall Shulman met with Dobrynin on January 26 to deliver an oral message on Vance's behalf. A summary of the discussion is in telegram 23202 to Moscow, January 28. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840140-2541)

<sup>5</sup> Carter wrote "ok" in the right-hand margin adjacent to this paragraph. For Carter's discussions of Vietnam with Deng Xiaoping on January 29 and 30, see *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. XIII, China, Documents 205-207.



## 42. Minutes of a National Security Council Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, February 16, 1979, 4:30–5:15 p.m.

### SUBJECT

Sino-Vietnamese Conflict; Iran

### PRESENT

The President  
The Vice President  
Secretary Vance  
Assistant Secretary Holbrooke  
Admiral Turner  
Deputy Secretary of Defense Duncan  
Deputy Assistant Secretary Armacost  
General Lucius [*Lew*] Allen  
General William Smith  
David Aaron  
Michel Oksenberg

### I. *Situation Report*

The President convened the meeting in order to discuss the Sino-Vietnamese conflict.

Dr. Brzezinski placed three items on the agenda: a situation report; securing approval of a Presidential statement to be delivered to President Brezhnev and determining our public posture.

Admiral Turner described the Chinese military strength which they have amassed at the border: in the air, 700 attack jet fighters, consisting of MIG 15's, 17's, 19, and 40 21's—half of the Chinese MIG-21 fleet; also some Ilyushin 28 bombers; on the ground, 14 divisions, with nine amassed at an attack point in the NE portion of the Sino-Vietnamese border and 5 amassed at a point in the NW. The two attack points are at the traditional entry points to Vietnam.

Elements of five Chinese Armies have been brought to the combat zone, and three more armies are converging onto the area from central and eastern China. It is thought these armies would camp at the bases vacated by armies which moved south and apparently now are to be thrown into battle.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, Meetings File, Box 2, NSC Meeting #16, Held 2/16/1979, 2/79. Top Secret. The meeting took place in the Cabinet Room at the White House. (Carter Library, Presidential Materials, President's Daily Diary)

Total Chinese forces in the 14 divisions total 170,000 men.

Facing them are border defense units and militia. Four reconstruction divisions—ill-equipped and ill-trained—have been moved north. Three para-military divisions have also moved north. The core Vietnamese strength is the five regular divisions ringing Hanoi.

Vietnam has also moved anti-aircraft and howitzers to the North, but their effort has been minor.

*Vance:* What about Vietnamese aircraft?

*Turner:* Vietnam has 250 MIG 17, 19, and 21. Their 21's are better than Chinese MIG-21's. The Vietnamese enjoy three advantages in the air: (1) training; (2) a coordinated radar control network; and (3) air-to-air missiles.

*President:* Is it fair to say the Vietnamese thus far have not responded to the Chinese military build-up, and that their main posture is to defend Hanoi?

*Turner:* Yes.

*President:* Have the Chinese been provoked to undertake this action?

*Turner:* We don't know.

*President:* What will the Chinese do?

*Turner:* We believe the Chinese will confine themselves to the hilly areas and not enter the plain. But the Vietnamese may not come after them.

The area of the border clashes and provocations which the Chinese claim require the attack is here. (Turner showed photo intelligence of the region of the alleged border incidents.) The terrain is one through which armor can move. The hills are up to 3,000 feet, and the valleys can be used.

*President:* Is there [less than 1 line not declassified] on the level of activity on the North Vietnamese border?

*Turner:* No.

Turning to the Sino-Soviet border, the Chinese have evacuated dependents from some cities in Sinkiang. They have initiated an air-alert in the Northeast and restricted inward population movement.

## II. Statement to Soviets

Oksenberg asked why we should deliver a demarche to the Soviets. Vance pointed to two reasons: to dispel any notions we are involved; and to provide the framework which will guide our policy. We wish to avoid any miscalculation on their part.

[Dr. Brzezinski then presented the President with a draft (Tab 1) demarche to Moscow, which the President then read and edited. Dr. Brzezinski read the edited changes and discussion ensued.]<sup>2</sup>

The original text proposed that we tell the Soviets that restraint on their part would elicit restraint on our part. The President questioned this formulation. Allen wondered if it would inhibit increased reconnaissance on our part, should that be necessary. Or would such a formulation keep us in Subic?

Vance thought the formulation would have no practical restraint on us. Smith then asked what the utility of our “restraint” pledge was. What would we be prepared to restrain? Recognizing we did not wish to foreclose future courses of action, the “restraint” pledge was dropped.

Instead, the meeting considered saying if the Soviets would restrain themselves, we would behave similarly. The President pointed out “similar” implies the “same.” That is not our position. The President stated our objective: not to become militarily involved, not to extend our base structure in East Asia because of the conflict, but still to restrain the Soviets. We should adopt wording, the President said, that keeps our options open but still gives a sop to the Soviets.

Holbrooke described our posture this way: If the Russians do nothing in response to the crisis, we will do nothing. If they do something, we will do something. Our statement must convey this sense.

Aaron agreed. If Soviets increase their ship presence, we may wish to do the same. Christopher wondered whether reaching an implicit arms restraint agreement with the Soviets fell under Article 32<sup>3</sup> and necessitated consultations with Congress. Vance said no.

Brzezinski proposed language to take this into account, to the effect that we urge the Soviets to exercise restraint. And we would be prepared to cooperate to seek a solution to the conflict. This formulation was accepted. (See Tab 2)<sup>4</sup>

Duncan recommended deleting the clause “and its supporters” in the sentence, “Vietnam and its supporters must share responsibility with China for the situation.” Duncan saw no need to poke our finger in Moscow’s eye; they know our views. All agreed.

---

<sup>2</sup> Brackets are in the original. Tab 1 is not attached but several draft messages to the Soviet Union are attached to a copy of this record in the Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, 1977–1980, Box 56, NSC 016, 2/16/79, SINO-Vietnamese Conflict/Iran.

<sup>3</sup> Not further identified.

<sup>4</sup> Not attached. Tab 2 is attached to the copy in the Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, 1977–1980, Box 56, NSC 016, 2/16/79, SINO-Vietnamese Conflict/Iran.

Vance asked whether this should go as a President to Brezhnev message.

The President said that was his wish. The dispatch shows we have not colluded with the Chinese. We were condemning Chinese actions and are acting separately from them. The President felt his word of honor was at stake here, he wished to allay any Soviet fears, and he therefore would communicate directly. He recognized time would pass before we would ascertain the Soviet reaction.

Other editorial changes were made to the draft. Brzezinski wanted "object to" rather than "oppose" Chinese steps. "Oppose" in Russian has an activist connotation that should be avoided here, since it might embolden Moscow to "oppose" as well. Holbrooke sought reference to our January 20th as well as 26th demarche to Moscow.<sup>5</sup> Aaron recommended the insertion of the actual warning of 26th. All these recommendations were accepted.<sup>6</sup>

### III. *Public Statements*

This first statement on our reaction (Tab 3) was accepted as drafted.<sup>7</sup>

The second statement, in response to a hypothetical question about advance notice, was re-written. We would say we noted the build-up for some time and made our position clear.

If a question is raised as to whether Teng raised it, we would say he alluded to it without being specific as to Chinese intentions, and we informed him of our position.

As to the advance notice Ch'ai provided this morning,<sup>8</sup> the President prefers to keep it in confidence. He said he feels more sympathy for the Chinese in this conflict. And we have a responsibility to protect Chinese confidence in us to inform us of their plans. The President expressed some regret the Chinese told us in advance, it places us in a difficult position, but as events unfold, we will see what happens.

The President stated that ever since the first Kampuchea-Vietnam clash, our position has been to deplore violence. We should say publicly that even during the last few hours, we have made our position clear

---

<sup>5</sup> Vance met with Dobrynin on January 20 to express U.S. concern about widening the fighting in Indochina. (Telegram 15594 to Moscow, January 20; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840176-1057) For the January 26 demarche, see footnote 3, Document 41.

<sup>6</sup> For the text of the February 17 message to Brezhnev, see *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Document 172.

<sup>7</sup> Not attached. Tab 3 is attached to the copy in the Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, 1977-1980, Box 56, NSC 016, 2/16/79, SINO-Vietnamese Conflict/Iran. Hodding Carter read the statement to the press on February 17. See Jim Hoagland, "U.S. to Soviets: No Intervention," *Washington Post*, February 18, 1979, p. A1.

<sup>8</sup> See *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. XIII, China, Document 212.

to all the parties concerned. Our degree of knowledge should be minimized. And we should not emphasize we have been discussing the issue. We do not wish to appear to be deeply involved in this conflict, though we recognize its dangers.

Vance said he would call Andy Young to warn him but stress he was not to debrief others.

---

#### 43. Minutes of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, February 18, 1979, 9–9:35 a.m.

##### SUBJECT

Sino-Vietnamese Conflict

##### PARTICIPANTS

###### *State*

Secretary Cyrus Vance  
Dep Sec Warren Christopher  
Under Sec David Newsom  
Asst Sec for EA & Pacific Affairs  
Richard Holbrooke  
Asst Sec Harold Saunders  
Asst Sec Hodding Carter

###### *Department of Defense*

Deputy Secretary Charles Duncan  
Dep Asst Sec Michael Armacost  
Commander Kelley

###### *JCS*

General David Jones  
General William Y. Smith

###### *White House*

Vice President Mondale  
Asst to the Pres for NSC  
Zbigniew Brzezinski  
Press Secretary Jody Powell  
Dep Asst to the Pres for NSC  
David Aaron

###### *NSC*

Colonel William Odom, Military Asst  
Michel Oksenberg, Staff Member  
Gary Sick, Staff Member

###### *CIA*

Admiral Stansfield Turner  
Deputy Robert Bowie

##### MINUTES

Dr. Brzezinski outlined the agenda—a situation report, including a report on the political situation; a report on the U.N. discussion of the advisability of additional public statements; analysis of Congressional reaction; and discussion of bilateral relations with the PRC. (S)

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, Meetings File, Box 14, SCC Meeting #141, Held 2/19/79, 2/79. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The Summary of Conclusions of the meeting is printed in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XIII, China, Document 218. The SCC also met on February 17 to discuss the Chinese-Vietnamese fighting; see *ibid.*, Document 217.

Dr. Brzezinski also noted that henceforth at the meetings on this subject, attendance would be limited to principals plus one. (S)

*Situation Report*

Admiral Turner gave the situation report. Information remains fragmentary. Thus far, we have been able to identify two Chinese divisions as having penetrated ten kilometers into North Vietnam. The remainder of the conflict seems limited in scope and is closer to the border. Chinese intentions at this point appear to be limited, with Chinese forces under strict central control and under discipline as to how far they should penetrate. There has been some confusion among Chinese forces in the early stages of the battle, particularly in identifying the enemy—as Vietnamese uniforms and designations make them nearly indistinguishable from Chinese forces. The Chinese have been quite active in the air, including some use of IL-28 bombers from Hainan Island. (S)

Secretary Vance asked how deep the air intrusions have been to date. Admiral Turner replied only 20 to 25 kilometers. One report of Vietnamese use of SAMs in the Northwest would place Chinese air penetration deeper than that. (S)

Turner noted that thus far we have intercepted relatively few communications, which prompted a question as to whether we could do more to intercept Chinese signals. Turner said that he could look at the USS HORN, to see if we could send it closer in. (S)

Vance asked where the deepest penetration had occurred. Turner replied in the Northeast salient, where Chinese forces had advanced about ten kilometers. The rough judgment is that the Chinese had halted this thrust. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski asked whether the Chinese may hold at a shallow penetration. Turner replied that this could be the case. (S)

Dick Holbrooke asked whether it was true that no divisions had yet been moved from Hanoi to the north. Turner said that was correct. (S)

Discussion then turned to the Sino-Soviet situation, and Turner indicated that there are no changes, though we have just discovered that an airborne division is missing from Leningrad. (S)

Vance asked whether there was any indication of Soviet aircraft movement, to which Turner replied that the CIA has not seen any. General Jones added that there had been an alert of some SS-20 units, and DIA had noted that the Soviets were palletizing equipment of an airborne division near Leningrad. (S)

Brzezinski asked whether it was true that the Chinese had evacuated civilians from some cities along the border. Turner said that civilians had been removed from Urumchi. (S)

Brzezinski asked what the situation was in Cambodia. Turner replied that, while there was no heavy combat, there was no retrogression in the ability of the Pol Pot forces to hold their own. (S)

Brzezinski asked whether there was any indication of Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia. Turner answered no. (S)

Vice President Mondale noted that one scenario for the Chinese invasion was that Peking would accompany their military effort with an effort to change the leadership of the guerrilla forces in Cambodia—bringing Ieng Sary and Sihanouk into a position of prominence. After this, they would couple their own withdrawal from Vietnam with an effort to establish a new coalition leadership in Cambodia. The Vice President asked whether the Chinese were making any headway in altering the leadership of Cambodian resistance forces. Turner noted that there had been no change in this area. (S)

#### *Political Aspects*

Vance reported that if anything happens in the U.N. immediately, it probably will be the Chinese trying to bring the Cambodian issue to the General Assembly for debate. (S)

Vance noted that the Soviets did not have their Ambassador to the U.N. in New York, though he predicted that Troyanovsky will soon come back. (S)

Ambassador Young thinks that the Sino-Vietnamese issue will be broached by Tuesday.<sup>2</sup> Our people are prepared in New York to carry out instructions as given. (S)

As far as the Soviets are concerned, they have only issued one bland statement. (S)

#### *Statement to the Chinese*

Brzezinski thought that we should prepare a formal statement for the Chinese. Vance agreed and thought that perhaps he should talk to Ambassador Ch'ai Tse-min tomorrow. Holbrooke, Armacost, and Oksenberg were assigned to prepare those remarks to be discussed at a formal SCC meeting tomorrow. (S)

#### *Statements by Others*

Brzezinski asked what statements had been made by our allies. Holbrooke said that the Japanese had issued a statement similar to ours. Brzezinski read a TASS statement giving strong Soviet support of the Vietnamese, but also indicating the Soviets were confident the Vietnamese could handle the situation on their own. (S)

---

<sup>2</sup> February 20.

*Congressional*

Vance reported that in widespread discussions with the leadership yesterday, all supported the position that we were taking. They supported a position of non-involvement and of condemnation both of the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and the Chinese attack on Vietnam. (S)

Brzezinski reported on his talk with Nixon yesterday,<sup>3</sup> whom he called on instructions. Nixon counseled that we should be careful not to repeat the mistake of 1956 during the Suez crisis by giving the Soviets an opening to make gains. While we should criticize the Chinese, we should not create a situation in which we adversely affect our bilateral relations or through our criticism give the Soviets a justification for harming our interests. (S)

Vance reported that Kissinger was supportive of our policy, and said that he would talk to Baker<sup>4</sup> to make sure that he supports us. (S)

Vance reported that Baker is supportive. Holbrooke reported that Senator Glenn will be on "Meet the Press" and that he will talk to him. (S)

Brzezinski reported that George Meany<sup>5</sup> believes the whole thing was instigated by the Soviets and that we should go after them. (S)

*Public Statements*

Brzezinski asked whether we should make any additional public statements. Powell and others thought that the initial press response was good. Holbrooke thought that the six points which Vance used for his briefing of Gwertzman<sup>6</sup> yesterday was quite effective. Powell thought we should now brief the wire services and the networks. (S)

Powell asked whether we should reveal that the President had communicated with Brezhnev via the Hotline yesterday.<sup>7</sup> Brzezinski said that we should neither confirm nor deny. (S)

*Soviet Involvement*

Brzezinski asked what if the Soviets make a threat against China. What would our response be? Vance stated that his concern is that the Soviets might send volunteer pilots to Hanoi. Brzezinski thought it possible the Soviets would seek a position at Cam Ranh Bay. (S)

---

<sup>3</sup> No memorandum of conversation of this discussion has been found.

<sup>4</sup> Senate Minority Leader Howard Baker (R-Tennessee).

<sup>5</sup> President of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO).

<sup>6</sup> *New York Times* reporter Bernard Gwertzman.

<sup>7</sup> See *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Document 172.



David Aaron thought that in that case, we would have to reevaluate our security relationship with the Soviet Union. (S)

Brzezinski ordered a study to be prepared for tomorrow's SCC meeting identifying the range of possible Soviet reactions to the Sino-Vietnamese conflict and listing possible U.S. responses for each possible Soviet action. Oksenberg, Armacost, and Odom were tasked with preparing that report. (S)

*Miscellaneous*

Jones observed that Marcos was obsessed with the idea of Vietnam becoming a Cuba of the Far East. He recently and quite incessantly asked what we would do to inhibit South Vietnam from moving into the Soviet camp. Mrs. Marcos appears to have a different view from her husband; she feels that China, and not the Soviet Union, poses the major danger to Southeast Asia. (S)

Brzezinski scheduled another SCC meeting on the Sino-Vietnamese conflict for tomorrow morning, to focus on two issues; our bilateral relations with Peking; and an assessment of likely Soviet reactions. Brzezinski wondered if the Soviets develop a major threat by Monday or Tuesday<sup>8</sup> how we would respond. (S)

Mondale noted that we must have a program for consultations with the ANZUS and the ASEAN states. Turner asked whether we should improve our reconnaissance capability for keeping abreast of the tactical situation in Vietnam. Two options may be available to us: placing a cruiser in the Tonkin Gulf with a monitoring capability, or using the SR-71. Brzezinski directed Turner to present a report on these options for tomorrow's meeting. (S)

Hodding Carter noted that any increase in surveillance activities or any actions on the U.S. part in response to the Sino-Vietnamese conflict would depart from our public assertion that we have "no interest" in this conflict. (S)

Holbrooke asked about the situation on the Hill with respect to normalization legislation. Christopher reported that conversations with Javits and Church revealed no indications that the recent events would affect either the Omnibus Legislation<sup>9</sup> or the resolutions to be attached to it. Vance reported that Church was prepared to go ahead and to separate himself from Javits. The situation is different in the House, Vance reported, where Zablocki appears determined to push an amended Omnibus Bill and a resolution that would undercut normal-

---

<sup>8</sup> February 19 or 20.

<sup>9</sup> Reference is to the Taiwan Relations Act. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XIII, China, Document 213.

ization. Wolff intends to stick with the Kennedy/Cranston resolution. Vance told Zablocki that the Administration would be prepared for a direct confrontation with him, if he persists on his course. Zablocki is inclined to seek postponement for 90 days, but we have indicated that we are committed to the March 1 date. (S)

Holbrooke reported that the most immediate and troublesome issue is securing funds for the American Institute on Taiwan. Reprogramming is being held up by Senator Hollings, who chairs a committee consisting of Deconcini, Garn, and Weicker. There is no chance to secure reprogramming prior to passage of the Omnibus Legislation. This means that all operations on Taiwan may close down on March 2. (S)

Brzezinski noted that this was not an issue to be discussed in this meeting, but an immediate meeting would be held with the appropriate Congressional liaison people to develop a strategy for handling this issue. (S)<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Brzezinski initialed below the last paragraph.

#### 44. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, February 19, 1979, 3:05–3:55 p.m.

##### ATTENDEES

###### *State*

Cyrus Vance  
Warren Christopher  
Richard Holbrooke

###### *Defense*

Harold Brown  
Charles Duncan

###### *JCS*

David Jones

###### *CIA*

Stansfield Turner  
Robert Bowie

###### *White House*

Zbigniew Brzezinski  
Jody Powell

###### *NSC*

David Aaron  
William Odom  
Michel Oksenberg

##### SUBJECT

Sino-Vietnamese Conflict

#### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

##### *I. Situation Report*

The Chinese have penetrated 10 km on two different fronts and are holding. There is very little information about the tactical situation on the ground. The Chinese are informing their cadre that the struggle may be a protracted one in which the Chinese will sustain losses.

##### *II. Foreign Response to our Various Démarches*

Brzezinski read the Brezhnev response, which he linked to the official Soviet statement.<sup>2</sup> The Soviets, it was concluded, have yet to commit themselves to a course of action.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, Meetings File, Box 14, Folder 20, SCC Meeting #141 Held 2/19/79, 2/79. Secret. Sent to Carter under a February 19 covering memorandum from Brzezinski that Carter initialed. (Ibid.)

<sup>2</sup> According to the translation of Brezhnev's response to the U.S. message (see footnote 6, Document 214), he declared, "I would not be candid if I did not call your attention to the fact that China's aggression against Viet Nam was undertaken soon after Deng Xiaoping's visit to the USA, during which he made pronouncements openly inimical to the cause of peace, including direct threats to Viet Nam. And is this simple coincidence? We and others must, of course, draw from this the appropriate conclusions. Therefore, we do not understand why you are appealing to us to exercise restraint. Such an appeal must be directed only to the aggressor—that is, to China." Brezhnev's message is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VI, Soviet Union. The official Soviet statement, February 18, was published in the *New York Times*, February 19, 1979, p. A11.

### *III. U.S. Objectives in the Conflict*

The group agreed that the following statement summarizes our objectives: In the context of avoiding any direct U.S. involvement, we should: (1) minimize the adverse effect of the conflict upon our bilateral relations either with the People's Republic of China or the Soviet Union; (2) deter a Soviet escalation of the conflict; (3) secure the withdrawal of both Vietnam from Kampuchea and China from Vietnam; (4) seek the emergence of a neutral Kampuchea; and (5) reassure ASEAN and Japan in the process.<sup>3</sup>

### *IV. U.S.-Chinese Bilateral Relations*

The group approved Cy delivering a short *démarche* to Ambassador Chai on Tuesday, February 20, essentially seeking information about Chinese intentions and hinting that without a clear understanding of Chinese intentions the expansion of our bilateral ties could eventually be adversely affected. (A draft of Vance's statement is at Tab B.)<sup>4</sup>

The group decided to postpone for 36 hours a decision on whether Blumenthal should continue his plans for a Friday departure to Peking, until the limits of China's penetration of Vietnam become a bit clearer. There are five options with respect to the trip: (1) persist with original plans; (2) persist with the trip, but alter the instructions to take into account the new situation; (3) postpone the trip for a week; (4) postpone the trip until Chinese have withdrawn forces from Vietnam; (5) keep the trip on schedule but have Carswell substitute for Blumenthal.<sup>5</sup>

Vance thought the trip should not go forward while Chinese troops are stationed in a foreign country. We might inadvertently be seen to support Chinese action through a Blumenthal trip. He advocated a one-week delay.

<sup>3</sup> Carter wrote, "all good" in the right margin next to this paragraph.

<sup>4</sup> Oksenberg's draft of Vance's statement to Ambassador Chai is attached but not printed.

<sup>5</sup> See also Tab C. [Handwritten footnote in the original. At Tab C is a backchannel message, initialed by Carter, from Callaghan, February 19, in which the Prime Minister describes the U.K. response to the crisis: "In the days before the Chinese action in Vietnam, we strongly urged on both the Vietnamese and Chinese governments the dangerous consequences of any build-up in tension. Since then we have reiterated to the Vietnamese our view that both Vietnam and China should show restraint and uphold the principle of the territorial integrity of UN member states. We also deplore the fact that the Vietnamese Government has still not withdrawn its forces from Cambodia. Furthermore, we have urged restraint on the Russians and rebutted the allegation that the West is in collusion with the Chinese. With the Chinese we are taking the line that we are looking for early indications that their forces will be withdrawn from Vietnam as the Chinese themselves have undertaken." (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, Meetings File, Box 14, SCC Meeting #141, Held 2/19/79, 2/79)]

Holbrooke thought the trip should go forward. Without Blumenthal in Peking and without Woodcock there, we would have no high-level representation on March 1st when the Liaison Office is upgraded to Embassy status. In addition, cancellation of the trip would be interpreted in the United States as Administration admission that we have suffered a setback and that we are steering an erratic course.

The Vice President believed we must avoid any appearance of becoming involved in the conflict. To delay Blumenthal's trip would be to tip in the Soviet Vietnamese favor, to persist as is would be to tip in China's favor. Blumenthal should go, but make critical remarks.<sup>6</sup>

Brzezinski argued that the trip should go forth [forward], though with altered instructions. The Blumenthal trip is part of the normalization process, and we seek that to go forward in spite of the Vietnam conflict. Frank Press went to Moscow recently, even though the Soviet-backed Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea had just occurred. There is bilateral advantage to be secured in Mike's trip, and we would only be punishing ourselves if we hold back.

Powell thought the press would react negatively no matter what we do, but the reaction would not be too strong if Blumenthal left on Friday. Powell believes that the basic U.S. public reaction is that Vietnam deserves to be beaten a little bit over the head.

#### *V. United Nations*

The group decided to authorize our UN Mission to explore, particularly with our Allies, inscribing both Indochina issues for Security Council debate. Neither China nor the Soviet Union wish the entire range of Indochina issues to be debated—China wants Kampuchea debated and the Soviets want Vietnam debated. It was judged that we would secure political advantage by taking the issue to the UN and by adopting a stance that would be balanced between Moscow and Peking.

#### *VI. Intelligence Gathering*

[1 paragraph (2½ lines) not declassified]

#### *VII. Contingency Planning for Soviet Military Involvement*

The group began contingency planning in the event of (1) a direct Soviet military involvement in the Sino-Vietnamese conflict; or (2) a Sino-Soviet conflict. The group will consider at a subsequent meeting whether, if the Soviets appear to be moving toward acquiring Cam

---

<sup>6</sup> Carter wrote in the right margin next to this paragraph, "He should go as scheduled." Blumenthal was scheduled to visit Beijing February 24–March 2 and Shanghai March 2–4. (Telegram 37792 to Beijing, February 13, National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790069–0290)

Ranh Bay for a naval base, we should inform Moscow *before* they make a final decision that their action could lead to our reconsideration of our position that we would not enter into a security relationship with the People's Republic of China.

---

#### 45. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, February 21, 1979, 4:05–4:50 p.m.

##### PARTICIPANTS

###### *White House*

Zbigniew Brzezinski (Asst to the Pres for National Security Affairs)

###### *State*

Warren Christopher (Asst Sec of State)

Richard Holbrooke (Asst Sec of State for EA & Pacific Affairs)

###### *Treasury*

Secretary Blumenthal

Asst Sec Tony Solomon

###### *DOD*

Secretary Brown

David McGiffert (Asst Sec of Defense)

###### *JCS*

General Allen

General Smith

###### *NSC*

David Aaron

Michel Oksenberg

William Odom

###### *CIA*

Admiral Stansfield Turner

Robert Bowie

##### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

The meeting received a situation report from Admiral Turner. The Chinese are bringing in additional forces and the Vietnamese may be

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, Meetings File, Box 15, SCC Meeting #143, Held 2/21/1979, 2/79. Confidential. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. Carter initialed the top of the page.

moving main force units north. The Soviets are sending a VIP plane to Hanoi and two aircraft are ferrying equipment. (C)

Brzezinski reported on the President's acceptance of the SCC February 19 recommendation on U.S. goals in the conflict, his endorsement of eight additional reconnaissance flights, his approval of our U.N. activity, and his decision to have Blumenthal proceed.<sup>2</sup> (C)

The group discussed the general situation. All agreed it would not be in our interest to see China become mired in a protracted conflict. (C)

The group reached the following tentative decisions:

—The U.S. should now actively seek a Security Council meeting, based on the favorable responses to our informal consultations thus far. Our effort should be given higher visibility through briefings by Hodding Carter at State. State will send a message to the U.N. on February 22 on this;<sup>3</sup> its text will be cleared through the NSC. (C)

—Blumenthal should express both publicly and privately our opposition to the conflict. His toast at his welcoming banquet should be carefully crafted to indicate our displeasure with the turn of events in Southeast Asia. His toast will be cleared by the NSC. (C)

—The group agreed that if Blumenthal can reach a claims/assets settlement and/or establish a Joint Economic Commission, he should announce these accomplishments upon his departure. Christopher thought a claims/assets settlement would help on the Hill. (C)

—State is sending a recommendation for additional FMS for Pakistan, Thailand, and others in the light of recent events. The group endorsed this recommendation. (C)

---

<sup>2</sup> See Document 44. See also, *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XIII, China, Document 220.

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to telegram 43803 to USUN, February 22. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790082–0993) For a description of the Security Council meetings February 23–28, see *Yearbook of the United Nations, 1979*, pp. 281–283.

#### 46. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Bangkok, February 21, 1979, 0548Z

5698. Subj: (C) Hanoi's Third Front: South Vietnam. Ref: A. 78 Bangkok 22489, B. 78 Bangkok 29931.<sup>2</sup>

1. (C—Entire text)

2. Summary: South Vietnamese are massively disillusioned with their Communist government, its management of the economy, its cadres, and its war with Kampuchea, according to reports of refugees who just arrived in Thailand. It is also clear that the SRV Government reciprocates this distrust. GSRV failed to take its people into confidence concerning its role in Kampuchea and returning of remains of Vietnamese killed in fighting makes clear another act of perfidy on the part of Hanoi. "Dark skinned Khmer speaking Vietnamese" enroute to Kampuchea indicate a continuing Vietnamese role in that country. Southern economy is a shambles. Inflation threatens survival. Black market rice prices in Ho Chi Minh City quintupled in less than a year. Hanoi blames China and floods for high prices. Populace adds to this list of excuses SRV management of economy, corruption, and the war in Kampuchea. While economic difficulties in southern Vietnam are most apparent, the scars on the minds and spirits of the South Vietnamese are perhaps even deeper. Those tinged with association with the former regime are, of course, the least trusted and are permanently damaged in the socialist society. Majority of former GVN officials may still remain at forced labor in "re-education camps." Afraid of "disorders", authorities started in December picking up again those released just months before. Conscription since December encompasses all males between 18 and 35. Youths find it particularly ironic "to fight Hanoi's war against Communist Cambodia" for a government which has incarcerated their fathers and brothers. Northern cadres are pictured as haughty, arrogant, increasingly cynical of their own government and its policies, and corrupt. Options for disaffected South Vietnamese are few and dangerous. Resistance may be growing, and refugees speak of "liberated areas where the Viet Cong dare not go." Escape, almost universally

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of the Director of Central Intelligence, Job 81M00919R: Executive Registry Subject Files (1977–1979), Box 12, Folder 31: C–309 East Asia. Confidential. Sent for information to Hong Kong, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Moscow, Paris, Beijing, Rangoon, Seoul, Singapore, Tokyo, Vientiane, CINCPAC also for POLAD, and DIA.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 22489 from Bangkok is dated August 7, 1978; telegram 29931 from Bangkok is dated October 13, 1978. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780334–0673 and D780420–0620) Both discussed the "socialist transformation" taking place in South Vietnam based on interviews with refugees.



desired, is costly, perilous, and boats are scarce. Refugees say exodus will continue nonetheless. Failure by Hanoi to treat flaws in its southern administration could lead to major disruptions with impact on Hanoi's control and even its leadership. End Summary.

#### The Gulf Between Government and People

3. Vietnamese refugees arriving in Thailand in February described to us, in a series of interviews in Songkhla Feb 13–15, increasing despair among South Vietnamese over conditions in Vietnam and the directions in which Hanoi is seemingly taking the nation. To them the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea reflects Hanoi's devotion to ideology, military power, and domination rather than the pragmatism, reconstruction, and reconciliation, which sympathetic southern Vietnamese hoped would characterize the policies of a reunified Vietnam, commented a former professor from Can Tho University. The government distrusts its own people and lies to them, he added. Hanoi denies that Vietnam has invaded Kampuchea. They claim that Kampuchea attacked Vietnam and, "secretly I hope that Kampuchea will win and overthrow the Government of Vietnam," a former noodle maker remarked. Refugees say that, despite government claims, everyone knows what is going on. The government commandeered cars and buses (already nationalized) to haul the troops to the Kampuchean front. They also now haul the many dead and wounded back, refugees assert. The returning trucks with their cargo symbolize the destruction of South Vietnam, a former Saigon agricultural university professor commented. More Vietnamese troops are still being sent to Kampuchea. Moreover, Hanoi is dispatching "dark skinned Vietnamese" and Vietnamese who lived on the border and speak Khmer to serve as administrative cadres for the Heng Samrin regime.

#### A Wrecked Economy

4. "Socialist transformation," floods, corruption and the war with Kampuchea have devastated the southern economy. Inflation now poses a threat to survival. The standard of living drops steadily. The government blames the economic disaster on the threat from China, either directly, or through "Chinese lackies" in Kampuchea. These are common themes in the refugees' stories. Price comparisons in the black market, where all but the privileged cadres and workers must buy, bear them out. Rice prices in Ho Chi Minh City have gone from 2 dong a kilo (2.19 dong to the dollar) in July to seven to ten dong now. Pork prices have risen from 8 dong in July to 14 dong in February. (Government store price has risen from 1.5 dong to 2.) Chicken and beef are not available, refugees from Saigon say. A bowl of pho (noodles,

bits of pork, onion, coriander) now costs 3–4 dong. Gasoline, when available, is .5 dong a liter. Cigarettes are now .5 dong a cigarette. Since farmers are not allowed to transport their produce to sell in Ho Chi Minh City, prices are higher in the city. Rural prices, closer to sources, are lower but have shown a similar price spiral. Rice has gone from 1.5–2 dong per kilo late last spring to 4 dong; pork from 6–10 to 12–14 dong a kilo; pho from .3–.5 to .6–1 dong; a can of milk from .5 to 1 dong. Despite the doubling or worse of prices, salaries for those lucky enough to be allowed to work have not changed. Teachers make 63 dong a month; a cleaning lady (the lowest salary) makes 50 dong; a professor, 85; a cyclo driver, 300; a PAVN petty officer, 75; a captain, 120; and a soldier, 5 dong a month (plus food and uniforms).

5. In our first contact in over a year with refugees from central Vietnam, two youths from Qui Nhon, who just barely survived a month-long voyage, told us that the economy in Qui Nhon is a disaster. Shops are closed. You can buy almost nothing. Anything produced must be sold to the government. Farmland was all collectivized early in 1978. In the collectives, only those who work hard and have “good attitudes” are given bonuses. Rice costs 4 dong a kilo, pork is 10 dong. People are too poor to smoke any more. Sugar, beer, and coffee are no longer sold. Rubber sandals cost 10 dong. Clothing stores in Qui Nhon, as in Saigon and the Mekong Delta were closed early this year. Government stores to sell cloth have not yet opened.

6. Other areas of the economy have also suffered as a result of “socialist transformation” policies and the war with Kampuchea. Refugees report that additional factories have closed due to lack of raw materials and labor shortages caused by the military draft. Government still talks of collectivizing all farms by the end of 1980, and more collective farms are reported to have been established in pilot areas of Tien Giang, An Giang, Dong Thap, and Long An provinces. As earlier reported (Ref B), forced sale of produce to the government at very low prices and distaste for working on a collective basis have led to further drops in productivity levels. A collective farmer receives 13 kilos of paddy per month (normal working adult ration might be 25–30 kilos of paddy per month) and 5–10 dong a day for 8 hours of work on a collective farm. Ideological exhortations fail to inspire South Vietnamese to work, one farmer from Long Xuyen commented. Refugees also blame managerial inexperience and technological backwardness of Communist cadres for declining production throughout the economy. Cadres also haughtily ignore available expertise among southerners, since using their knowledge would be an admission of the superiority of pragmatism over ideology, the agriculture professor noted.

7. New economic zones (NEZ's),<sup>3</sup> theoretically the only way out for the army of the deprived, are still feared and regarded as "death-traps", one refugee said. The program itself is in bad shape, the agriculture professor said. People return from NEZ's and sleep on the streets of Saigon. With the addition of northern cadres and soldiers, plus the "street sleepers", Saigon is as densely populated as in early 1975. People are still picked up in the middle of the night and hauled to the NEZ's, but the government seems so preoccupied with Kampuchea and larger economic problems that the authorities no longer have enough time to force people to return to the NEZ's, one refugee said. By another report, 10,000 northerners have been moved to NEZ's in Tri Ton (former Chau Doc province). The agriculture professor thinks that the present leadership cannot save the economy. "Senior officials and their ideas must be changed," he commented.

#### Disillusioned and Distrusted Population

8. We have described above the ravaging of the economic welfare of the South Vietnamese population. Their minds, spirits, and rights as humans or political beings are equally scarred and limited. No progress is reported in improving these areas. Student refugees report that students increasingly "take vacations" from the intellectual fare offered extolling Communism and the worker. They can see the disparities between the lectures and reality. A Catholic priest who just arrived in Thailand described the new system as cruel, inhuman, and duplicitous. He noted that his church and fellow priests are hounded and harassed in the hope of eventually reducing the religion to a shell of support for the Communist administration. He was himself arrested twice (and escaped) allegedly as a CIA agent. Like others, he related that there is no judicial system in the SRV, no trials, no courts, no legal recourse, no human rights, only the Communist authorities who have rights and impose their will on the population.

9. Those tinged with association with the former regime are not only without rights, but are still jailed or suspect. Recent arrivals include an unusually large number of graduates of re-education seminars, released about three years after internment. This explains the substantial numbers of the educated (teachers, former ARVN officers of ranks

---

<sup>3</sup> In telegram 46435 to USNATO, February 26, the NEZs were described as follows: "Hanoi's most ambitious postwar effort in agriculture and at socioeconomic reform is embodied in the 'new economic zones' primitive areas in the country side set aside for agricultural development. They represent Hanoi's efforts to deal with millions of urban unemployed, lagging food production, uneven population distribution and inadequate political control in some southern areas. About 1.5 million people have been moved, but many have drifted back to the cities because of harsh living conditions in the new areas. So far few if any of these areas have actually supplied an agricultural surplus to the state." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790087-1046)

up to captain) who are now arriving in Thailand. Many of their colleagues will not arrive, since the refugees uniformly report that large numbers of lower ranking government officials and military officers are still in the forced labor camps, i.e., re-education seminars. Refugees spoke of hundreds or thousands still in each of these former camps. SRV authorities have not even bothered to provide political indoctrination in the camps, possibly since the internees were too busily engaged in hard labor. They even had to work on Sundays, which were called "socialist days." Refugees with whom we spoke usually said that roughly thirty to fifty percent of the persons in their camps had still not been released. More senior GVN officials and officers of the rank of major or above are almost all still in camps, they said. Refugees expressed doubts that many would ever be released.

10. Reflecting the continuing distrust of the administration in those associated with the former GVN, even those released, several refugees reported that authorities began in December and January picking up and rejailling those who were released only a few months ago. One refugee had heard that the government was "afraid of disorders" and therefore had again detained former military officers. A former office director of the PRU program related that in late December he received an "invitation card" to report to the Public Security Bureau. Having heard that released officers and former office directors were being picked up again, he fled to Thailand.

11. Another group who feels particularly resentful toward the administration are youths who are conscripted to fight "Hanoi's war with Cambodian Communists." Refugees report that, beginning in December, males between 18–35 were being drafted into the PAVN. Age limit formerly was 18–25. Young women are also being sought energetically as volunteers. There are rumors that males up to the age of 45 may be called up. No one wants to go. They regard the war as a problem of the north's, irrelevant to South Vietnam. "It is particularly ironic," one refugee commented, "to be called to fight for the same government which sent our fathers and brothers to re-education camps." AWOL rates remain high, the refugees claim. One refugee called EmbOff's attention to the large number of youths surrounding us in the refugee camp, when asked what young people's attitude toward the draft was.

#### Cynical Rulers

12. Discussing the SRV cadres, one refugee said that they act like "masters, victors, and are arrogant and venally corrupt." Several refugees talked of the new class system in South Vietnam, headed by the privileged class of northern cadres. One noted the relevance of Yugoslav writer Djilas<sup>4</sup> "the new class" to the role of the new rulers of

---

<sup>4</sup> Milovan Djilas, a Yugoslav dissident.

South Vietnam. Southerners are struck by the growing cynicism of the cadres. Cadres are themselves disillusioned with their government, which led them to believe that the south was oppressed and impoverished. They were surprised to find that the south was a prosperous paradise by comparison with the north. Refugees also believed that the war with Kampuchea and the disastrous state of the economy have as well affected northern cadres. Most, they allege, have become cynical, no longer care about their image, or try to make southerners understand their policies, and only want to exercise control and make as much money as corruption permits. A few, however, have told southerners in confidence that the leaders in Hanoi must be changed.

#### Resistance or Refuge

13. Desperation seems to be growing, but options are limited and dangerous. For the first time, we heard refugees talk of “liberated areas” in South Vietnam, where the “Viet Cong cannot go.” Refugees also identified leaders of resistance efforts. A former member of the Vinh Long Province Council, a Cap Tien Party member, and teacher at Can Tho University, spoke of three separate “liberated areas” or “movements.” He said liberated areas are in a Nhon village of former Chau Doc Province, led by Captain Sau Deo, a name which cropped up in several conversations. SRV claims Sau Deo is dead, but refugees do not believe it. Other “liberated area” was Co Do, west of Can Tho. Leader in Co Do is reportedly Le Quang Vinh, son of former ARVN General Le Quang Chien. Both “liberated areas” are reportedly well armed. Teacher also heard that the Phuc Quoc (reconquer country) movement in Tien Giang province (former Vinh Long and Sa Dec provinces) is a new resistance movement still with many followers, despite reports that the authorities have recently arrested 1000 persons suspected of membership in Phuc Quoc. This movement also seems to be connected with the Catholic agricultural youth movement.

14. Other refugees spoke of pockets of resistance in Hong Ngu, Dong Thap province, in Dong Nai province (former Long Khanh and Binh Thuy provinces), Lao Dong province, and By Fulro in Dac Lac (former Darlac) province. This represented a significant increase in reports of this kind, but the refugees interviewed contained numerous former military officers, more likely than other refugees to be interested and knowledgeable about resistance activities. Other refugees, like the two youths from Qui Nhon, said that the people detested the Communist government, but were too fearful for their lives to resist.

15. As an alternative, refugees claim uniformly that almost everyone in Vietnam would like to flee. Anyone with the means escapes, all said. Availability of boats is increasingly a problem. However, lack of money to either bribe officials or buy passage on a small boat for secret escape inhibits large numbers. At the same time, the desire

to escape is mounting as the cruel realities of prospects under the Communists rule become clear. The recent refugees to Thailand are overwhelmingly ethnic Vietnamese, arriving in small boats, departing Vietnam secretly without the knowledge or connivance of the SRV authorities. They are aware of the other, purchased route on large ships, which is available generally to Sino-Vietnamese. Refugee boats arriving in Thailand are almost all attacked 3 or 4 times by Thai pirates. Record is 14 attacks on a single boat, reducing the refugees to their underwear.

16. Asked about the future, refugees say that people do not wish even to think about the future. The prospects are too dire. Many young people have brothers or fathers who have been or are in re-education camps. Because of these relationships, they know they have no future. If their families have money, they escape. If they do not, the thought of the future is unbearable, one refugee explained. A 42-year old stall operator from Rach Gia acted differently. Having himself studied only five years, he said that he escaped and brought along his eight children because the Communist education system was worthless. He wanted his children to get a good education in America. He escaped for their future.

#### What Does All This Mean?

17. Hanoi's policies in South Vietnam are near bankruptcy. The administration controls but does not appear to govern. The scope of the alienation of the population, reflected in these interviews, albeit of the disaffected, raises questions about Hanoi's ability to manage the problems in South Vietnam. The apparent scope of Hanoi's other difficulties in Kampuchea and with the PRC would appear to be compelling reasons for policy changes to ameliorate conditions in the southern half of Vietnam. Failure by Hanoi to treat seriously the necessities and the flaws in its southern administration could, over the long term, lead to disruptions of dimensions which might contribute directly to force changes either of persons or policies in Hanoi.

**Abramowitz**

**47. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, February 23, 1979, 3:05–3:50 p.m.

SINO-VIETNAMESE CONFLICT

PARTICIPANTS

*White House*

Vice President Mondale

Jody Powell (Press Secretary)

Hamilton Jordan (Asst to Press)

Dr. Brzezinski (Asst to Pres for National Security Affairs)

David Aaron (Dep Asst to Pres for National Security Affairs)

Denis Clift (Asst to the YP for National Security Affairs)

*State*

Deputy Secretary Warren Christopher

David Newsom (Under Secretary for Political Affairs)

Robert Oakley (Dep Asst Sec for EA and Pacific Affairs)

*DOD*

Secretary Harold Brown

Charles Duncan

Michael Armacost (Dep Asst Sec for EA and Pacific Affairs)

*JCS*

General William Smith

*CIA*

Admiral Turner

Deputy Robert Bowie

*NSC*

Michel Oksenberg

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

Admiral Turner summarized the battle situation. Chinese forces have apparently captured all Vietnamese frontier outposts along the entire 1100 kilometers into Vietnam. But they have not yet pushed forward. They are trying to lure the Vietnamese forces north, but it is not yet clear they will be successful in this effort.

At the U.N., the U.S. initiative to inscribe both Indochina issues in the Security Council agenda was joined by Norway. Eight votes are required for discussion, and it appeared that the debate may even get underway late today. The U.S. would speak first, followed by the Soviet

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Brzezinski Donated Material, Subject File, Box 29, Meetings, SCC 144: 2/23/79. Top Secret. Initialed by Brzezinski at the end of the text. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room.

Union. Our hope is that the non-aligned countries, particularly Kuwait, Bangladesh will propose a resolution acceptable to us which would condemn both the Vietnamese action in Cambodia and the Chinese action in Vietnam.<sup>2</sup>

We discussed U.S. contingencies in the event the Soviet Union seeks to acquire permanent military facilities in Vietnam. Were they to do so, the entire strategic situation in Asia would undergo a fundamental change. The meeting decided that Cy should deliver the *dé-marche* at Tab A to Dobrynin.<sup>3</sup>

We assessed our public posture on the conflict. Some concern was expressed that we may seem at this point to be a bit light on the Chinese. The group felt, however, that through Blumenthal's statement in Peking<sup>4</sup> and through the forthcoming U.N. debate, we would strike the right balance. Jody pointed out that our general position has won wide acclaim and our task is to explain how each action we undertake is consistent with our basic position. As far as the battle situation is concerned, the U.S. Government should neither become the major source of information about the conflict nor should we make any predictions. Our main task in backgrounding should be to introduce a note of calm and to knock down sensationalist stories.

---

<sup>2</sup> The UN Security Council held five meetings between February 23 and 28. See *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1979, pp. 281–283.

<sup>3</sup> Tab A was not found.

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 2, Document 223.



**48. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the  
Department of State (Tarnoff) to Secretary of State Vance<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, March 29, 1979

SUBJECT

Your Breakfast with the President Friday, March 30, 1979<sup>2</sup>

[Omitted here is discussion of the situation in Angola.]

2. *Vietnam*. Following the Chinese withdrawal from Vietnam,<sup>3</sup> tensions in the area have increased rather than decreased. We have seen a total Vietnamese mobilization and deployment toward the Chinese border, expansion of area conflicts to include threats to Laos and cross-border operations into Thailand, heightened Soviet military activity and involvement in Vietnam, and polemics from the Chinese and Vietnamese which prejudice the success of negotiations if and when they start. We have been urged by a number of countries, most recently by the Finns, to talk directly to the Vietnamese.

With the foregoing in mind, you might make the following points to the President:

—I have concluded that we should try to establish a direct dialogue with the Vietnamese. I am asking Ambassador Ha Van Lau if he will meet with Bob Oakley in New York to begin such a dialogue.<sup>4</sup>

—Bob would discuss the implications of a growing Soviet military presence in Vietnam and review the tensions in Laos, the conflict in Kampuchea and the dangers to the region posed by a continuation of present trends. He would probe for any Vietnamese interest in de-escalating this danger and for their willingness to cooperate with the international community in regularizing the refugee outflow. He would not offer any hope that normalization is likely unless these serious concerns of ours are met.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Records of Cyrus Vance, 1977–1980, Lot 84D241, President's Breakfast 1/1/79–4/30/79. Secret; Nodis. Vance's initials are stamped at the bottom of the first page of the memorandum.

<sup>2</sup> The breakfast meeting was held in the Cabinet Room at the White House, 7:32–9:07 a.m. Carter, Mondale, Vance, Brown and Brzezinski attended. (Carter Library, Presidential Materials, President's Daily Diary) No record of the discussion has been found.

<sup>3</sup> Chinese troops had completely withdrawn from Vietnam by March 16. A March 20 INR report on the consequences of the Chinese attack is printed in *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vol. XIII, China, Document 231.

<sup>4</sup> Telegram 145378 to USUN, June 6, conveyed the invitation to Lau for talks. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840148–2082)

<sup>5</sup> See Document 53.

—In connection with the refugee situation, I believe that Dick Clark could usefully visit Hanoi for a face-to-face discussion of refugee matters during his Southeast Asian swing in mid-April. Dick would underline how seriously we view Vietnamese performance in this matter. Both Liz Holtzman and the Deputy UNHCR have had useful talks on the subject in Hanoi,<sup>6</sup> but we need further clarification of what practical steps the Vietnamese plan to take to reduce the refugee flow and when.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to Vietnam.]

---

<sup>6</sup> Representatives Holtzman and Evans visited Vietnam February 22–24. (Telegram 6260 from Bangkok, February 24; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790085–0943) Deputy UNHCR Dale de Haan visited Hanoi February 26–March 5. (Telegram 3009 from the Mission in Geneva, February 22; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790084–0245)

---

#### 49. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the Department of State (Tarnoff) to Secretary of State Vance<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 3, 1979

SUBJECT

Your Breakfast Meeting with the President Friday, May 4, 1979<sup>2</sup>

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to Vietnam.]

3. *Talks with the Vietnamese.* We continue to receive reports of Vietnamese interest in resuming contact with U.S. and in reducing Hanoi's high level of dependency on the USSR. There is significant Hill interest (Glenn, Montgomery, Kennedy, Wolff, Holtzman, Nunn, etc.) in our discussing the refugee situation and MIAs with the Vietnamese. Many Asian leaders, most recently Ohira, have pointed out the advantages of keeping in touch with Hanoi. The most natural way for us to contact the Vietnamese would be to accept their invitation to resume

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Records of Cyrus Vance, 1977–1980, Lot 84D241, President's Breakfast 5/1/79–8/31/80. Secret; Nodis. Vance's initials are stamped at the bottom of the first page of the memorandum.

<sup>2</sup> The breakfast meeting took place in the Cabinet Room at the White House, 7:30–8:56 a.m. Carter, Mondale, Vance, Brown, Brzezinski, and Strauss attended. (Carter Library, Presidential Materials, President's Daily Diary) No record of the discussion has been found.

talks in New York at the Oakley/Ha Van Lau level.<sup>3</sup> We would convey tough messages to Hanoi: normalization is not an imminent prospect, concern over the SRV handling of refugees, opposition to the SRV occupation of Kampuchea. If we are to exercise any leverage in dealing with the SRV on these issues, a direct contact would have to be resumed. We would make sure that key congressional leaders and the press (on background) understand our objectives if we were to resume talks with the SRV representatives.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to Vietnam.]

---

<sup>3</sup> See Document 53.

---

**50. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 16, 1979

SUBJECT

Vietnam

I would like to raise the question of our policy towards a dialogue with Vietnam for discussion on Friday morning.<sup>2</sup> I believe strongly that we are on the wrong course and that we are driving the Vietnamese further and further into the arms of the Soviets. We do not need to normalize at this point, but the failure to have any dialogue is foregoing an important opportunity. The dialogue could be carried out at the United Nations with a minimum of publicity. All of our ASEAN partners are pressing us to conduct such a dialogue, as is Japan. In addition to the opening of a dialogue being the right substantive course, failure to do so is raising increasing political problems at home. We are coming increasingly under attack from both the right and the left. I believe we should change our course and do it promptly.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Records of Cyrus Vance, 1977–1980, Lot 84D241, President's Breakfast 5/1/79–8/31/80. Secret.

<sup>2</sup> May 18. The President held a breakfast meeting that morning with Mondale, Vance, Brzezinski, and Jordan, 7:30–9:10 a.m. (Carter Library, Presidential Materials, President's Daily Diary) No record of the discussion has been found.

**51. Memorandum From Michel Oksenberg of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 16, 1979

SUBJECT

Vietnam (U)

Cy Vance has sent the President a poorly reasoned memorandum on Vietnam.<sup>2</sup> I have annotated my reaction on the next page.<sup>3</sup> (C)

The idea is Holbrooke's, who raised it at our Monday East Asia group meeting.<sup>4</sup> I am opposed, not so much on China grounds as on grounds of constancy and credibility. We told the Vietnamese in September that if they invaded Cambodia or drew closer to the Soviets, normalization was not in the cards.<sup>5</sup> They made their choice; now let them live with the consequences for awhile. Can we not learn patience? (S)

Holbrooke wishes Oakley to meet the Vietnamese solely to condemn their behavior in Cambodia and to decry the Soviet presence. But would others believe us? (S)

Would the Vietnamese not sense that the very willingness to talk represents a change in position? And Cy affirms that this would be a change. If we are to change, then should we not consult our allies and China first? And if to enter a dialogue is a change, then should it occur before or after the Brezhnev Summit?<sup>6</sup> Will our complaints to the Soviets about Cam Ranh Bay, etc., be more or less plausible if we just began talks with Vietnam? Less, I should think. (S)

I have drafted an appropriate cover memorandum from you to the President at Tab I.<sup>7</sup> (U)

Nick Platt disagrees. He feels that we lose nothing by maintaining communication with Hanoi. By doing so we are being responsive to the requests of other allies in the region, including the Japanese and

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Oksenberg Subject File, Box 33, Chron, 5/1-16/79. Secret. Sent for action.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 50.

<sup>3</sup> Attached but not printed is a copy of Vance's May 16 memorandum, on which Oksenberg wrote extensive comments.

<sup>4</sup> May 14. No minutes of this meeting have been found.

<sup>5</sup> See Documents 26 and 27.

<sup>6</sup> The Summit was held in Vienna June 16-18. Documentation is in *Foreign Relations*, 1977-1980, vol. VI, Soviet Union.

<sup>7</sup> Attached but not printed is an unsigned version of Document 52.

our ASEAN partners. Platt would hate to see us work ourselves into a position where we had to be sure of a positive response before opening a dialogue. Such a practice could produce a situation of a long hiatus.<sup>8</sup> (S)

*RECOMMENDATIONS:*

That you sign the memorandum to the President at Tab I.

That when the subject comes up on Friday (May 18), you recommend that: (a) State develop a strategy paper with options on dealing with Vietnam (Holbrooke consistently has refused to develop a PRM-type policy memorandum, knowing—I believe—how weak his argumentation would be on paper.); (b) we talk first with ASEAN, Japan, and China; and (c) we postpone any initiative with Hanoi until after the Brezhnev Summit.<sup>9</sup> (S)

---

<sup>8</sup> Oksenberg added “denying us flexibility a la US-China relations in the past” by hand.

<sup>9</sup> Neither the approve nor the disapprove option was selected.

---

**52. Memorandum From the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 17, 1979

SUBJECT

Vietnam (U)

Cy Vance requests Vietnam be placed on the Friday<sup>2</sup> morning agenda (Tab A).<sup>3</sup> I concur. It is an important issue. (C)

I am somewhat doubtful of the proposition that “we are driving the Vietnamese into the arms of the Soviets,” since the Vietnamese made that choice themselves, in part because of China. I am also skeptical that we are missing “important opportunities,” and we did indicate to

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Oksenberg Subject File, Box 33, Chron, 5/1–16/79. Secret. Sent for action. Carter initialed the top of the memorandum.

<sup>2</sup> May 18. See footnote 2, Document 50.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 51.

the Vietnamese that if they invaded Cambodia, it would adversely affect their relations with us. Another zigzag on this issue will not enhance our credibility.

Instead, I would propose that a formal PRC be held, for the purpose of designing a strategy for promoting a more stable Indochina. This strategy should involve, in my opinion, the following steps:

- Consultations with the Japanese, Chinese and ASEAN countries about Vietnam and regional security;

- some tangible demonstration of our interest in the security of Thailand, so that neither Vietnam nor Thailand conclude that our willingness to talk with Vietnam is a demonstration of our inconstancy;

- some direct efforts to reduce the Soviet military presence in Vietnam, perhaps with consultations with Brezhnev at the Summit, or through counteractions (e.g. some additional form of collaboration with the Chinese?), thereby indicating that we were serious when we expressed concern about the growing Soviet presence.

While Sonoda did make some comments about Vietnam, I noticed that Ohira did not raise the issue at all. The attitude of the ASEAN countries is probably ambivalent, and it is a fact that they actually approved the Chinese actions against Vietnam.

Finally, as far as domestic politics is concerned, a secret dialogue with the Vietnamese will not be of any value, while a publicly announced one, I suspect, is not going to be helpful.

In brief, I think the issue deserves more serious analysis, and I simply do not share this sudden sense of urgency.

(I cannot speak for Harold,<sup>4</sup> but I have the feeling that he would concur with what I say above.)

---

<sup>4</sup> Secretary of Defense Harold Brown.

**53. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

New York, June 22, 1979

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Ha Van Lau  
Counselor Pham Duong  
Counselor Cu Dinh Ba  
  
Robert B. Oakley  
Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Ambassador Donald McHenry  
USUN Mission, New York  
Stephen R. Lyne  
Director, EA/VLC

MCHENRY: Thank you for receiving us this afternoon on such short notice. My colleagues came here from Washington.

HA VAN LAU: I am pleased to be able to welcome Ambassador McHenry, Secretary Oakley, and his colleague here this afternoon.

OAKLEY: Mr. Ambassador, Secretary Vance asked me to give you his personal greetings and to say that he is looking forward to seeing you soon. He enjoyed seeing you again last fall.

As you know, Secretary Vance is leaving this weekend with the President for the Tokyo Summit. He will then proceed to meet with the ASEAN Foreign Ministers in Bali and with the ANZUS Foreign Ministers in Canberra.<sup>2</sup>

One of the key issues in these meetings will be the situation in Indochina and its effect on the region as a whole. We wanted to have an opportunity to convey a message to your government which clearly sets out our views on these important problems before Secretary Vance left, to ensure that there is no misunderstanding and in the hope that it could eventually help convince your government to seek an approach which would lead to cooperation rather than confrontation.

In discussing the regional effects of the situation in Indochina, the first concern of the governments represented at Tokyo and Bali will be the massive exodus of refugees from Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea. Our two governments have directly discussed this matter before;

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, 1977–1979, Lot 82D129, Vietnam, 1979. Secret. The meeting took place at the SRV UN Mission in New York.

<sup>2</sup> After the June 25–29 Economic Summit in Tokyo, Vance accompanied Carter on a state visit to South Korea June 30–July 1, then visited Bali July 1–3 and Canberra July 3–5.

Mr. Holbrooke discussed it here with Mr. Thach last fall,<sup>3</sup> and we discussed it with Ambassador Sung at the UNHCR meeting in Geneva in December.<sup>4</sup> Our most recent high-level authoritative statements on the subject are those made by Secretary Vance and Assistant Secretary Holbrooke last week;<sup>5</sup> they expressed great concern over the tragedy of so much human suffering and called upon your government to adopt more humane policies.

We continue to support the principle of free emigration. Our hope is that an understanding can be reached between your government, your citizens, and the international community which would achieve an orderly flow of refugees and family reunions at levels commensurate with the ability of the international community to absorb them. The problem now is simply that there are so many refugees coming out that there is no place for them.

In frankness, all of the considerable information available to us indicates that the recent sharp increase in the refugee exodus from Vietnam represents a deliberate policy on the part of the Vietnamese government. This also applies to part of the refugees who have left Kampuchea for Thailand. The statements of your government concerning Vietnamese citizens of Chinese descent tend to reinforce this belief as do other statements your officials have made about over a half million people you believe will leave Vietnam.

We are aware of the agreement which has been reached between you and the UNHCR on family reunions.<sup>6</sup> It is a good agreement. We stand ready to facilitate the movement of family reunification cases directly to the U.S. We do not believe that this agreement, however, changes your obligation to establish conditions which do not force your people to flee, knowing they risk drowning at sea or, at best, long years in a refugee camp, rather than remain in Vietnam, Kampuchea or Laos. Also, only about 2,000 persons qualified for this program in March, yet well over 60,000 persons fled Vietnam by sea and landed elsewhere in Southeast Asia; an additional 30–40,000 persons probably died.

You are aware of the proposal to hold an international conference on refugees. We support the idea of such a conference based on humani-

---

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 26 and 27.

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 2, Document 35.

<sup>5</sup> Reference is to Vance's remarks during his June 13 press conference; see Department of State *Bulletin*, August 1979, pp. 23–24. Holbrooke testified before the House Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs on June 13. For his testimony, see Department of State *Bulletin*, October 1979, pp. 34–37.

<sup>6</sup> The Memorandum of Understanding Between the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was signed on May 30. See *American Foreign Policy Basic Documents, 1977–1980*, pp. 1109–1110.



tarian concerns and objectives, believing that it will assist in energizing the international community to do its part in responding to the problems caused by the refugee exodus. We know that some want a conference solely for a political discussion. We believe that major political debate should be held in a forum appropriate for such a debate. We believe that such a conference can help the refugees themselves, your government, and other governments in the region. We hope that your government can see its way clear to attending such a conference, for the purpose of working with the international community to establish regularized procedures to handle the refugee problem, and to take actions which will lessen the burden on the refugees and on the other countries of the world.<sup>7</sup>

The refugee problem does not only arise in connection with the boat people from Vietnam, as you are aware.

These are tens of thousands of people fleeing from Kampuchea into Thailand. Their arrival there exacerbates the crisis Thailand is already facing because of the number of refugees to whom it has given temporary asylum. We believe that these refugees also complicate the already dangerous situation on the border between Thailand and Kampuchea. Your government must bear a considerable degree of responsibility for both these situations because of the presence of your troops inside Kampuchea.

We have already raised with your government our concern about the possibility of an inadvertent military confrontation between Thai and Vietnamese forces as a result of your military activities in Kampuchea along the border with Thailand. The refugee problem makes this situation even more difficult and complicated. Given our close relationship with Thailand, with which we have treaty commitments, the dangers which could arise from incidents involving Vietnamese and Thai forces are obviously of great concern to us.

Everything we have done since the beginning of this Administration has been designed to bring peace to Southeast Asia. We discussed last fall here with representatives of the SRV and also with Mr. Waldheim our fear that events would lead in turn to escalation, thus increasing the danger of great power involvement in the region. Unfortunately, this is what occurred. We are afraid that, given the situation between Thailand and Vietnam, it could happen again. We desire if at all possible to avoid the great dangers of escalation, an escalation which could

---

<sup>7</sup> A meeting on Refugees and Displaced Persons in South-East Asia took place at the United Nations in Geneva July 20–21. Description of the conference is in *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1979, pp. 918–919. See also Document 138.

rapidly spread, as well as increasing the degree of great power involvement in the area.

We cannot stress too much our concern over the humanitarian issues facing Southeast Asia, their political consequences for your country as well as for other countries, and the danger of expanded conflict. We hope that your government will take every precaution against any possible expansion of the conflict, will seek a political solution to the conflict in Kampuchea, and will consider very seriously how you can truly cooperate with the rest of the world to find a common solution to the refugee problem.

As Mr. Holbrooke stressed in his first talks with Phan Hien in May of 1977,<sup>8</sup> the U.S. desires normal relations with Vietnam in the context of lasting peace and stability in Indochina and of all Southeast Asia. Indications last fall that your policies were beginning to run counter to that objective caused us to seek clarification of what you intended and your subsequent actions obliged us to suspend further movement toward normalization.<sup>9</sup>

It is our hope that there can be a return to peace and stability in Indochina and in all Southeast Asia. This would relieve the suffering of the peoples of Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea, and would permit all governments in the region to rededicate themselves to the key tasks of economic and social development. It would also reduce understandable fear among many nations that the presence of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea is intended to impose a non-representative government upon an independent state and that your government has designs on other states. It would reverse the trend toward worsening relations between your government and the other states in Southeast Asia and would also create conditions under which we could resume our movement toward establishing normal relations.

Secretary Vance has also asked me to convey his appreciation for your personal assistance in facilitating the return of Mr. Garwood<sup>10</sup> to the United States from Vietnam. As you know, the Administration, the Congress, and the American people remain intensely interested in any cooperation you can provide us on the matter of MIAs. It is an issue of considerable importance. The cooperation that we received earlier was extremely important and I told Vu Hoang in Jakarta that we needed to resume this cooperation.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> See Documents 11–13.

<sup>9</sup> See Documents 33 and 35.

<sup>10</sup> Robert Garwood, an American prisoner of war.

<sup>11</sup> Presumably Oakley met with Vu Hoang at the May 15–16 Jakarta Conference on Indochinese Refugees.

Secretary Vance wanted to be sure that you had a good understanding of the position of our government before he left on his trip to Asia.

I would like to express to you our appreciation for your agreeing to receive the Congressional delegation led by Congressman Wolff.<sup>12</sup> We believe that visits of Congresswoman Holtzman and Congressman Evans<sup>13</sup> earlier this year help to improve the understanding between our two countries.

If I might, Mr. Ambassador, I would ask you to help us to resolve the case of a ship in your custody, the *Algernon*. According to details provided to us by your Embassy in Paris, the ship apparently ran into difficulty some 80 miles off your coast and was brought into Vung Tau by a Soviet ship. Your government, through our contacts in Paris, has told us that it is aware that the ship is there, and promised us a speedy resolution of the situation. Unfortunately, we have not yet received any further details about the ship nor has the ICRC been able to establish contact with the crew. (The interpreter took careful notes and Ha Van Lau nodded).

HA VAN LAU: First of all I want to thank Mr. McHenry and Mr. Oakley for coming here today. I also thank you for the greetings from Secretary Vance. I ask you to convey my greetings to the Secretary.

As for the message you just raised, I consider it to be a verbal message from Secretary Vance who asks me to convey it to my government. So I will do my duty.

OAKLEY: Both the President and Secretary Vance wanted to be sure that your government was aware of our position before they leave.

HA VAN LAU: I understand that they are leaving tomorrow. Do you want a response before the Secretary leaves?

OAKLEY: No. We just wanted to be sure you had our views before we left.

HA VAN LAU: You can be sure I will convey this message. One question remains in my mind. I do not know why this message had to be delivered before the Secretary leaves.

OAKLEY: We wanted to deliver it because some of the discussions during the trip will concern your government. We feel it only proper and correct to convey our position on these issues that concern you in advance. I know that you have no response from Hanoi in response to our earlier request. We believe it important, however, to do this, to tell you our views. We thank you for receiving us.

---

<sup>12</sup> The congressional delegation visited Hanoi August 10–12. (Telegram 29213 from Bangkok, August 12; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790366–0348)

<sup>13</sup> See footnote 6, Document 48.

HA VAN LAU: Although I have no instructions from my government I can express my personal views. We also have the views of our government on these problems of refugees, normalization, Kampuchea, and other concrete matters.

About one question you raised; you referred to a foundation for cooperation and not confrontation. But your actions and your speech do not conform to that. That is my first impression. For example, Tran Quang Co, when he was here staying for the meetings of the working groups was here for cooperation not for confrontation. We wanted a process of cooperation. As we have stated on many occasions we believe normalization of relations between our two countries would contribute to peace and stability in Southeast Asia. We have done many things to show our good will. If that is not yet achieved, it is not our responsibility.

As for other problems, such as refugees, I want to stress that we have never had a policy of forcing out people. That allegation has already been made in public by you. It is unfounded.

OAKLEY: Let me be precise. We have never said that the Vietnamese government forced people to flee. But the conditions created by your government are such that people voluntarily choose to flee, often paying large amounts of money to get a boat knowing that half of them will die.

Our problem is with the conditions which cause them to make this choice, not that they are put on ships at the point of a bayonet.

HA VAN LAU: These conditions you talk about come from the loudspeaker of China. They are not reality. Those allegations we deny as slanders. Our internal policy is our own. Perhaps it is not clear to you, or perhaps you do not want to understand it. To allege that we force people to the new economic zones, and then because they do not want to go they flee, is a distortion. The new economic zones is our government's policy to attempt to distribute resources and to develop resources throughout the country.

Under earlier regimes these lands were not used; people were concentrated in Ho Chi Minh City, Qui Nhon, and Danang. Now that the former regimes have been overthrown, we have begun to distribute manpower throughout the country. Each citizen must contribute to this policy. Already the policy has brought good results. But there is a small minority who formerly lived on the blackmarket were non-productive traders do not want to sweat or labor or to endure hardship with those who have lived through thirty years of war and hardship.

OAKLEY: We understand that you are purifying your society. Nevertheless, the effect of doing so so rapidly and the shortage of resources is causing people to do desperate things.

HA VAN LAU: If they don't work, they starve; they must produce.

OAKLEY: That is why Ambassador Young has suggested the idea of refugee camps perhaps on some of your outlying islands.

HA VAN LAU: We do not need such camps. We do not need such concentration camps as you established in Vietnam.

MCHENRY: We are not proposing concentration camps; we are attempting to bring regularity out of chaos.

HA VAN LAU: While we gradually attempted to reconstruct our country, there were forces at work to sabotage our reconstruction as you know.

As for Kampuchea our troops in Kampuchea are not there to push Khmer into Thailand. Now the Thai government is forcing them back. Who bears the responsibility for this?

OAKLEY: We have complained to the Thai Government too.

MCHENRY: We need to sit down and to discuss the questions so that the difficulties and loss of life are reduced. We need to take into account whatever programs you have so as to build up your country. The international community and you need to work to reduce the loss of life and to reduce suffering, not to create chaos in all the surrounding countries. That is what most people are trying to get at. That is why we discuss an international conference.

We hope that your government and our government can deal realistically in a constructive atmosphere. One thing is for sure; there is a massive dislocation and we have to deal with two factors. We have to take care of those being dislocated. We have to see if we can reduce the suffering and see that the situation does not continue to develop. You have discussed the idea of a conference with the Secretary General. Have you received a response from your government?

HA VAN LAU: The Foreign Ministry has issued a statement in which we agreed to an international conference under the conditions listed.

OAKLEY: But these conditions are related only to 2,000 people, while 60,000, maybe 100,000, left by sea. Your agreement with the High Commissioner deals with only a small part of the problem.

HA VAN LAU: The Secretary General is thinking about the conference.

MCHENRY: Yes, he is trying to find a way of dealing realistically with the problems, free of political invective.

HA VAN LAU: It is not because we have concern about political discussion. It is a problem for the High Commissioner. It is a clear question of a humanitarian character. It also creates problems and difficulties with our neighboring countries and creates difficulties for us inside our country. Why should we create difficulties for ourselves?

The words of Secretary Vance's message convey the idea that he is putting the responsibility on us. Why should we create difficulties for ourselves? We are not the source of all events.

OAKLEY: Maybe not, but people are leaving your country, the efforts to date, last fall and earlier for example have not been successful in dealing with the problem. As a result relations between you and your neighbors are getting worse.

MCHENRY: I am glad to hear that you have no policy of expelling ethnic Chinese. That worries me because of the dimensions of the problem for all Southeast Asian countries and for your own country. I am delighted to hear this is your policy. I am sure that the Secretary will be glad to hear it.

Mr. Ambassador, I am sorry, but I have to go now to dedicate the lunar space model . . . .

---

**54. Memorandum From the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs (Sullivan) to the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs (Holbrooke)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 22, 1979

SUBJECT

Chinese Policy toward Vietnam and Indochina

You've asked for some thoughts on what the PRC thinks it's doing in Indochina. Harvey, Harry<sup>2</sup> and I talked or communicated in various ways with analysts at CIA, INR and DIA, as well as with Bill Beecher<sup>3</sup> (who visited the border area recently at Chinese invitation), Mike Armacost, Embassy Beijing and miscellaneous others. Harvey, Harry and I chewed over the impressions we gathered and our own ideas and found that we agreed among ourselves, but disagreed at several points with the intelligence community view.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Sullivan Subject File, Box 69, Chron, 6-8/80. Secret. Holbrooke wrote at the top of the first page, "Read by CRV [Vance], Peacock, Talboys—very good memo. RH."

<sup>2</sup> Harvey Feldman, Special Coordinator for Taiwan, and Harry Thayer, Director of the Office for PRC and Mongolia Affairs in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs.

<sup>3</sup> Journalist William Beecher.

With only a few variations in emphasis, the intelligence community takes pretty much the same view of current PRC policy. They see it as almost purely reactive and without any underlying coherent strategy except to keep pressure on Vietnam.<sup>4</sup> They believe the Chinese hope that by forcing the Vietnamese to continue to divert economic resources, the Vietnamese will ultimately “crack” under the strain and negotiate a *modus vivendi*.<sup>5</sup> The pressure will include occasional feints on the Sino-Viet border, bellicose statements, low-level guerilla warfare in Laos (but without Chinese regulars), and support for an anti-Vietnamese resistance in Kampuchea.

According to this “conventional view”, the Chinese understand that the short-term result will be to force Hanoi into greater dependence on Moscow. But the Chinese concluded such dependence was inevitable in any case once Vietnam joined CEMA and signed its treaty with the USSR. Some analysts think this is Chinese rationalization; others, that Peking sincerely believes that forcing Hanoi closer to Moscow will lead the Vietnamese to replicate China’s own Russian experience and, sooner or later, seek greater independence. None of the analysts (except [*name not declassified*]) thinks China will be successful either in eliminating Soviet influence in Vietnam, or in lessening Vietnamese control of Indochina. A minority in INR believe that once the Chinese realize their policy is not working and that the Vietnamese, with Russian help, will be able to restore their own and Indochina’s economy, Peking will be tempted to attack again.<sup>6</sup>

#### *Our View*

The “conventional analysis” is too Indochina specific. The Chinese goal is indeed to lessen or eliminate Soviet influence, but in the *region* (including India and Pakistan, as well as Southeast Asia), not just in Vietnam. Viewed in this light, Chinese policy appears more rational—and more successful.

The Chinese attack was much more than a means of pressuring or punishing the Vietnamese, or disrupting their economy. It demonstrated that Vietnamese dominance is neither inevitable nor permanent, and that China remains a more important factor for Southeast Asia to take into account than Vietnam.

The Vietnamese-Soviet alliance tars both partners. Moscow is stained by Vietnamese policy, particularly on the refugee issue, and

---

<sup>4</sup> Holbrooke underlined this sentence.

<sup>5</sup> Holbrooke underlined “the Vietnamese will ultimately ‘crack’ under the strain and negotiate” in this sentence.

<sup>6</sup> Holbrooke highlighted this paragraph by placing vertical lines in both the left- and right-hand margins.



the Southeast Asians are far less willing to deal with Hanoi than they were a year ago. In addition, the Southeast Asian reaction to Soviet presence is far more adverse than before. A few years ago, both Singapore and Malaysia seemed prepared to allow Soviet naval units to use their facilities. Not any more.

The result is, the Chinese have an interesting straddle: Moscow might conclude in time that it loses more than it gains by the Vietnamese connection, as far as regional interests are concerned, and pull back. In this case the Vietnamese would be forced to deal with Peking (which would have an interesting demonstration effect on India and others). If Moscow does not pull back, it may find itself continuing to lose influence in Southeast Asia.

The Chinese will play other cards as well. We don't completely rule out another strike but this looks less likely once you analyze the first invasion as primarily a political, rather than military or economic demonstration. Peking has made its point and, barring extreme provocation, need not make it again. It will keep the pot boiling in Kampuchea as long as possible, almost certainly will stir up trouble in Laos (but without use of Chinese regulars), and continue efforts to keep Vietnam isolated internationally, including from us.

Beyond this, we think China's major gambit will be offered in the talks with the Soviet Union. We do not believe anything like rapprochement is in the wind (really substantial moves would be too risky for the Chinese leadership), but we believe the Chinese will move to warm the relationship somewhat.<sup>7</sup> There is no better way of shaking Vietnamese resolve than the hint that Moscow, when the chips are down, may not be a completely reliable partner. It will be important that we keep our own cool should China decide to give the appearance of moving toward better relations with the USSR.<sup>8</sup>

This analysis may seem too optimistic. There are many uncertainties. Moscow in fact might commit itself wholeheartedly to Vietnam, however embarrassing to other interests, as it has to Cuba or Mongolia. And if a naval base at Cam Ranh Bay is in the offing, this would be a powerful lure. But we believe Chinese policy is more rational and more calculated than "conventional wisdom" would have it, and therefore that it has a better chance of success.

I also talked with Punch Coomaraswamy, an old friend from my Singapore days. He agreed that over the long term the Chinese strategy

---

<sup>7</sup> Holbrooke underlined "we believe the Chinese will move to warm the relationship somewhat" in this sentence.

<sup>8</sup> Holbrooke highlighted this paragraph by placing a vertical line in the right-hand margin.



of keeping the pressure on and letting the contradictions grow will work. He reminded me of a statement Lee Kuan Yew made some years ago in a different context: that looking toward the year 2000, the countries of Southeast Asia will have no choice, if they are<sup>9</sup> to survive, but to follow policies acceptable to China. The Chinese certainly believe this and according to Punch, most of the South Asians believe it too.<sup>10</sup> The Chinese are doubtless also exploiting the likelihood that the Vietnamese, deep in the hearts, fear this maxim may well be true.

---

<sup>9</sup> Holbrooke replaced “in order” with “if they are.”

<sup>10</sup> Holbrooke highlighted this sentence and the previous one. He also wrote a question mark in the left-hand margin adjacent to these sentences.

---

## 55. Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>

PA M 79–10290C

Washington, June 26, 1979

VIETNAM-KAMPUCHEA: PROSPECTS [*portion marking not declassified*]

In the six months since the Vietnamese invaded Kampuchea, they have been unable to crush Pol Pot's resistance forces and secure control of the countryside. Hanoi no doubt feels that time is on its side and has not backed away from its goals. The Vietnamese are attempting to establish the legitimacy of its puppet, the Heng Samrin regime, by helping it set up a viable political infrastructure and preventing serious food shortages. Until at least the next dry season, however, their efforts will be complicated by Pol Pot's continued stubborn resistance. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Several Vietnamese divisions are still conducting battalion-size sweeps along the Thai-Kampuchea border, but most Vietnamese forces have begun building defensive positions opposite the frontier in an attempt to prevent the Pol Pot forces that have taken refuge in Thailand from reentering Kampuchea. Units drawn from 10 of the approximately

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 82T00267R: Production Case Files, Box 1, Folder 37: Vietnam-Kampuchea: Prospects. Secret; [*handling restrictions not declassified*]. A note on the first page indicates the memorandum was prepared by the Office of Strategic Research and the Office of Political Analysis at the request of Armacost.

two dozen Vietnamese divisions in Kampuchea (perhaps 200,000 soldiers) are deployed in blocking positions near the Thai frontier and are closely monitoring Kampuchean and Thai military moves. Operations by the mobile but largely roadbound Vietnamese forces will be restricted by the heavy rains. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Vietnam may be planning to send some of its units home during the rainy season so they can rest and refit. A Vietnamese defector claims that Vietnam will withdraw as many as six divisions from Kampuchea. Many Vietnamese units are newly formed and inexperienced; they have suffered heavy casualties, and morale has dropped in many units. Some Vietnamese troops have deserted and fled to Thailand. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Pol Pot's forces this month held a guerrilla warfare congress to draw up plans for waging more effective operations against the Vietnamese and to improve their position. The resolution passed by the congress indicates that the Pol Pot forces recognize they must work harder to rally popular support. Some resistance units were criticized for being idle and admonished to take the initiative and attack the Vietnamese continuously. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Pol Pot's forces were set back by the recent Vietnamese drives in northern and western Kampuchea, but evidently suffered few losses and can still conduct widespread harassment attacks against the Vietnamese. Pol Pot is leading the resistance from a headquarters sanctuary in southern Battambang Province, from which he maintains communications with a tactical command post in the eastern Cardamom Mountains and directs operations in the north and northeast. He still has some 30,000 to 40,000 troops under his control. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The Kampucheans are combat experienced, tough, and disciplined. Some of their units, especially those in the northeast, are short of munitions, but others appear to be well armed and supplied. The rains have already given them a respite from combat and should not unduly hamper their guerrilla operations. The Kampucheans do not rely on heavy equipment or weapons, and they move freely through the countryside while eluding Vietnamese units. They recently attacked Vietnamese positions along Route 5 in Pursat Province. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The Vietnamese anticipate larger Kampuchean operations during the rainy season. One Vietnamese military report indicates that Pol Pot's forces are planning an offensive against Vietnamese outposts throughout Kaoh Kong Province, which is important because of its access to the sea. The Kampucheans may attempt to secure a section of the coast in order to offload Chinese supply ships. They probably will increase their operations in other provinces also to keep pressure on the Vietnamese. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Under [*less than 1 line not declassified*] Chinese auspices, Pol Pot's forces and the Khmer Liberation Movement, which operates out of Thailand, reportedly have agreed to cooperate against the Vietnamese. Accounts of [*less than 1 line not declassified*] Chinese efforts to bring about an agreement between the two Khmer factions and of meetings between Pol Pot's Foreign Minister Ieng Sary and Son Sann, who has emerged as leader of the Movement, are plausible. Most Kampucheans in the Khmer Liberation Movement fled to Thailand because of Pol Pot's brutality, however, and they still distrust him. The agreement apparently was reached in late May following discussions between Son Sann and Chinese officials [*less than 1 line not declassified*] regarding Chinese assistance to the Khmer Liberation Movement. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The Khmer Liberation Movement, which has only recently emerged as a credible resistance force, probably is an umbrella organization made up of smaller resistance elements principally recruited from refugee camps inside Thailand. With about 5,000 soldiers organized into a dozen battalions, it is not a significant military force, but it apparently has sent small reconnaissance teams into Kampuchea. The Movement evidently has begun small-scale military operations against Vietnamese units in the northwest. The Vietnamese reportedly are concerned about a recent increase in activities by anti-Vietnamese forces. These forces have begun operating behind Vietnamese lines, have collected intelligence on Vietnamese forces in western Kampuchea, and have penetrated the administrative apparatus of the pro-Vietnamese government in Phnom Penh. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The Chinese are said to have agreed to consider Son Sann's request for aid in forming new units, including the initial provisions of weapons and ammunition and funds for food, medicine, and other supplies. These materials would have to come through Thailand (as would almost all supplies for Pol Pot's forces) and would facilitate the recruiting and training of the Khmer Liberation Movement forces. [*portion marking not declassified*]

[*less than 1 line not declassified*] support to Kampuchean resistance forces could result in the fighting spilling over the border from Kampuchea into Thailand. There have already been several small incidents in which Vietnamese patrols have crossed the border in pursuit of Pol Pot's troops. The Vietnamese are clearly monitoring Kampuchean and Thai military moves and have increased their intelligence collection near the frontier. Some reconnaissance units have crossed as deep as 10 kilometers inside Thailand. [*4 lines not declassified*] [*portion marking not declassified*]

## 56. Intelligence Assessment Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>

NI 79-10007

September 1979

Kampuchea: Famine, Fighting, and Refugees [*portion marking not declassified*]

### *Key Judgments*

We estimate that the Kampuchean population has been reduced over the past decade from more than 7 million to around 5.8 million. At the same time, the amount of farmland in crop production has been severely reduced. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The estimated numbers of persons facing starvation is in the range of 2.25–3.5 million. The brunt of this disaster will be borne by those living in or near towns and cities. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Estimates of food assistance needed through December to prevent mass starvation range between 150,000 and 200,000 metric tons of grain. A substantial amount of medical supplies will also be required. The picture over the longer term is no less gloomy, although the amount of external assistance needed is as yet undeterminable. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Many factors will influence the refugee flow, but, should famine become widespread, tens of thousands each month may try to cross into Thailand. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Heng Samrin/Vietnamese authorities will probably allow large amounts of relief supplies to enter but will try to impose conditions. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The Heng Samrin/Vietnamese administrative infrastructure in Kampuchea is not adequate for the distribution of relief supplies and cooperation by the Vietnamese military will be required. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Thailand will permit the passage of relief supplies both by air to Heng Samrin authorities in Phnom Penh and overland to civilians under Pol Pot's control at the border, but may change this policy if it should be criticized publicly by Vietnam. [*portion marking not declassified*]

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of the Director of Central Intelligence, Job 81B00401R: Subject Files of the Presidential Briefing Coordinator for [the] Director of Central Intelligence, Box 14, Folder 8: SCC Meeting Cambodia. Secret; [*handling restriction not declassified*]. Prepared in the National Foreign Assessment Center.

In the event of a new surge of refugees, the Thais will probably maintain a hardline policy and try to deny entry. They may also forcibly repatriate refugees unless prompt guarantees of permanent resettlement are forthcoming from the international community. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The fighting will intensify in the dry season due to start in November, and will adversely affect the security and food supplies of the civilian population. There is little prospect for a negotiated peace at present. [*portion marking not declassified*]

[Omitted here are the Discussion section of the memorandum and the appendix.]

---

**57. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 4, 1979

SUBJECT

Kampuchean Relief (U)

(S) As requested, the Joint Staff has prepared a plan for a one-time airdrop of supplies to needy refugees in western Kampuchea (Cambodia). Details are provided in the appendix and DIA assessment.<sup>2</sup>

(S) The plan envisages staging three USAF MC-130 Combat Talon aircraft (especially designed for sensitive operations) out of Utapao airbase. The concept would be to conduct a night drop of 30–36 tons per night for two or three nights, flying at low altitude to minimize the risk of enemy detection. This would provide a total drop of 70–100 tons—a total which could be increased by deployment of additional aircraft from CONUS or by conducting two flights per aircraft each night.

(S) DIA has identified several drop zones along the southwestern Thai-Kampuchean border which they believe would meet the objectives of the airdrop. They believe there are significant numbers of Cambodians in these areas, but cannot be precise about numbers. Drops in these

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 50, Thailand, 1979. Secret; Noform. A copy was sent to Vance.

<sup>2</sup> Not attached.

locations would pose fewer risks of direct Vietnamese military counter-measures than would drops farther north where Vietnamese military forces are currently operating. In addition, since refugee concentrations are higher in the northwestern border area, DIA is continuing to search for alternative drop areas there which would avoid Vietnamese forces.

(S) While the Joint Staff assesses the military risks of this plan as minimal, such risks are not negligible, and they must be weighed against anticipated benefits. It is not at all clear that airdrops within a narrow zone (10nm) along the Thai-Cambodian border will substantially augment supplies already being provided at distribution points along the frontier. Given the logistic expenses of air drops, the same funds spent on more conventional relief efforts would probably provide more food in the mouths of the starving. More serious, I believe, is the danger that such an operation might be misconstrued by the SRV as an effort by the Thais with our connivance (or vice versa) to supply Pol Pot. In that case it might precipitate Vietnamese retaliation in Thailand; it would probably provoke strong criticism of U.S. actions from international relief agencies; and it might enable Hanoi to shift the focus of international attention away from their genocidal policies to allegations of U.S. intervention in Cambodia. Needless to add, loss of any aircraft would have significant intelligence and operational costs as well.

(S) These reservations notwithstanding, if a decision is reached to initiate such airdrops, we are prepared to commence the operation within 72 hours after an execute decision, assuming State can make the necessary arrangements for use of and delivery of foodstuffs to Utapao.

**Harold Brown**

**58. Telegram From the Embassy in Laos to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Vientiane, September 4, 1979, 0520Z

640. For Holbrooke From Chargé. Subject: Objectives, 1979–1981: Indochina—a Policy of Differentiation.

1. (Secret–Entire text)

2. Summary: Building on a West German and Australian suggestion, I recommend we adopt a policy of differentiating between our treatment of the Lao and the Vietnamese. The objective is to hasten the day when the Vietnamese come to their senses and drop the policies which, as you pointed out to the Secretary, could lead to the disaster of a large war. We should try to help the Lao through the Mekong Committee;<sup>2</sup> we should try to resolve our human rights differences with the LPDR, and we must do what we can to alter Lao misconceptions of the U.S. By doing so, we would try to show Hanoi that there is an advantageous alternative to what they are now doing. End Summary.

3. As my tour in Vientiane comes to an end, I can only say “amen” to your estimate that the principal strategic challenge we face in East Asia is the potential for regional instability created by the current Indochina situation. Failure here would indeed be disastrous, and I do not doubt that it could lead to a large war.

4. The fundamental problem is Hanoi. The SRV is an unlikely amalgam of military strength combined with economic and diplomatic weakness. Their formidable military machine is backed by a collapsed economy and an almost pathological inability to get along with most of their neighbors. Added to this strange mixture is perhaps the most dangerous ingredient of all: the Vietnamese leadership’s unshakeable belief in its own rectitude. They have the “correct line,” as they tell themselves and the world over and over again, and the proof they present is their conquest of South Viet Nam in 1975.

5. Coping with this self-righteous, militarily strong, but economically and diplomatically feeble nation in a region as weak and divided as Southeast Asia is a major challenge. Direct confrontation either by us or by the Chinese will not work. It only increases Hanoi’s self-

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Cables File, Far East, Box 13, 9–11/79. Secret; Sensitive; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> Established by the United Nations in 1957, the Mekong Committee, composed of representatives from Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam, convened to manage the resources of the Lower Mekong Basin. The Mekong Committee is now known as the Mekong River Commission.

righteous stubbornness, as we found out during the war. We must continue to stress this point in our contacts with the Chinese.

6. We must thus look for ways to hold firm, wear the SRV down, and wait for the day when the current Lao Dong leadership is gone. It is not unreasonable to expect that like the Chinese, the Vietnamese will ultimately come to realize that they have been left behind by the rest of the world, that they must "modernize," and that they have not been following the "correct line" after all. Like the Chinese, they will probably never admit the latter, but what they will be doing will be obvious to all concerned.

7. The U.S. task must thus be to hold firm and do what we can to hasten the day when Viet Nam comes to its senses. I am therefore particularly attracted to the tactic recommended by both the West Germans (Vientiane 615)<sup>3</sup> and Australia's Nick Parkinson (Vientiane 0618).<sup>4</sup> This is a policy of differentiating to as great an extent as possible between the way we treat the Lao and the way we treat the Vietnamese. The differentiation would be done in a way which would strengthen Thai-Lao ties as much as possible.

8. The object of this policy is to show Hanoi as quickly and as clearly as possible that their current policy line is hurting only themselves but that there is an alternative available. The policy would also hopefully open up at least this part of Indochina to the more open, more humane, and undoubtedly more successful forms of social, economic, and political organization found in Thailand. This could also have a beneficial effect on such short term problems as the refugee outflow from Laos.

9. There are real roadblocks to carrying out a Lao policy which is different from our policy toward Viet Nam. Direct aid is still against U.S. law, the LPDR is still so weak and incompetent that it is next to impossible to expect significant developmental results from U.S. aid. Lao human rights practices leave much to be desired. The Lao attitude toward the U.S. is still clouded by doctrinaire foolishness and war-formed misconceptions. On the other hand, we can work with the already existing differences between our relations with Laos and our relations with Viet Nam. Indirect aid to Laos is possible, and we have nearly normal diplomatic relations with the LPDR, and, as my Thai colleague recommended (Vientiane 602),<sup>5</sup> we do not have to be in any

---

<sup>3</sup> Telegram 615 from Vientiane, August 24, addressed West European support for Lao independence. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790389-0155)

<sup>4</sup> Telegram 618 from Vientiane, August 29, described Australian policy to encourage Lao independence. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790390-1226)

<sup>5</sup> Telegram 602 from Vientiane, August 22, outlined the Thai view on regional balance in Southeast Asia. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790384-0149)



hurry to make moves toward the Vietnamese which will remove these differences.

10. This is why I find the West German suggestion of working through the Mekong Committee so interesting. Mekong Committee aid, especially if it is handled through the US and has a substantial Thai component, might be considered indirect for purposes of our law. It helps strengthen the region, and it provides a mechanism which is accepted by the Lao and which might be able to circumvent some of the more serious Lao administrative and organizational weaknesses. Some of the Committee's proposed projects could also have clear developmental benefits.

11. The human rights problem is a serious one. Drawing the Lao closer to the Thai can have a beneficial long-term effect, and in the short run, our pointed presentations to them on the Hmong gas issue (Vientiane 594, 595, and 616)<sup>6</sup> will hopefully be helpful. I would hope that two moves in this area could be made: First, that either I or my successor be authorized to give the Lao what evidence we have on this problem, and second, that we do what we can to lay to rest the "genocide" canard. The LPDR's campaign against the dissident Hmong is not particularly nice—no war is—but it is not directed against Hmong as a racial group and it is supported by many Hmong. Loose use of the "genocide" shibboleth weakens our real human rights case and interferes with broader policy aims.

12. We also need to continue to work on the Lao attitude toward the U.S. The objective must be first to convince the Lao and ultimately the Vietnamese that they are not following the "correct line" and that they can be better served by freer, more sensible, and more humane policies. We must thus be careful not to make differentiating moves toward the Lao which could serve to convince them and their Vietnamese patrons that they had worn us down and that we were now ready to support their disastrously inappropriate "new system" with all its potential for domestic and regional instability.

13. This is one reason I am sorry we seem to have decided to overlook an opportunity in connection with my departure (State 223219).<sup>7</sup> As someone who is leaving, I was in a position to do things which my successor will probably find difficult to do for some time to come. I had hoped to be able to draw on the bank account of good

---

<sup>6</sup> Telegrams 594 and 595, August 20, and telegram 616, August 27, all from Vientiane, described Roberts's farewell calls on Lao officials, during which he raised the alleged use of chemical agents against Hmong refugees. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790379-0166, D79037-0253, and D73090-1160)

<sup>7</sup> Telegram 223219 to Vientiane, August 24, discussed the content of Roberts's farewell speech. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790387-0988)

will—or at least open mindedness—which the Embassy has been able to build up with the Lao over the last 21 months to try to bring them to see that their distorted view of the United States and their invective against us were inaccurate and hurt only themselves. I had originally thought that such an effort would be worthwhile in and of itself, but after my conversations with the West German Ambassador and Parkinson I now see that a frank statement such as the one I had planned to make could have been a useful base on which to build a new policy of differentiation.

14. I think that many Lao were ready for such a message. I have in mind the repeated and almost plaintive remarks of Khamphay, Soubanh, Plantana, and Chanpheng<sup>8</sup> that the LPDR was truly independent and only wanted to have good relations with all countries of the world (Vientiane 594 and 616). I also have in mind the amazingly frank comments about Lao-Vietnamese relations made to me by Planning Minister Ma (Vientiane 632).<sup>9</sup> I had hoped to be able to deliver my message as part of a program which, after the message had sunk in and after the Lao had hopefully moderated their attitude toward us, would be followed up by a move to nominate my successor as Ambassador. This would be the first step in a policy of differentiation ultimately intended to have a beneficial and regionally stabilizing effect on Hanoi.

15. Regrets are a waste of time, and other opportunities will come along. As I leave Vientiane, I would hope that EA, Embassy Vientiane, and Mr. Moser will continue to look for ways in which we can capitalize on the extremely helpful West German and Australian suggestion. Fostering Thai-Lao links via the Mekong Committee under carefully prepared circumstances is a constructive do-able method of differentiating between the way we treat the Lao and the Vietnamese. It could serve our humanitarian and developmental interests while at the same time holding out some hope of avoiding the potential disaster in Indochina which you highlighted for the Secretary.

**Roberts**

---

<sup>8</sup> Soubanh Sithilath, Secretary General of the Lao Foreign Ministry; Platana Choulamany, Lao Chief of Protocol; Chanpheng, Chief of the Lao Press Department.

<sup>9</sup> Telegram 632 from Vientiane, August 30, summarized Roberts's meeting with Ma. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790400-0709)

**59. Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>**

SR M 79–10125CX

Washington, September 12, 1979

**SUBJECT**

Vietnam's Military Posture and Perceptions of Chinese threat [*portion marking not declassified*]

1. Over the past six months or so, Vietnam apparently has increased the number of combat troops in its ground forces from some 800,000 to well over one million, largely as a consequence of the Chinese invasion last February. In the northern part of the country, the Vietnamese have increased the number of mainline divisions from about 13 to at least 19 and perhaps as many as 28, apparently in anticipation of future Chinese military operations. Preliminary analysis suggests that many of these divisions are upgraded provincial units, but a few are regular force outfits withdrawn from Kampuchea. [*2½ lines not declassified*] [*portion marking not declassified*]

2. Recent intelligence reports indicate that the Vietnamese are augmenting their 21 or so divisions in Kampuchea with a few thousand more troops. This limited reinforcement could be the first indication that the Vietnamese are preparing to launch an offensive against Pol Pot's forces in southwestern Kampuchea when the dry season begins in November. With Chinese material assistance and military pressure applied along their border with Vietnam, Pol Pot's guerrillas are expected to survive this Vietnamese push and continue their fight into next year. Since last spring's offensive against Pol Pot, most of the 150,000 or so Vietnamese troops still in Kampuchea have been involved in protecting major cities, towns, and ports, as well as attempting to keep open the rail lines and key road networks. Last week, Vietnamese forces helped the Heng Samrin government to reopen the deep water ports at Kompong Som and soon hope to renew rail service between Phnom Penh and Kampong Som. [*portion marking not declassified*]

3. In Laos the Vietnamese recently deployed an additional 1,000 troops to reinforce their nearly 40,000 combat troops already operating there. There is also from evidence that the Vietnamese have deployed some troops to positions along the Lao-Chinese frontier. [*less than 1 line not declassified*] the Vietnamese are now actively conducting reconnaissance against Chinese forces near the Sino-Lao border. In southern

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of the Director of Central Intelligence, Job 81M00919R: Executive Registry Subject Files (1977–1979), Box 12, Folder 31: C–309 East Asia. Secret; [*handling restrictions not declassified*]. A note on the first page indicates that this memorandum was prepared by Asian Branch, Regional Analysis Division, Office of Special Research.

Laos, the Vietnamese are moving troops for the first time along the Lao-Kampuchean frontier—another possible indicator that Vietnam is preparing to move against Pol Pot. *[portion marking not declassified]*

4. The Vietnamese apparently are concerned about a second Chinese invasion later this year and have deployed their forces accordingly. In the past week, Vietnam has stepped up its public charges that China is conducting almost daily incursions into Vietnam and is positioning major forces along the border for use in another invasion. *[less than 1 line not declassified]* Vietnamese officials have confided that they expect a major Chinese thrust through Mon Cai and the coastal plain and secondary attacks through Laos and Lang Son. In anticipation of this invasion, Vietnamese forces are positioned all along the border and are believed to be deployed in considerable depth in the coastal plain. Although Chinese officials have begun to speak more openly of teaching Vietnam a second lesson, no major troop movements have been detected yet that would indicate that China is forming a major new invasion force.<sup>2</sup> *[portion marking not declassified]*

---

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 238556 to all East Asian and Pacific posts, September 11, transmitted the text of a briefing memorandum from Holbrooke to Vance that discussed the possibility of a second Chinese attack on Vietnam. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XIII, China, Document 270.

**60. Telegram From the Embassy in China to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Beijing, October 5, 1979, 1109Z

7014. Subj: Meeting With Sihanouk. Ref: State 25899<sup>2</sup>

1. C–Entire Text.

2. I met with Prince Sihanouk October 4 at his residence to present the positions outlined in reftel. I also told him that I had hoped to see him immediately after the Mondale visit<sup>3</sup> but that unfortunately he had left Beijing before I returned from Tokyo.

3. I said that I wanted to ensure that there was no misunderstanding between him and the U.S. Government regarding our position on the UN credentials issue. I outlined what had happened within the Credentials Committee and drew on Ambassador Petree's statement for an explanation of why we had done what we had.<sup>4</sup> I emphasized that the American vote was not given in support for the Pol Pot regime or its atrocious practices. However, if we had abstained within the Credentials Committee the Heng Samrin government would have been seated. I noted that U.S. policy was to support neither Heng Samrin nor Pol Pot. We called, instead, for withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Kampuchea in the context of an overall political settlement. We were certainly not acting within a PRC-ASEAN-Japanese bloc.

4. I also noted that Secretary Vance and Assistant Secretary Holbrooke had stated many times that the Prince could have a very constructive role in the solution of the Kampuchean problem.

5. It was unfortunate that political events would have to await the results of the offensive that was just now unfolding. No one was sure, I noted, how this would turn out and the U.S. was extremely concerned about famine in Kampuchea and the need for rapid relief. I said that we were doing all we could to try to alleviate the situation and that

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Cables File, Far East, Box 13, 9–11/79. Confidential; Sensitive; Immediate; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> Mondale traveled to China, Japan, and Hong Kong in late August and early September.

<sup>4</sup> Petree presented the argument that although the U.S. Government did not condone the human rights violations of the Pol Pot regime, the Vietnamese-imposed government of Kampuchea had no more legitimate claim. See Bernard D. Nossiter, "U.N. Assembly, Rebuffing Soviet, Seats Cambodia Regime of Pol Pot," *New York Times*, September 22, 1979, p. 1. The United States voted in favor of General Assembly Resolution 34/2 A, adopted on September 21, which approved the seating of the Pol Pot regime. See *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1979, pp. 291–293 and 302.

he could play an effective role in getting international pressure so that aid might flow unhampered to the Kampuchean people.

6. In response Sihanouk launched into a rather emotional criticism of our UN stand. He said that in referring to a Sino-U.S.-ASEAN bloc he only meant it appeared as if there was a *de facto* alliance between these groups within the UN to try to prevent the Heng Samrin government from being seated. Sihanouk said that he approved of the decision not to recommend the Heng Samrin government as the legitimate government of Kampuchea, but that on the other hand the Pol Pot regime was in no way either the government of the Kampuchean people. As a matter of fact, Sihanouk said, the Kampuchean people said that their number one enemy was the Pol Pot gang and the Vietnamese colonialists and Heng Samrin was only the "number two" enemy. Pol Pot was responsible for the genocide of millions of Khmer people. At least the Vietnamese despite their colonialist invasion of Kampuchea allowed the people to survive and did not try to kill them. People were dying of starvation but it was still not the same as the terror and genocide experienced under Pol Pot.

7. In view of the mass murders committed by Pol Pot Sihanouk said that he could not understand why some countries had been able to vote in favor of seating the DK delegation. The French had abstained and the Indians had said they wished to leave the seat vacant. It was less immoral, according to the Prince, to abstain. Frankly, seating the Pol Pot delegation was equivalent to saying that the United Nations despises its own Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In the West after the Nuremberg trials leading Nazis were hung. That was a moral act, the Prince said. Now this latest move favored the Asian Hitlerians. The West was tough on white Hitlers, said the Prince, but not so tough on yellow Hitlers. This was racism.

8. I told the Prince that I didn't want to get into an argument with him over the issue but that we had thought the seating of the Heng Samrin people would give sanction to the invasion by the Vietnamese.

9. Sihanouk interjected that Kampuchea used to be a French colony but that they had gotten rid of the French peacefully. Now although they hoped for peaceful solution to the situation it was not realistic to expect one. The people of Kampuchea did not want a Vietnamese brand of Communism or a Chinese brand. Least of all did they want a Khmer government pushing the genocide of their own people.

10. Sihanouk then said he had something new he wished to discuss with me. He said that while in Pyongyang he had met with refugee representatives from the U.S., France, Belgium, Germany, Australia and Thailand. They wished to unite under Sihanouk's exclusive leadership and had decided to establish a Khmer Nationalist Confederation. The Prince said that he had reached a common political program in

discussion with these representatives. Although some of them had opposed his peaceful approach to the Khmer question, he had persuaded them to let him try to negotiate a solution with the SRV. He would open peace talks at a conference in either Pyongyang, Hanoi or Prague.

11. The Prince said he would propose summit talks in a little while to Pham Van Dong. He fully expected the SRV to reject this proposal. There would be no direct answer; they would let the world know through other means. If they answered him directly, it would be tantamount to a confession that they were guilty of colonialism and had assumed responsibility for the invasion. Also it would undermine Heng Samrin's position and would show that he is merely a puppet. The Vietnamese would say that Sihanouk should go to Phnom Penh to talk to the only legal government of Kampuchea.

12. After the first rejection, Sihanouk said that he would try four more times over the next two months to show that he was a peace-loving leader. He said that if one day they were forced to make war on the Vietnamese it could be shown that he had done his best to get a peaceful solution. He thought that the dry season offensive would be successful because of the Vietnamese military strength. Ninety percent of Pol Pot's forces would be destroyed. This would lessen SRV interest in talks with Sihanouk.

13. After his proposal had been rejected five times, as he fully expected it would be, Sihanouk said that he would be ready to go to war. He said that there were still many young Khmers who would rather die fighting the Vietnamese than continue as Vietnamese subjects. Small groups sponsored by the confederation could operate against the Vietnamese inside Kampuchea. Young men could be recruited from amongst the refugees in Thai camps. The Chinese and many others might be willing to fight and equip these forces.

14. According to the Khmer Constitution, Sihanouk said, if unable to defend against foreign aggression with its own resources Kampuchea could call for foreign assistance. Friendly volunteers could be asked to come just as Chinese volunteers had gone to Korea, Tanzanians to Uganda and the French to Chad, Zaire and Central Africa. The Prince said it was really very moral to interfere with internal affairs in this matter. This was a concept accepted by international tradition.

15. Sihanouk thought that the Chinese would be sure to support him even if he refused to cooperate with Pol Pot. He would not be the chairman of a united front with Pol Pot nor serve any so-called Democratic Kampuchean government. His forces, however, would not attack those of Pol Pot. He would instead create a second front. Accordingly, he thought that the Chinese would be willing to support him with money and military equipment. There would be a problem in

getting his forces and their equipment to Kampuchea. There would have to be some help from Thailand. He said that he wanted to study with other countries, including the U.S., how to transport his forces through Thailand or by sea into Kampuchea.

16. I asked the Prince what he thought the chances were for cooperation with Kriangsak. He said that Kriangsak remained hostile to him because of long-time differences over the temple on the Thai-Kampuchea border.<sup>5</sup> Sihanouk said that for his survival he needs help from Thailand, China and the U.S. The Khmers cannot be hostile towards Japan, ASEAN and other countries.

17. I asked him if he had any objection if I reported all of the above to the Department. He said that he had already given the story to the Washington Post and that he always hoped to maintain the best of relations with the U.S. press.

18. Finally, he said that he was short of money. He was not begging, but hoped to be able to sell his latest movie "Rose of Bokor", in which he plays a Japanese army officer and Monique a Franco-Khmer beauty, to Japanese and American distributors. He invited me, our staff and the local American press corps to come view the film.

**Woodcock**

---

<sup>5</sup> Reference is to the Preah Vihear Temple. In June 1962, after a lengthy dispute between Thailand and Cambodia, the International Court of Justice ruled that the temple belonged to Cambodia.



**61. Memorandum From the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (McIntyre) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 9, 1979

## SUBJECT

Kampuchean Famine Relief

Cy Vance is asking you to make a statement now initiating a large U.S. contribution to an international relief effort in Kampuchea.<sup>2</sup> I recognize the dimensions of the human tragedy and the need for the United States to exercise moral leadership. But I am concerned that major questions remain to be answered:

*Will the relief be equitably distributed?* Both the Pol Pot and Heng Samrin regimes have used food denial to the other as a deliberate policy. No one in the U.S. Government has been able to tell OMB staff what the nature of the agreement is that the International Red Cross (ICRC) were finally able to reach with the Heng Samrin regime to assure that the food will go to starving civilians rather than military forces. Indeed the Heng Samrin government radio broadcasts have asserted that their forces would distribute the food and merely report back to the ICRC. This position may simply reflect political face-saving, but it may also indicate that they are deadly serious. The United States may have no choice but to proceed under the circumstances, but we should be under no illusion about the difficulty of assuring fair and equitable distribution of the relief supplies.

*Can we legally use refugee funds to aid persons who have not crossed international borders?* OMB is holding the proposed Presidential Determination authorizing release of emergency refugee assistance funds<sup>3</sup> because of this legal concern. Until we are certain that the proposed funds can be spent legally, we will continue to hold the Determination. (This issue will be handled expeditiously).

*Recommendation.* Any public statement of support by the United States should emphasize that continued assistance will *depend on adequate assurances of equitable distribution of relief supplies.*

Also your statement should be limited to a general announcement that the U.S. will provide \$5 million in PL-480 food stuffs, while we

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 42, Kampuchea, 1/77–10/79. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> Vance's October 8 request to Carter is in Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 42, Kampuchea, 1/77–10/79.

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to Presidential Determination No. 80–1, October 15. (3 CFR, 1979 Comp., p. 493)

continue to examine the legalities of using the Emergency Refugee Fund.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Carter did not make a specific aid pledge to Kampuchea in his October 9 news conference. Instead, he made a non-committal statement about the need for aid to Kampuchea. See *Public Papers: Carter, 1979*, Book II, p. 1844.

---

**62. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) and the Special Representative for Economic Summits (Owen) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 12, 1979

SUBJECT

Initial US Commitment to Kampuchean Relief (U)

The International Committee of the Red Cross and UN Childrens Fund are on the verge of launching their appeal, which we now understand will be for \$110 million for humanitarian aid to Kampuchea. Representatives of UNICEF and ICRC are now enroute to Phnom Penh to get the program started, and have already received initial pledges totaling \$21 million from Japan, Germany, Australia, Britain, and the European Economic Community. (U)

The difficulties in securing continuing, explicit, and detailed agreements with the Heng Samrin regime concerning monitoring are well known to you. ICRC/UNICEF have an unwritten agreement with this regime that they will be permitted to have access and monitor the international assistance. The best estimate of the Department of State is that the UNICEF/ICRC authorities will be able to implement this agreement, but will face constant roadblocks and other problems, which will raise a question about the agreement's durability. Tab D<sup>2</sup> is a memorandum from State outlining the risks and probabilities. The main hangup is the Vietnamese puppet regime's dislike of assistance also going to the Pol Pot (DK) authorities. (C)

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 6, Cambodia, 1979. Confidential. Sent for action. OMB concurred.

<sup>2</sup> Attached but not printed.

State and NSC staff believe that the most effective way to keep the access agreement firm is by a substantial and highly visible humanitarian effort, plus pressure on the parties and their supporters. (C)

If the agreement breaks down, UNICEF and ICRC will cease food distribution in Kampuchea. If the agreement breaks down in the next 60 days, our food won't even have reached Kampuchea; it takes that long to get there. If it breaks down thereafter, we could consider diverting our food to the dozen or so food depots being established on the Thai side of the border to feed the large expected influx of starving Kampuchians. (C)

State recommends an initial contribution of \$2 million for trucks, fork-lifts, and other machinery to unload food. Regarding the legal question raised by OMB on aiding persons who have not crossed international borders,<sup>3</sup> we now have an opinion from the Department of State Legal Adviser (Tab C)<sup>4</sup> that it is within your authority to make a Presidential Determination to draw \$2 million in cash from the United States Emergency, Refugee, and Migration Assistance Fund for Kampuchean relief. Attached at Tab A is the Presidential Determination for your signature.<sup>5</sup> (U)

A related step the United States can simultaneously announce is a pledge of \$5 million in commodities and shipping costs from the Food for Peace (PL-480) Program. This contribution can be made out of existing resources; no Presidential action is required. Neither it nor the \$2 million requires any additional budgetary appropriation. (U)

Reports from the Hill suggest a growing desire to see the United States make a generous response. We are being asked why Congress has not yet been asked for funds or support. A cable just received, addressed to you personally by Dick Clark,<sup>6</sup> urgently recommends an immediate and generous US anticipatory response to the impending ICRC/UNICEF appeal. Dick urges we announce now that we will contribute one-third (\$36.6 million) of the entire project. (C)

In our view, the first stage of the ICRC/UNICEF appeal (for \$20 million) will be adequately met by the action we are recommending, plus contributions by other governments. When this initial \$20 million start-up money is exhausted, ICRC and UNICEF will ask for contributions to meet the rest of their \$110 million target; we will make appropriate recommendations to you at that time. (C)

---

<sup>3</sup> See Document 61.

<sup>4</sup> Attached but not printed.

<sup>5</sup> Not attached. See footnote 3, Document 61.

<sup>6</sup> Telegram 16565 from the Mission in Geneva, October 10. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790464-0196)

We recommend that you issue a public statement announcing this decision.<sup>7</sup> This announcement should also refer to the fact that the UN World Food Program will also soon be drawing upon US pledges already made to meet Kampuchean needs. A statement is attached at Tab B,<sup>8</sup> which has been cleared with Bernard Aronson. (U)

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That you sign the Presidential Determination at Tab A authorizing drawing down \$2 million for the initial US contribution to the ICRC/UNICEF effort.

2. That you approve the issuance of the attached statement.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> For the text of the October 15 statement, see *Public Papers: Carter, 1979*, Book II, pp. 1924–1925.

<sup>8</sup> Not attached.

<sup>9</sup> Carter checked the approve option for both recommendations and initialed below.

---

### 63. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 24, 1979

#### MEMORANDUM FOR

The Secretary of State  
The Secretary of Agriculture  
The Director, Office of Management and Budget  
The Director, International Development Cooperation Administration  
The Administrator, Agency for International Development

#### SUBJECT

Kampuchean Emergency Relief

The President has decided to increase direct U.S. Government contributions to Kampuchean emergency relief to \$39 million and to ask U.S. private relief organizations to increase their efforts to avert starvation in Kampuchea. In response to the UNICEF-ICRC appeal for \$111

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 42, Kampuchea, 1/77–10/79. No classification marking. Poats sent a copy of the memorandum to Brzezinski under an October 23 covering memorandum and requested that Brzezinski sign it. (Ibid.)

million covering the first six months of Kampuchean emergency relief, the President plans to announce on Wednesday these measures:<sup>2</sup>

—transfer of \$3 million of Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance funds, in equal amounts, to UNICEF and the ICRC;<sup>3</sup>

—provision for \$20 million earmarked for Kampuchean food aid in the pending PL480 supplemental budget request (reducing the Title I portion of this request accordingly);<sup>4</sup>

—grant of \$9 million of Refugee and Migration Assistance funds to the Government of Thailand to assist it in carrying out a \$28 million program for destitute Kampuchean refugees in that country;

—support for legislation sponsored by Chairman Zablocki and others of the House Foreign Relations Committee to establish stand-by authority to permit quick appropriation of additional funds for Kampuchean relief as and when required later in this fiscal year.

These measures are in addition to \$7 million previously provided for this purpose.

The revised PL480 supplemental budget request will be transmitted to the Congress by OMB immediately after the House-Senate conference on the agriculture appropriation has been completed.

Prior to enactment of the supplemental, urgent Kampuchean food aid requirements beyond the initial \$5 million grant and within the new ceiling of \$25 million should be drawn from uncommitted funds in Title II accounts.<sup>5</sup>

**Zbigniew Brzezinski**

---

<sup>2</sup> For the text of the October 24 statement, see *Public Papers: Carter, 1979*, Book II, pp. 2011–2012.

<sup>3</sup> Presidential Determination No. 80–4, October 24, directed the transfer. (3 CFR, 1979 Comp., p. 495) For Carter's October 24 statement on the additional relief efforts for Cambodian refugees, see *Public Papers: Carter, 1979*, Book II, pp. 2011–2012. Carter subsequently issued Presidential Determination No. 80–5, November 13, which directed that an additional \$2 million be made available from the Emergency Migration and Refugee Assistance Fund for transfer to UNICEF for the relief program in Kampuchea. See *Public Papers: Carter, 1979*, Book II, p. 2117.

<sup>4</sup> Title I addresses trade and development assistance.

<sup>5</sup> Title II addresses emergency and private assistance.

# **64. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, October 25, 1979, 0454Z

43652. Subj: (S) Holbrooke-Thach Meeting, October 23, 1979.

1. (Secret-Entire text)

2. Following is verbatim report of subject meeting.

Location: Vietnamese Mission

Participants: Richard Holbrooke  
Morton Abramowitz  
Michael Armacost  
Dennis Harter

Vietnamese: Nguyen Co Thach, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs  
SRV Ambassador to Bangkok  
SRV Counselor Luu Doan Huynh

Holbrooke: I am pleased that you were able to see us and that I was personally able to see you again after one year.

Thach: One year and one month.

Holbrooke: One year and one month. Yes, I think it was September 29th.<sup>2</sup> As you know, I had useful talks with Vice Foreign Minister Phan Hien in New York last Tuesday.<sup>3</sup> I am sure that he has reported to you on our discussion. I will not repeat those matters again to you today. Secretary Vance has asked me to join the Senators in order to show our concern for the grave problems facing the Khmer people. Of course, you understand I cannot go to Phnom Penh on this trip. Mr. Harter has been asked by Secretary Vance to do so. He will accompany the Senators as an escort.<sup>4</sup> Let me also introduce Mr. Armacost who will replace Mr. Oakley as my Senior Deputy. Mr. Armacost is presently at the Pentagon, working on Asia. Before this he was in the White

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Cables File, Far East, Box 13, 9-11/79. Secret; Sensitive; Immediate; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> They met on September 27. See Document 27.

<sup>3</sup> October 16. Telegram 274516 to selected posts, October 20, summarized the discussion, during which Holbrooke told Phan Hien that the "situation in the region" made progress toward normalization of U.S.-Vietnamese relations impossible. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850040-2407, N790008-0219)

<sup>4</sup> Harter accompanied the congressional delegation led by Senator Sasser to Kampuchea. See Documents 67 and 140.

House and before that in the State Department. Mr. Oakley is going to Zaire as Ambassador.

Thach: And you will miss him.

Holbrooke: He will miss Vietnam, but he will be back some day. Let us go back to the trip and the fact that the Senators have requested to take several staff. This unfortunately became interpreted as two. It was apparently a miscommunication or something “mal-entendu.” Each of the Senators has one personal staff and there is also a representative of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee chaired by Senator Church. Thus their minimal group is five staff, one State Department escort and four others. The press problem is a new problem and if it is unacceptable then I understand. But we would hope that two staff or three or four or five is no problem. I hope that Phnom Penh can accept the larger numbers. We should separate the staff and press problems.

Thach: We are embarrassed. We cannot say whether we agree or whether we do not agree. This does not depend on us. If we do anything against what is agreed to by the Phnom Penh authorities, we will have trouble with them.

Holbrooke: Two or three more staff would certainly not be a great problem.

Thach: The numbers are not important. Only one thing is important and that is their sovereignty. We will notify Phnom Penh again.

Holbrooke: I hope our two Ambassadors can work it out.

Abramowitz: When you hear from Phnom Penh, please notify me at anytime.

Thach: Yes. Yes, I will do as you wish. I doubt whether there is enough time to get any results. I must cable Hanoi and then Hanoi must cable to Phnom Penh.

Holbrooke: Mr. Minister, perhaps I could mention a few other points which came up in my discussions in New York. Phan Hien both in Geneva and in New York said we were playing the Chinese card. I want you to know and to understand the United States continues to have as its ultimate objective the normalization of diplomatic relations with Vietnam. After we saw each other a year ago certain events occurred in the region and it was no longer possible for us to move forward with normalization at that time. Nevertheless, normalization is still our objective. The factors that make it difficult now are well known, the Kampuchea situation and the refugee situation.

We have noted and have attached great importance to your statements on the refugee moratorium and on your actions since the Geneva Conference.<sup>5</sup> These actions are significant and help to relieve the tre-

---

<sup>5</sup> Presumably the UN conference on refugees held in Geneva July 20–21. See footnote 7, Document 53.

mendous burdens and pressures on this area. The continuation of the moratorium is of great importance. We have also noted statements including those that you yourself have made here that Vietnam will not attack Thailand, and that Vietnamese troops will not fight on Thai soil. You understand that this is what causes most concern in this situation.

Thach: I do not like to dwell in the past. If you have anything new to say on the question of normalization, then give them to me. I don't want to go over all this again. It all gives us bad impressions. You say you want to normalize. But then you tell us otherwise. Let me tell you frankly: You are becoming the victims of your own propaganda. We are not in a hurry on the question of normalization. When normalization is in the interests of both sides, we will have it. We existed for four thousand years without relations with America. We can exist for a few more without relations with you. We want to have relations because it is in the interest of both countries. But Vietnam will continue to exist with or without those interests and without relations. You have given me an explanation that you do not play the China card. But that does not change my impression or the impression of my government. We regret it. China plays the America card.

Abramowitz: Mr. Holbrooke does not know how to play cards. He plays tennis.

Holbrooke: The Chinese invented card playing. We don't play cards; are not playing any Chinese card. We know the importance of each other's sovereignty. We follow your government's actions closely. We can distinguish between those which contribute to stability and others which do not. Congressional visits do contribute and we appreciate this. Your statements in Thailand are also appreciated. The visits of the Senators to Phnom Penh will also contribute. The question that concerns us the most is Thailand. I particularly noted your statement two days ago in the press conference.<sup>6</sup> That statement we take as very important.

Thach: The politics are very clear. We will not invade Thailand. That has been an historic fact; it still maintains and will do so in the future. Even the far distant future. We will not invade Thailand.

Holbrooke: There is always a danger because your troops are near the border and there is fighting going on. Yesterday we were in an area near the border where artillery had been fired into Thailand and people had been killed. These were refugees and Thai people.

---

<sup>6</sup> Thach stated that Vietnamese troops would not cross into Thailand. See "Vietnam Says Its Troops Will Not Enter Thailand," *New York Times*, October 21, 1979, p. 17.



Thach: We are aware of the policies of the American Government during the recent war on the Cambodian sanctuaries. We do not intend to follow the American example.

Holbrooke: You are very clever. You know that at the time I did not support that policy. I wrote an article about it. (Holbrooke to Armacost): You now understand how smart the Minister is because he addresses me with positions that he knows that I did not agree with.

Thach: We try to understand Thailand, and I hope that they understand us. I had a visit for one hour with Prime Minister Kriangsak. (To Ambassador Abramowitz): It was after your meeting with Kriangsak.<sup>7</sup> I was very firm.

Abramowitz: And Prime Minister Kriangsak?

Thach: He also was firm. Our policy is clear. Just don't make a big noise about everything and become a victim of your noisy propaganda.

Holbrooke: We are not making noise. We only made noise when 40,000 and 50,000 refugees came to Hong Kong and the ASEAN countries. This was a terrible burden to those countries and ASEAN was coming apart. There we correctly made a big noise.

Thach: That is a different question. How many people in Hong Kong are Vietnamese and how many are Chinese who come directly from China and not Vietnam? You never make reference to Chinese who come from the Mainland.

Holbrooke: After I had talked with Phan Hien, I visited Hong Kong with the Vice President.<sup>8</sup> I discussed this with the authorities there. They make a distinction between two different groups. Those who come from Vietnam and those who come from the Mainland. The Hong Kong authorities return people who come from the Mainland to China every day. This is a matter of British and Chinese concern. The biggest refugee problems have been in Thailand and Malaysia. (To Ambassador Abramowitz): The boat numbers are better now, correct?

Thach: I want to forget the past. There has been too much suffering for both countries. But the policies of the U.S. during recent months compel us to recall the past. It is no good to dwell on the ashes of the past. If you can stop, as early as possible it is in your own interest. We are ready in any eventuality if you wish to go on.

---

<sup>7</sup> Abramowitz and Kriangsak met on September 28. Telegram 39760 from Bangkok, September 28, reported their meeting. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790444-0482)

<sup>8</sup> Holbrooke accompanied Mondale on his visit to China, Japan, and Hong Kong in late August and early September.

Holbrooke: We too wish to put the past behind us. Phan Hien and I discussed this; we tried to explain that we do not operate with the policies of the past.

Thach: You have sent your 7th Fleet to the area; that is an action of the past, it is no good.

Holbrooke: We have heard this before. I stress again: We only seek to save people who are dying at sea. We will withdraw the 7th Fleet when conditions exist that make their efforts unnecessary. I mentioned this now since Phan Hien also mentioned it in New York.

Thach: I also talked with congressional delegations. They also did not agree on sending the 7th Fleet. If you can stop it as early as possible it is in your interest. Otherwise, it becomes like a "boss."

Holbrooke: Another question is the question of orderly departure. After I saw Phan Hien in Geneva and talked to him about this question, we sent a special team here to Bangkok to process these cases. This team was to proceed to Ho Chi Minh City as soon as the Vietnamese Government would agree to let them in to carry out the practical procedures for orderly departure. But it is now months later and they are still here. I do not understand. We are ready to make major steps to do this with you. I particularly want to ask you to help us on this. It will help us and it will help you.

Thach: We see no [garble—conditions?] on this matter. Your consular officials can travel on the plane to bring those who are allowed to go abroad, and then go back to their base. That is the arrangement we have agreed to. But you want to stay. You want your consular people to stay in Vietnam and that is not possible.

Abramowitz: Mr. Minister, please let me say a few words about this program. We are prepared to operate in Vietnam under the conditions you have stipulated. It is your country. But we also have our legislation to carry out. That is our responsibility. Our purpose is to take the maximum we are permitted to take as soon as possible. We will operate as you tell us to. But to the extent that you allow consular officers to stay for several days we could process many more applicants. Our request is purely functional: We want to move larger numbers of people quicker.

Holbrooke: These people are across the street, Mr. Minister. You can take them with you when you return to Hanoi. They have been put here to do this. We have put no conditions on them. But they are still here. It is in your interest and in our interest and it will reduce the pressure on the ASEAN to bring people directly to the United States. We understand that you feel that you could lose control inside your own country if our people were able to move about freely. But you have your ways to protect yourself from that.

Thach: No. That's not the case.

Holbrooke: If we process the people in your country then it is easier. This was your proposal not ours.

Thach: We extended our goodwill and cooperation but we cannot say that the law of America can only be carried out only in that way. Vietnamese law is the sole law in Vietnam. It is not United States law. People go by mutual agreement when they are accepted by the United States. That is the time that the consular officers can come to Vietnam. And then the plane can come. Further, we have accepted in the team of HCR (UNHCR) that there would be one American, but that he would not have the status of an American official.

Holbrooke: We have accepted this.

Thach: Then that is something that is for working for now. While there is no normalization, we do not see how you can ask for more than this.

Abramowitz: We are not trying to avoid your law. The U.S. law requires that anyone who wishes to come to the United States must first be seen by a consular officer or by an official of our immigration service. It does not matter where, in Bangkok, Moscow, or anywhere. The more time they are allowed to spend in Vietnam, the more we can speed up the process. We will operate as has been so far agreed. But the numbers will grow if consular officers can come in for two or three days. Instead of 50 people who can be processed in a one-day period by a consular officer, the consular officers could process far more in a 2–3 day period. This is our sole purpose to increase the numbers. You may decide to do otherwise for other reasons, but the only issue for us is to try to expand the numbers.

Thach: The consular officers only can come after it has been decided that the people can be allowed to leave Vietnam.

Abramowitz: The person from the voluntary agency who comes in under the UNHCR will come in only to in a sense arrange all the documents. According to our law a consular official must look at the case to determine who the person is and that he is not really a cousin or a brother of who he says he is. In the past fifty years there have been many cases of immigration fraud and this has dictated why we have these features in our laws. Only a consular officer has the authority to say that an applicant can receive a visa.

Holbrooke: When anyone wishes to go to Vietnam he needs permission and he goes to the UN in New York or Paris and he needs to get permission from someone.

Thach: That is not always necessary. Your 7th Fleet can pick them up at sea without consular officers.

Abramowitz: I only wanted to be sure that you fully understand our policy and our legal requirements, and that our purpose is to

maximize the numbers of people who can be moved. You may still decide you do not want to do it in such a way as to expedite the process, but that is your decision.

Holbrooke: I think it is important for it to begin. The refugee numbers have dropped. I wanted you to hear the Ambassador. As you said to me once before we need to find imaginative solutions.

Thach: That is our decision. Please abide by it.

Holbrooke: We will. When will you go back to Vietnam?

Thach: On the 26th.

Holbrooke: We have taken too much of your time.

Thach: I have reserved the whole morning for you.

Holbrooke: Then you must have something to say.

Thach: We always have lots to talk about but this time I have nothing to talk about. You requested the meeting. So I have nothing to say.

Holbrooke (to Armacost): You see he is one of the best diplomats in the world.

Thach: No. You are mistaken. I am the worst diplomat. I could not persuade him (Holbrooke) on the China card. I want to make this statement very clear. This is a very deep impression in our country. I must be frank with you.

Holbrooke: I was with the Vice President in Peking in August. He told Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping that we opposed any second Chinese attack on Vietnam and that we would oppose it publicly.<sup>9</sup> Secretary Vance told Han Nianlong this in New York when he was there.<sup>10</sup> The President told Deng Xiaoping that in Washington in January before the attack.<sup>11</sup> We did not support a Chinese attack. We will not support a Chinese attack. We had intelligence about the build up on the border just as we had intelligence about the Vietnamese military in Kampuchea and we also opposed the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. I wish to make it very clear, we opposed both invasions. The Chinese invasion of Vietnam and the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. You say you are concerned about the China card. I don't question that or your sincerity. The U.S. does not wish to encourage China in this way. We have normalized relations with China because it is in our interests to do so. And we will continue to improve our relations with China. We will have credits and Hua Guofeng will come to the U.S. next year. Vice President Mondale went to China this year. But one thing we will

<sup>9</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1979–1980, vol. VI, China, Document 265.

<sup>10</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1979–1980, vol. VI, China, Document 278.

<sup>11</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1979–1980, vol. VI, China, Document 206 and 207.

stress very strongly. We will not support, we do not support Pol Pot. This is a matter that the U.S. and China do not agree on. We hope you can accept our statements on this as sincerely as we accept yours. You understand why we can't move now, but we can remain frank in our talks with each other.

Thach: I take note of what you say. But that is something that is still difficult to understand. We still find it hard to understand that prior to and after the Chinese attack you significantly improved your relations with China showing that the attack on Vietnam had no influence on your policy. On the other hand, you say the Vietnamese attack on Kampuchea means you can take no action on relations with us. This is a double standard and we don't understand. We will never understand. I cannot explain it.

Holbrooke: I would like to review for you the timing and the sequence. I know what you said but that was not the sequence. We saw each other on September 29th [27th]. At that time, we removed the question of aid from our considerations, and then we were considering the possibility of moving forward on the recognition of Vietnam. The refugees began to increase greatly in October. Vietnam's invasion began in December. This created an enormous public outcry. The Chinese invasion came after. The refugee issue more than anything else caused the halt to progress. There was a cry of outrage in the U.S. Even people who before didn't support the U.S. involvement in Indochina were critical of your policy on refugees. That is what happened in October, November and December before the Kampuchea affair.

Thach: After Bangkok where do you go?

Holbrooke: I will go to Manila, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore and then back to D.C. I will stop in Hawaii for one day.

Thach: We are interested in peace and stability and cooperation in this area. But the U.S., China and ASEAN don't want this and that is clear to us. Both the U.S. and China want war in this area. That is clear.

Holbrooke: We do not want war.

Thach: A proxy through the hands of others.

Holbrooke: I am sorry; we don't want war in this area.

Thach: ( )<sup>12</sup> They have peace, freedom and neutrality in the region.

Holbrooke: You mean the Malaysian proposal for a zone of peace?<sup>13</sup> We have accepted all this. I have said this myself publicly.

---

<sup>12</sup> As on the original; an omission in the transmission.

<sup>13</sup> Presumably a reference to the 1971 ASEAN declaration of a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality in the region.

Thach: We want the Southeast Asians to discuss this together. But your friends don't want it.

Holbrooke: We agree with it and we support it. We support ASEAN. We want peace in Kampuchea too and a way to find a solution to the problems that we have there.

Thach: We have conflicting views. Please don't have any illusions of imposing your views on us. We also will not impose our views on you. This is a matter of deep differences between us and we believe it should be set aside. We should find out areas of agreement to discuss.

Holbrooke: I agree with that. And we should build bridges one step at a time. We have taken steps for food relief to Kampuchea, and on orderly departure from Vietnam. In that regard we have encouraging reports and the Senators' visit is encouraging. We hope that you can take into account the Ambassador's points on the program of orderly departures working under UNHCR.

Abramowitz: Mr. Minister, personally I have been here only for the past 15 months; I have seen the tension and vast human tragedies generated by the Kampuchea problem. I must say that there must be an adjustment and a balancing of all country interests. Otherwise, Cambodia will only be a source of permanent tension. No one side can impose a solution. Over time all parties must adjust. How we get to that point, I do not know, but all must make some adjustments in their positions.

Thach: What is at stake is the interest of the Kampuchean people. We can't decide that.

Holbrooke: The Kampuchean people are being destroyed.

Thach: You support the destroyer.

Holbrooke: No, we do not.

Thach: We have our conflicting views. We don't need to discuss this.

Abramowitz: Vietnam cannot promote security by making its neighbors insecure.

Thach: May I make a reply?

Abramowitz: I did not want to keep you longer.

Thach: Then a reply is not necessary.

Abramowitz: In the short time I have been here, we have seen very terrible things. I am not trying to be polemical by my previous comment.

Thach: Of course. I have lived here for 58 years and I have seen worse crimes. I am a victim here not you. I am getting older and older with the crimes against the people in this area.

Holbrooke: I hope your Ambassador and Ambassador Abramowitz across the street can talk.

Thach: Yes, we don't need cars.

Holbrooke: We walked across the street this morning. Ambassador Abramowitz has the full support and confidence of the President and the Secretary. He can speak for us. We have serious difficulties. But we wish to stress the desire to move forward. We recognize that you have problems with China. You must understand that our relations with China will continue. There will be other visits. Do not interpret these as anti-Vietnamese. We are willing to improve relations because it is in our interests.

Thach: We are very patient. We will watch deeds. We don't need to rely so much on words.

Abramowitz: We will also watch your deeds.

**Abramowitz**

---

**65. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the  
Department of State (Tarnoff) to Secretary of State Vance<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 25, 1979

**SUBJECT**

Your Breakfast with the President Friday, October 26, 1979<sup>2</sup>

[Omitted here is information unrelated to Kampuchea.]

8. *Kampuchean Relief*. You could mention to the President that you taped yesterday an interview on the Kampuchean situation for showing on an ABC special this evening. The interview reiterates our deep concern and catalogues our record of action on this issue.

We are encouraged by the results of the Codel Sasser visit<sup>3</sup> which focused attention on the Kampuchean famine and succeeded in raising with the Vietnamese the constructive "land bridge" proposal.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Records of Cyrus Vance, 1977–1980, Lot 84D241, President's Breakfast 9/1/79–12/31/79. Secret; Nodis. Vance's initials are stamped at the top of the first page of the memorandum.

<sup>2</sup> The breakfast meeting took place in the Cabinet Room at the White House October 26, 7:31–9:10 a.m. (Carter Library, Presidential Materials, President's Daily Diary) No memorandum of conversation of this meeting has been found.

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 67 and 140.

However, hostile rhetorical exchanges between Bangkok and Hanoi/Phnom Penh and incidents along the Thai-Khmer border pose a growing threat to both the land bridge proposal and relief operations already under way.

The Codel may press for a U.S. commitment of \$100 million for relief efforts. While Congressional support for a major relief effort is certainly welcome, we will need to be alert to the uncertainties that still exist about Vietnamese intentions. We have also heard that the Senators will press for a more conspicuous U.S. role in the relief effort. The Vietnamese would probably reject this and there might be some danger of diminished interest in other countries.

There has been some foreign and press speculation that the Codel visit to Phnom Penh may indicate a softening of the U.S. position on the Vietnamese-backed regime. We, and the delegation, have reiterated U.S. rejection of both the Pol Pot and Heng Samrin regimes as unrepresentative of the Khmer people.

[Omitted here is information unrelated to Kampuchea.]

---

**66. Memorandum From the President's Deputy Assistant for  
National Security Affairs (Aaron) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 3, 1979

SUBJECT

Kampuchea Relief

The response of the Congress and of other nations to the intensifying human crisis in Kampuchea has been encouraging. However, I believe continued high level initiative will be needed to keep our efforts from bogging down in the bureaucracy. Moreover, I am concerned that the net result of our current approach will be that the Vietnamese and Heng Samrin strategy of starving out their opposition will succeed. This will not only work to our disadvantage in the region but will take untold lives as well.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 42, Kampuchea, 11-12/79. Confidential. Sent for action. Carter wrote at the top of the first page, "Zbig, Let Rosalynn go w/Richmond. Warren [Christopher] agrees. J." Rosalynn Carter visited Thailand, November 8-10. See Document 71.



The international relief agencies are working through the Heng Samrin government in Phnom Penh. The relief agencies have preserved their formal position that food should go to all and that they be allowed to monitor the distribution of food. This, however, is only a fig leaf. The Heng Samrin regime has rejected providing food to Pol Pot and there are only about a dozen international “monitors” located in Phnom Penh and they have not the capacity to assure that food goes to the people in the contested areas.

The situation is increasingly growing critical for the people in the contested areas and on the borders in Thailand. I believe that our government and the international agencies are doing a good job but these efforts are inadequate to the human and political challenge. I have discussed this with Zbig and Henry Owen and as a result we are giving serious consideration to the following steps which we might take beyond our continued support of the international relief efforts.

First, we need to make a major effort to mobilize medical and paramedical help for the Kampuchean refugees crossing into Thailand. For this purpose we need to draw on (a) U.S. military capabilities, (b) Peace Corps volunteers who could be withdrawn from their current assignment for TDY in Thailand, and (c) a public call in the United States and elsewhere for interns, nurses and paramedics to join in a temporary effort to meet the medical challenge of the Kampuchean refugees in Thailand.

As a first step, we must establish what the real needs are. For this purpose, we are considering sending the Surgeon General Julius Richmond to Thailand. I would appreciate your reaction to the idea that Mrs. Carter might also make that trip. Subsequently, she could host a meeting of the leading figures in the health field to develop a coordinated public/private medical relief program.

This meeting could be set up before Mrs. Carter’s departure in order to underscore the substantive importance of her trip. (If this idea appeals to you, please let me know. Henry Owen will be in contact with Mary Hoyt.)

Second, we are giving serious consideration to unilaterally dropping food into the areas of Kampuchea not controlled by the Heng Samrin regime. The DOD will have contingency plans prepared by Monday.<sup>2</sup>

This would be a dramatic move. It would demonstrate bold leadership on our part and meet a very severe human need. There are a number of logistic problems to be overcome if we choose this course,

---

<sup>2</sup> November 5.

but having consulted with military planners, I believe they can be overcome.

Such a step will be controversial within our own government. But frankly I do not believe that the people in the Pol Pot areas will receive any food from the international relief efforts as they are currently structured. I also believe there would be widespread Congressional and public support for such a dramatic action. I discussed the idea with Zbig before he left and he was generally favorable toward it.

The principal argument against flying unilateral food drops into Kampuchea is that the Vietnamese and the Heng Samrin regime might then reject the international efforts currently under way. However, since only the Heng Samrin regime will benefit from the international relief efforts, they are not likely to cut their nose off to spite their face.

Another problem is that our aircraft could well come under attack and American lives could be lost. This in turn could lead to an escalation of our military involvement. I believe this is a real risk. But whether we would inexorably become involved in a military way depends on our own choice. I think the stakes are worth the risk.

Third, we need to address this issue with the Soviets at a high level. State is preparing a letter from you to Brezhnev.<sup>3</sup> I think we need to be very careful about this. The Soviets are not likely to be helpful and a rebuff could work to the disadvantage of SALT. If you decide to send Mrs. Carter to Thailand and undertake unilateral food drops, I think we can keep our approach to the Soviets at the Foreign Minister level without being subject to criticism that we are not doing enough.

We do not need to decide the issue of unilateral food drops until next week. However, I would appreciate your guidance on whether to continue considering the possibility that Mrs. Carter could go to Thailand with the Surgeon General and whether you wish us to prepare a draft letter from you to Brezhnev.

#### *Decisions<sup>4</sup>*

Mrs. Carter to visit Thailand.

Letter to Brezhnev.

---

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

<sup>4</sup> Carter checked the "yes" option for both decisions.

**67. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

New York, November 5, 1979, noon

## PARTICIPANTS

SRV Ambassador to the U.N., Ha Van Lau  
SRV Counselor, Cu Dinh Ba  
Interpreter  
Senator James Sasser, (D-Tenn.)  
Senator John Danforth, (R-Missouri)  
Senator Max Baucus, (D-Montana)  
Asst. Secy of State, Richard Holbrooke  
Dennis G. Harter, EA/VLC

SASSER: Mr. Ambassador, we are pleased to meet with you today. My colleagues and I are happy to have this occasion to discuss the situation in Kampuchea with you. We were in Thailand about a week ago and then we went to Kampuchea to meet with its Foreign Minister.<sup>2</sup> This visit was arranged by representatives of your government who we contacted to secure permission to visit Phnom Penh.

We presented a proposal to FonMin Hun Sen to open a truck route to Kampuchea for the delivery of food and medical supplies on a humanitarian basis. The trucks and the truck route and the drivers all would be selected by international relief agencies in cooperation with the government of Phnom Penh. The whole operation would be handled by the International Red Cross (ICRC) and UNICEF organizations. We felt then and still believe today that opening a land route over Routes 5 and 6 from Thailand to Phnom Penh is the only way to move adequate quantities of food and medicine rapidly. We believe time is important. We fear that every day more people will die.

We have come here to talk with you today, because, after we went to see the Foreign Minister in Phnom Penh, we had the impression that he had favorably received our proposals. He said that he would take these proposals up with the Central Committee. He agreed with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Thach of your government that security was not a problem. Afterwards, however, we heard a radio broadcast which was negative on our proposal. But in this broadcast there were several statements which we thought might be a misunderstanding of our proposal. The broadcast said that a truck route was a condition for additional aid. It was not a condition nor was it our

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968–1991, Lot 94D430, New York Meetings, 1978–1979. No classification marking. The meeting took place in the Indonesian Lounge at UN Headquarters.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 140.

intention to impose any conditions on providing assistance to the Kampuchean people. We sought to cooperate in any way possible with food and medical assistance. We were advised by ICRC, by UNICEF, and by other experts that this (the truck route) is the only adequate means to deliver large quantities of food and medicine.

So we come here today, Mr. Ambassador, to ask your help to persuade the Phnom Penh authorities to permit the trucks to enter Kampuchea. We would stress that all of this would be handled by ICRC and UNICEF personnel. We now understand that we will be able to see representatives of the Heng Samrin government and we will deliver a letter to them for their Foreign Minister. I would like to transmit a copy of that letter to you.<sup>3</sup>

Let me conclude by saying we believe that the situation is urgent. We are concerned that thousands could die from lack of medicine or food. We wish to set aside political considerations and see that adequate supplies get in purely for humanitarian purposes. We are aware that trucks could be rolling in 3 to 5 days, if the Phnom Penh authorities will grant permission to open the truck route. It is not our wish to supply food or medical supplies to any particular political group. We only wish to help the Kampuchean people.

*HA VAN LAU:* First let me thank you for this meeting today. We understand that you are very concerned about the famine situation in Kampuchea. I am aware of this concern because I personally followed reports of your visit to Thailand and to Phnom Penh. That is why I am willing to meet with you today.

First I would like to emphasize that the final word on any matter which takes place in Kampuchea is within the competence of the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea. I believe that when you were in Phnom Penh and met with Foreign Minister Hun Sen you realized this and understood that the government was in control of the situation. After you put forth your proposal, the People's Revolutionary Council gave you an official view. I am ready to pass on your opinions and ideas to my government, but I must say again, that the right to take decisions is with the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea. And I think, since you will see the Ambassador of the People's Revolutionary Council in New York, you will be able to raise the problem again.<sup>4</sup> You will be able to discuss it with him because he is the man authorized to discuss it. He will probably present this to his government and he will tell you what you want to know.

---

<sup>3</sup> The letter to Hun Sen was not found.

<sup>4</sup> Senators Sasser, Danforth, and Baucus met with the PRK Ambassador on November 5. (Telegram 293558 to Bangkok, November 10; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790519-0224)

I thank you for giving me the letter and would like to add a few words of personal opinion. In meeting with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Nguyen Co Thach, you were informed of the factual situation in Kampuchea. It is true that there are serious difficulties in Kampuchea. And I do not believe there is any need to repeat to you the root cause and the current cause of the difficulties. It is also true that the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea has made great efforts to alleviate these difficulties and to overcome the temporary food shortage.

The nation of Kampuchea is in the process of national reconstruction after many years of devastation. I would like to tell you frankly that reports in the Western press and even statements made in this General Assembly meeting lead the people to think that the Kampuchean people can't do anything. We have our own experience and we know it is difficult for a nation to do things in this situation. A nation must strive its best to survive. If a nation is not self-confident and does not make great efforts, then efforts by the international community cannot solve the problem.

Secondly, we Vietnamese people welcome any impartial aid from the international community to the Vietnamese people, as well as to the brotherly Kampuchean people. But when giving aid, the international community should understand the factual situation in our country—our capabilities and the measures we can take. Outside aid is only effective when it does not demand that the local inhabitants make efforts which override their capabilities. Then there will be delays. But this is not the responsibility of the local people. It is the responsibility of the outside. That is why, Senators, I want you to understand that to formulate a plan, you must formulate a plan in the best way able to help the local authorities receive aid.

Thirdly, how to deliver the assistance, what routes to take, this must also depend on the factual situation and the permission of the local authorities. It is not advisable then for us to pressure them, but we should try to reach agreement with them. Together we and the Phnom Penh Government were able to announce and agree to the opening of the Mekong River route to Phnom Penh. Now, with this decision, they are able to receive a greater amount of aid. Even before aid from the international community, supervised by ICRC and UNICEF, the People's Revolutionary Council had handled a great amount of aid from the socialist countries. Some here (at the pledging session),<sup>5</sup> will talk about this today. While giving aid we are not pressuring them to do this or that. We are working with them to overcome difficulties.

---

<sup>5</sup> The United Nations convened the Pledging Conference for Emergency Humanitarian Relief to the People of Kampuchea on November 5. For a description of the conference, see *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1979, p. 919.

Finally, I would like to talk about the pictures and reports by the mass media. Yes, the pictures are real. It is true that there are people who are starving. But this only has to do with a very small part of the people who in the past were forced by Pol Pot troops to go into the jungle with them. They (Pol Pot regime) didn't care for them and didn't feed them and now they let them flee to Thailand to instigate world opinion. This is not the real picture at all of Kampuchea. Yesterday I was given a copy by AFP Hanoi which talked about those starving 300,000 along the border and those in the jungles on the border. This is not an overall situation. What is being described is also not different from what exists in many other third-world countries. The mass media is not describing things representative of the problems of the country. I speak openly and frankly to you to help you obtain a proper and full assessment of the situation. And thus from this, you can formulate your proposal in regard to the factual situation.

*DANFORTH:* When we told Secretary of State Vance that we were going to meet with you, he explained that he wished us to express his warm personal regards. The fact that Secretary Vance is here today shows the importance that this issue has for the American people. He has come here with four members of the Senate, a number of members of the House of Representatives, a number of our State governors, and Father Theodore Hesburgh, President of one of our great universities.<sup>6</sup> The situation in Kampuchea is of great concern to the American people. Their interests and our interests are solely in feeding people. We are not interested in one political group or another. Only in getting food to people in need.

No matter how hard the Phnom Penh officials try to solve the problem, there are still people in need, civilians, children, people who don't care about politics. I think it is clear today that the financial resources, the food, the medical supplies—all will be available. The question is delivery to where the people are. So far planes are landing at Phnom Penh and food is being distributed by ICRC and UNICEF. Ships are landing at Kompong Som and delivery is made from the port. Yesterday, it was announced about the opening of the Mekong, a river route to Phnom Penh. All of these are desirable. Every method of delivery is desirable.

We are very pleased to see that permission to use the Mekong has been granted, but we are told by experts that these means of distribution are still not adequate. Trucks are needed within the country to make deliveries. Our proposal was to request the Phnom Penh authorities to permit trucks to come to Kampuchea via Routes 5 and 6 under

---

<sup>6</sup> Vance headed the U.S. delegation to the Pledging Conference.

UNICEF and ICRC control. This letter to Foreign Minister Hun Sen is to clarify some points which we feel were misunderstood. Two of those points are as follows. First, the U.S. does not condition aid on the opening of a truck route. Our assistance is offered without any conditions. We only want to get food to the people. There is no pressure on Phnom Penh. We believe that their decision carried with it decisions on the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

We stated that we hope that ICRC and UNICEF will work directly with you and with officials in Phnom Penh to develop details on a land bridge to Kampuchea. Such matters as how many trucks would be used, which roads would be used, who the drivers would be, how security would be provided, and how distribution inside Kampuchea would be organized—are all matters which would be decided by the Phnom Penh authorities, UNICEF and the ICRC. Therefore, we are very flexible. We are putting forth an idea and hoping for a favorable response.

I would like to add one point. Our colleagues in the Senate think we are far too moderate. They want to fly in planes. They want to drop food from planes. They want many unilateral ways of bringing in food. It is our view that the best way is for ICRC and UNICEF to work out arrangements with the Phnom Penh authorities and to have your cooperation on meeting security needs. I must say that the public feeling and the feeling in Congress is that people must be saved. Food must be distributed by whatever method available. The suggestion today by the Foreign Minister of France that food simply be dropped out of planes has much support in Congress and the press. Senator Kennedy has talked about this. Senator Levin and Senator Pell have presented this idea and many are considering it.

*HA VAN LAU:* We are here in the U.S. and so we understand how things are here. We understand the concerns of the U.S. people to help on humanitarian grounds. I think your concern has been proved by your trip to Kampuchea and to the area. I would like to say again to the U.S. representatives of the people that you should help the people to understand the factual situation. I agree that there are women and children and old folks in need of assistance from the international community. I do not deny this. And we welcome the initiative of Secretary General Kurt Waldheim. We welcome the responses of the international community to his international appeal. The question now is can the contributions help the people to overcome their difficulties. I am aware that some say to drop food and medical supplies. I think the American press also comments on this.

*HOLBROOKE:* Let me interrupt for a moment and state that the only reason we want to talk about that is because we don't think about anything except bringing food to people in need. There are no political overtones to these proposals. I just want to stress that fact.



HA VAN LAU: Yes, I understand. The Kampuchea people are now looking at the situation.

BAUCUS: We three (Senators) wish to stress that the U.S. interest and the proposal are no idle suggestion. It is a development which has support and which has become most prominent among all the proposals. We come here to you and to Phnom Penh, not as Americans, but just as people trying to help other people. We certainly want to work with the Phnom Penh authorities in order to have the food situation improved. We do not want to have trucks driven by Americans or by Thais, but by ICRC and UNICEF or with Vietnamese or Cambodians, to make sure that the food does not go to Pol Pot or to others with any political purpose. If the borders are opened up and aid comes in, it will be important not only for providing help, but also for international opinion to see the situation favorably. The whole world's interest is focusing on this issue. *Time* magazine's cover story is on this issue this week.<sup>7</sup> There will be more. The main interest is only to help people. I know this sounds like a political statement—wanting to help people—but we mean it. It is true for ourselves. We have no political considerations or concerns.

HA VAN LAU: We understand your status and your concern. The crux of the problem is what way, what means for aid to be received? When it comes to those who want to help and want to know how to help, I think they should discuss it with Phnom Penh. This is also in accord with the factual situation prevailing in Kampuchea. Speaking also on purely humanitarian grounds and setting aside political considerations, we should discuss who is in charge, who is in control of the country, and discuss the factual situation. We are merely friends of Kampuchea and seek to cooperate with them. And thus as a gesture we permit as a new method use of the Mekong to Phnom Penh. That is a new channel which can be discussed with Phnom Penh. And after consideration, Mr. Hun Sen will give you his answer.

Senators, Holbrooke, and SRV personnel exchange farewell remarks. Timing is arranged for additional meetings with PRK and with SRV and U.S. officials.

---

<sup>7</sup> Reference is to the November 12 issue of *Time* magazine, with the cover story, "Starvation: Deathwatch in Cambodia."



**68. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

New York, November 5, 1979, 3–3:45 P.M.

**PARTICIPANTS***U.S.*

Cyrus Vance, Secretary of State

Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary, EA

*Foreign*

Ha Van Lau, Vietnamese Ambassador to the United Nations

**HOLBROOKE:** I hope you will report to your government that our efforts here to get food to the people of Kampuchea is being done without any support for any faction in Kampuchea.

(At this point, Holbrooke read a statement made by the Phnom Penh authorities,<sup>2</sup> implying the U.S. is colluding with the PRC to support and supply Pol Pot forces.)

The statement made by the government in Phnom Penh misrepresents the American position. Would you please report this to Minister Thach. We oppose the Pol Pot government. We are not involved in any such arrangement.

**HA VAN LAU (HVL):** You already told Minister Thach the same thing.

**HOLBROOKE:** Yes, but since then your government has issued this additional statement.

**HVL:** I am sure that the U.S. representative understands the position of the USG on this. In saying so, I must add that the Phnom Penh authorities have their own outlook and their own opinions on this issue. If you have the chance to talk with them you can make your position clear.

**HOLBROOKE:** Three U.S. senators are right now making the same point to representatives of the Heng Samrin government.<sup>3</sup> Secretary Vance and I have known you for 12 years. I want you to know that I am speaking from conviction now.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968–1991, Lot 94D430, Box 17652, New York Meetings, 1978–1979. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Kenneth M. Quinn (EA) on November 6. The meeting took place in the Chinese Lounge at UN Headquarters.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably the statement issued on November 1 by the Kampuchean Government; see Henry Kamm, “Cambodia Impasse: Political and Human Needs in Conflict,” *New York Times*, November 2, 1979, p. A8.

<sup>3</sup> Senators Sasser, Danforth, and Baucus. See footnote 4, Document 67.

*HVL:* As Phan Hien told us, you have not yet convinced us adequately of your opinion.

*HOLBROOKE:* Mr. Ambassador, it is Vietnam that must convince the world that it doesn't want Kampucheans to starve.

(At this point Secretary Vance arrived to join the meeting.)

*VANCE:* It is nice to have a chance to see you again. One thing that is terribly important is that we make sure that arrangements are such that there is cooperation from the Kampuchean authorities on the distribution of food and medicine once it arrives in that country. We have reports that 90% of the stuff delivered to Phnom Penh is still in warehouses and not distributed. It requires cooperation if it is to get to the people in the countryside. Vietnam should use its influence in making sure that the local authorities act in a cooperative way to get medicines and supplies out to people who need it.

*HVL:* I am glad to have a chance to meet with you and to have a frank talk just as we have many times in the past. Our people have suffered a lot. We hope to end the suspicion that Vietnam is hindering the delivery of humanitarian aid. We have our own difficulties. We have given a great amount of aid to the Kampuchean people already. I will announce that this afternoon. As a result, our own people have reduced their rice ration. Speaking frankly, reports that Vietnam is impeding assistance are false. They are put out to create misunderstanding and enmity between us. This morning I told the three American senators that the international community and the American people are very concerned over the food situation of the Kampuchean people. This concern is legitimate. But we also must look beyond this. The famine has its root cause in the enormous consequences left by the Pol Pot regime from its 4 years of devastation. It is the result of past developments. The Kampuchean people are a nation. They have their own history, their own civilization and their own self-respect. They can make their own sacrifices and efforts. I have the impression from reading the mass media and statements by delegates that people think the Kampucheans are children waiting for assistance from the international community. That they can't save themselves. A nation which does not know how to save itself cannot expect help. Outside assistance can't substitute for efforts by the local inhabitants. In present circumstances the Kampuchean people are in bad need of help from the international community because they are meeting difficulties due to the past. Providing help is a responsibility, an obligation of mankind toward these too long suffering people.

You also must understand the factual situation—what the people are doing and what they have need of. They are not requesting air drops! Representatives of international organizations now in Phnom Penh are discussing with the local authorities questions regarding the means of delivery.

At this point I want to say that we welcome your granting a visa to the Ambassador of the Phnom Penh government enabling him to come to the U.S. Here he can have useful contacts with the American people. There are a number of people who are trying to paint a false picture of the situation there. They do not see the efforts made by the Kampuchean people and thus are misleading public opinion.

In the past, together with many Socialist countries, we gave assistance to the Kampuchean people. Now we are continuing. Regarding American assistance, the Kampuchean people welcome assistance without political conditions. Questions are how to arrange for the reception, transportation and distribution of such aid. The local authorities are authorized to discuss and decide these questions. It is not of benefit to this humanitarian effort to paint a false picture of Kampuchea. This morning I read a statement given at a press conference by a Canadian (?) spokeswoman. I was very dissatisfied with it. She said the Geneva Conference was convened because of pressure on Vietnam to control the wave of boat people. She added that now we are in a position to pressure Vietnam to open a land route and called upon the international community to pressure Vietnam. You understand, Mr. Secretary, that the Vietnamese people will not give in to such pressure. The Canadian official also offended us here in this meeting and at their press conference. This is not in their own interest. It will reduce their prestige.

We are here in a spirit of cooperation, trying to contribute to the success of the conference. A number of people who lack goodwill are trying to act against us. This is not beneficial and it is not necessary for us to reply.

As far as relations between our two countries, we are looking to have good relations. I met with Representative Wolff this morning.<sup>4</sup> He raised a number of problems and points and we shall take them into consideration. It is not necessary for me to repeat those at this time.

VANCE: Let me respond. As we see it, the central issue regarding Kampuchea is how all of us can make sure that necessary food and medicine get to the people in the countryside. There is no question that the people suffered terribly under Pol Pot. They also suffered as a result of the war when Vietnam brought its troops into Kampuchea. War always brings suffering. But now the Kampuchean people find themselves in a situation where they have lost their crops and where it is difficult to plant and feed their people because of the fighting. They don't have enough medicine. And to avoid the fighting, people

---

<sup>4</sup> No memorandum of conversation of this meeting has been found. A brief summary of the meeting is in telegram 293558 to Bangkok, November 10. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790519–0224)

must flee. So it is not a question that the Kampuchean people don't want to help themselves, but rather that it is impossible for them to do it under the present circumstances. Thus it is essential that the Phnom Penh authorities facilitate the process of the distribution of medicine and food and other supplies. Vietnam can be helpful in talking to the local authorities and in encouraging them to work with all people and representatives of all organizations, whatever their philosophies or ideologies, to get food to the people. I encourage you to do this.

On our bilateral relations, there are two principal points obstructing normalization of relations: 1) the refugee problem and 2) Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea. These two obstacles have halted progress between us. We have to find a solution to get back on track again to continue the process we have started and to achieve the end that all people, and particularly me, want to see.

*HVL:* You are aware of the position of my government from reports from representatives of your government who have met with us. In my opinion, conditions at present are not yet right, although we are looking for improvement. But you have failed to mention one other relevant factor. Our country was subjected to a war by 600,000 troops. Now they are trying to threaten us again.

*VANCE:* I want you to know that we are not playing any "China card." Regarding Pol Pot, we have said time and time again that we oppose him and everything he stands for. He is a tyrant.

*HVL:* Regrettably they are still sitting in international organizations. They have created a lot of obstacles to our work.

*VANCE:* I would add that we also don't believe that Heng Samrin represents the will of the Kampuchean people. We believe these people want to have free choice to determine what their government should be.

*HVL:* We are talking with the same sense, the same meaning—that is how to get the Kampuchean people to exercise self-determination. Now you don't believe they are exercising self-determination, but I believe soon you will. I tell you truly they are masters of their country. They are supported by their inhabitants, but outside forces are creating difficulties to this process. The Kampuchean people have regained independence and freedom. They know how to defend their rights. We believe the outside forces will finally fail.

*VANCE:* We believe there should be no outside force: no Chinese force; no Vietnamese force.

*HVL:* We don't want to stay. Do you believe we want to stay?

*VANCE:* We hope you get out. That would remove one of our obstacles.

*HVL:* As long as the threat of aggression by the Peking authorities still exists, they will remain. As soon as it stops, Vietnamese troops

will be withdrawn at the request of the Kampuchean people. They will not stay one day longer.

*VANCE:* We understand your concerns, the concerns you express about a possible second attack. To the extent we can do anything about it, we will oppose it and try to prevent it from happening.

*HVL:* I hope I can believe what you say is true.

*VANCE:* Believe me. This is true.

*HVL:* Yes, I do. But your intent and your statement should be proved by evidence, by action, so our people can believe it

*VANCE:* One other point. I am very worried about the situation along the Thai border. It is very dangerous. I note that Pham Van Dong has said you have no intention to attack Thailand, but I am frankly worried.

*HVL:* I will inform my government of your concern. As far as the tension along the border, in our view it is false and artificial. The leaders in Southeast Asian countries and the mass media say that Vietnam is not going to attack Thailand. At the same time, they say that there exists a danger of aggression by Vietnam. This is a contradiction. This proves it is artificial.

*HOLBROOKE:* But the situation there could erupt without anyone wanting it to.

*VANCE:* What Dick is saying is that incidents can occur that explode into larger things, not that you won't keep your word.

*HOLBROOKE:* Last week I saw Nguyen Co Thach.<sup>5</sup> He told me that you won't attack Thailand. At the same time, I traveled along the border and I can tell you that the tension is real. The Thai government is prepared to defend its territories, as any country must. The Vietnamese are fighting the Pol Pot remnants on Kampuchean soil. While I was there artillery rounds from Kampuchea fell into Thailand and the Thais returned the fire. We are concerned that the forces fighting each other inside Kampuchea will spill over and fight each other inside Thailand. This could involve Thailand. As you know we have announced that we have stepped up our aid to Thailand. In doing this, we are not involved in support of any one side, but we are simply helping our own ally defend its own territory.

*HVL:* I have nothing to say about your concern over that situation. Only when we believe each other can we settle this. The Thais say they won't attack Kampuchea. We want to believe that. To ease the difficulty on the border we are arranging for Thai and Vietnamese officials to meet with each other.

---

<sup>5</sup> Presumably the meeting on October 23; see Document 64.

VANCE: This is a very good step.

HOLBROOKE: That would be very helpful.

At this point the meeting was concluded with pleasantries.

---

## 69. Minutes of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, November 6, 1979, 9:45–10:35 a.m.

### SUBJECT

Kampuchean Relief

### PARTICIPANTS

The Vice President

Mrs. Carter

Kit Dobelle

#### *State*

Secretary Cyrus Vance

Matthew Nimetz (Counselor of the Department; Act. Coord. of Refugees)

Richard Holbrooke (Asst. Secy. for Far Eastern Affairs)

#### *OSD*

Deputy Secretary W. Graham Claytor, Jr.

Ambassador Robert Komer (Under Secretary for Policy)

#### *JCS*

General David Jones

Lt. General John Pustay

#### *DCI*

Admiral Stansfield Turner

#### *White House*

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski

Ambassador Henry Owen

#### *NSC*

Lincoln P. Bloomfield

Leslie G. Denend

### MINUTES

*Brzezinski*: He<sup>2</sup> is still in favor of an airdrop by the United States to reach starving Kampucheans not otherwise being fed, on the grounds

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, 1977–1981, Box 105, SCC 194 Cambodia, 11/6/1979. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room.

<sup>2</sup> Brzezinski is presumably referring to President Carter.

that we had a moral obligation to act. A study should be begun on ways and means, and we should let it be known that under certain contingencies we might have to act unilaterally.

*Vance*: Will discuss an airdrop with the French.

*Brzezinski*: It would be a pity if we have to follow France in taking such action.

*Vance*: The matter needs more study.

*General Pustay*: Referring to the Joint Staff's paper,<sup>3</sup> an airdrop would require prior reconnaissance flights, as well as fighter escorts in a hostile environment.

*Brzezinski*: Asked that a detailed operational plan be prepared.

*Mondale*: Suggested a modest airlift into Thailand, which Mrs. Carter could announce on her forthcoming trip.<sup>4</sup> He wondered whether Mrs. Carter might not speak for the United States in the UN debate the following week<sup>5</sup> on the subject of Kampuchea. He felt we should let it be known that we are considering unilateral action.

*Owen*: Indicated four purposes for Mrs. Carter's forthcoming trip to Bangkok, 1) to view the situation in company with the Surgeon General and report back regarding refugee camps, improvements that are needed, and how we can help the Thais; 2) in company with an engineering officer who would accompany Mrs. Carter, to report back on logistical problems in organizing and transporting food into Kampuchea; 3) to bolster Thai morale; 4) to express US moral concern. Mrs. Carter would report to the Voluntary Agencies on her return.

*Mondale*: The UNHCR is behaving in a fashion that is slow, tired, and pro-Vietnamese. Governor Lamm<sup>6</sup> holds similar views. He strongly recommended appointment with a single person to be in charge of all the camps, and another to see that the food came in.

*Vance*: Mrs. Carter should express sympathy and support for Thailand, particularly now they have accepted a true first asylum refugee policy.

*Mondale*: The trip should not appear to be a "guilt trip".

*Bloomfield*: The trip should stress the purpose of building up and strengthening the international effort, and not give any impression that we are preparing Americanization of the enterprise. *Vance* expressed his agreement.

---

<sup>3</sup> The Joint Staff memorandum, DJSJ 1941–79, November 5, outlines a variety of options for distributing food aid. (Ibid.)

<sup>4</sup> Mrs. Carter traveled to Thailand November 8–10. See Document 79.

<sup>5</sup> The General Assembly debate took place November 12–14.

<sup>6</sup> Richard D. Lamm, Governor of Colorado, a member of the delegation to the Pledging Conference.

*Brzezinski:* Arguments in favor of a US airdrop are: a dramatic expression of the concern of the President and the country, and the “weapons” in question would be food rather than bombs.

*Contrary arguments:* It might well encounter a hostile environment, produce an adverse reaction, and be used by Kampuchean political authorities to our disadvantage.

*Mondale:* It is scandalous that some people in Thailand are not being fed. *Vance:* The Thais now seem to be getting organized.

*Vance:* 90 to 95 percent of the material in Phnom Penh is still sitting there. He talked to the Vietnamese about it in New York the day before.<sup>7</sup>

*Brzezinski:* He favors an airdrop and an airlift.

*Vance:* The French would seem interested in playing a role in some such operation, and are also involved in opening up two additional fields in Kampuchea under Vietnamese control. While willing to do anything that will help, he wondered what the chances are of aircraft being shot down, and of the food getting to the hungry.

*Owen:* Senators Danforth, Baucus and Sasser, who had just returned from the area, reported that the airdrop in their opinion was not the best way.

*Holbrooke:* The greatest need is in the West, and the areas under control of Pol Pot, where US planes would be shot at. After the UN debate scheduled for November 17–19, several hundred thousand Kampucheans are likely to be pushed into Thailand in the dry season Vietnamese attacks.

There was general agreement to study the airdrop.

---

<sup>7</sup> See Document 67.



**70. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, November 6, 1979, 1413Z

45547. EA for Assistant Secretary Holbrooke. Department please pass White House for Owen and Denend and DOD/ISA/EAPR for Armacost. SUBJ: Cambodia Not Much Solace in Sight.

1. (S—Entire text)

2. The deteriorating situation on the Thai/Cambodian border prompts another review of the political aspects of Cambodian dilemma and the role of the United States.

3. For the second time this year the Cambodian war and all it has brought in its wake have reached the border of Thailand. Refugees keep streaming in and the population of much of western Cambodia has already drifted to the border. But unlike last spring the greater Vietnamese pressures have prompted the Thais to take a more generous attitude toward receiving Kampucheans in order to win wider international political support. But the dangers of fighting on Thai territory have become much greater. Pol Pot forces keep running in and out of Thai territory and receive some degree of supply, courtesy of Thai military. The Vietnamese have brought up forces to stamp out the resistance this dry season. The tensions on the Thai/Cambodian border are sure to grow as the tempo of Vietnamese military operations picks up. It is doubtful the SRV will allow Thai covert involvement to continue unchecked despite what Nguyen Co Thach has told us.

4. From SRV military dispositions, logistical problems and political constraints, it is unlikely that the security of Thailand is at stake on the border. The political stability of Thailand, and in particular the future of the Kriangsak government, is. We are of course not wed to any specific Thai Government and should be able to work with almost any government established in Thailand. But the demise of the Kriangsak government and the breakdown of Thai and ASEAN resolve because of SRV pressures and success in consolidating Heng Samrin legitimacy in Cambodia would inevitably result in significant erosion of U.S. interests throughout the area. While such a development will not be cataclysmic and the Thais will certainly survive as an independent state, it is one of such broad significance as to warrant the most serious reassessment of our options and of the constraints we have

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Cables File, Far East, Box 13, 9–11/79. Secret; Sensitive; Immediate; Nodis.

accepted thus far on our ability to influence the direction of events in Indochina. Situation also obviously could test our Manila commitment.<sup>2</sup>

#### 5. (I) The Players and Their Intentions.

(A) The SRV shows every indication of destroying Pol Pot. Pol Pot forces are insufficient for large scale action and SRV is proceeding by "search and destroy" missions. However they must obviously balance actions to this end against such factors as possible PRC counters and the views of the international community. They obviously prefer not to go into Thailand and so far have acted with caution. Vietnam's concern over the international community also means it will likely take no decisive steps before UNGA has concluded its debate on the ASEAN resolution.<sup>3</sup> The SRV is also engaged in a psychological effort to cow the Thais into ceasing support of Pol Pot and, with 5 to 6 divisions on the border, will make life difficult for both the RTG and ASEAN over the next few months. Vietnamese leaders couple their declarations about not intruding into Thailand with attacks against Thai covert support of Pol Pot. Most worrisome is that lower level SRV commanders seem to have some authority to intrude into Thailand. For the moment SRV has no interest in a compromise solution.

(B) The USSR has so far gotten away virtually clean despite its role in Cambodia. As far as can be seen there is nothing on the horizon to limit them from providing any needed military supplies to the SRV. It values its access to Vietnam and relishes the humiliation suffered by the PRC as Vietnam succeeds in Kampuchea. It is not displeased to see Chinese bogged down with Vietnamese.

(C) The PRC appears to have toned down at least its rhetoric on Vietnam. It talked big over the summer and perhaps misled the Thais. Pol Pot may not live up to their expectations. China appears to be looking to a much more protracted struggle of attriting the SRV. They see no possibility of political settlement given the present situation on the ground.

(D) The RTG continues its game of public neutrality and superficially disguised covert support for Khmer resistance elements. The Vietnamese clearly know what they are up to. But it would be wrong to equate relatively small Thai activities to make life difficult for Vietnamese with Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia. Kriangsak thought he had a strong partner in the PRC, but he now apparently is worried that the Chinese are back-tracking. Kriangsak, as the framer of current

---

<sup>2</sup> Reference is presumably to the U.S. commitment under the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty, known as the Manila Pact, signed on September 8, 1954. The treaty established the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization. (6 UST 81; TIAS 3170)

<sup>3</sup> The General Assembly adopted the ASEAN resolution as Resolution 34/22 on November 14. See *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1979, pp. 294-295 and 306-307.

RTG policies, could be in very difficult straits as border incidents and other SRV actions spook his more jittery and unsure countrymen at home. The Vietnamese moreover may be out to get him politically as best way of severing the Thai/PRC connection. Thai “neutrality” is rising as fear of trouble at the border increases.

(E) ASEAN is starting to flounder as rising tensions in the area exacerbate the differing perceptions within the group—Thais, Malaysians and Singaporeans remain fixed on SRV expansionism, but the Indonesians focus on China. The Philippines have trouble focusing on anything. It is becoming increasingly more difficult for ASEAN to work effectively and more complicated for us to work with it. Cambodia once brought them together; it is now tearing them apart. Moreover, leadership and follow-through are lacking.

#### 7. (II) Outlook and Implications

The SRV is in the military driver’s seat and has already gone far to vitiate Pol Pot. It further has all the initiative on the border and can orchestrate pressures on the Thai by incidents and incursions. Nevertheless, the war is not over and the Vietnamese have a difficult row to hoe in Kampuchea. Thailand will survive some limited SRV military operations on its territory, but Kriangsak may not. He cannot easily reverse his covert China alliance and stay in office. Thai humiliations on the border could catalyze opposition to Kriangsak or spur a hasty search for an alternative. His fall would be followed most likely by a government more accommodating to the SRV and willing to recognize Heng Samrin. (The opposite right anti-Communist takeover is a remote possibility. That posture would be short-lived.)

Such a Thai political crisis along these lines would be a serious blow to ASEAN as a political entity, if not a fatal one. This in turn would obviously negate the effort to establish a stable progressive order in the area.

The SRV campaign through the dry season also, of course, means a continued outflow of refugees into Thailand and suffering within Kampuchea.

#### 8. (III) Where We Stand

The U.S. wants to get the SRV out of Kampuchea, but we find other policy interests and constraints precluding us from trying to do so. We appear contradictory. Chinese-Thai efforts to support anti-SRV forces in Cambodia seem at present only real effort possibly affecting SRV willingness to entertain Cambodian political solution but we have, for good reasons, opposed them. However, we have no significant dialogue with the PRC on their support for Pol Pot, and there is no political solution possible with Pol Pot on the scene. We have generated no focus for pressure toward a political solution. We extend our com-

mitments as the Thais get deeper involved. Nor have we taken steps to keep the RTG from going out on its limb with China. At the same time we have given not insignificant material aid to the Thais, but our help has been less than spectacular (especially in comparison to the Soviet flood of materials into Vietnam), although our tanks and the 5 airlifts did make a good impact. Our somewhat successful efforts to make the Thais believe that we have done much more for them should not delude us. We are doing reasonably well at working with ASEAN, but have found relatively little means to push the group together when cracks appear.

#### 9. (IV) What To Do

I assume recognition of Pol Pot is too damaging to our position in the area at this time. If other interests prevent us from making life really difficult for the SRV, we can only continue and intensify our current lines of policy focusing on constraining the SRV along the border.

- Stir up more effort to internationalize the border and introduce greater foreign presence inside Kampuchea in connection with the relief effort;

- Follow our recent initiatives with stronger pressures on the USSR to exert some influence on SRV;

- Consider enhancing Sihanouk's latest initiatives. He remains the only real "name" in the vast gap between Pol Pot and Heng Samrin;

- Consider upping the ante by more direct support to Thailand, although we must be very careful not to imply a threat we will be unable to carry out (This is a prime concern we have with suggestions for any U.S. military air or sea presence);

- Encourage ASEAN to get its act together, mobilize diplomatic resources and more actively constrain the SRV. It should seek to pressure countries such as India and should itself open negotiations, preferably secret, with Hanoi over the nature of possible Kampuchean solutions. It could send an observer mission to the Thai border;

- Encourage the RTG individually to strengthen its diplomatic efforts, to take better advantage of its internationally attractive positions on refugees and internationalization of the border; and

- We must of course pursue the Khmer relief effort on its merits.

Our objectives through such moves should be to keep Khmer alive, preclude or limit SRV incursions into Thailand, promote ASEAN unity, and keep international pressure on SRV military to get out of Kampuchea. The departure of the Vietnamese army will not create a neutral Kampuchean state. Realistically, we must be prepared to accept SRV domination but not its troops. It is in any case essential to get international aid into Kampuchea following on emergency relief because

reconstruction is beyond Khmer resources and the SRV will contribute little.

To move in these general directions, it is imperative in the first instance to defuse the border and shake the present assumptions of the concerned parties. We must do our best to open up diplomatic scene. It is tragic that we cannot foresee a quick-fix that will save more Khmer lives, but keeping up pressure for more humanitarian aid may succeed in saving many of them as the political drama unfolds. Our talks with Vietnamese have become sterile and we should stop running after them.

There is an argument for more forthcoming recognition of the political vacuum that exists in Kampuchea. We could encourage Thais to anticipate possible complete Pol Pot failure. We would have to be extremely cautious since any steps along such lines risks immediate and exaggerated perceptions of our cutting and running.

None of this offers much promise of accomplishing what we want in the short run. But I frankly have exhausted my ability to transcend the existing constraints.

10. Recommend Dept pass this to AmEmbassies in Peking, Tokyo, ASEAN posts and Moscow.

**Abramowitz**

---

## **71. Report Prepared in the Office of the First Lady<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, undated

### **REPORT OF MRS. ROSALYNN CARTER ON CAMBODIAN RELIEF**

November 8–10, 1979

I visited Thailand November 8–10 to express the concern of all Americans over the tragedy unfolding in Cambodia, to pay tribute to the Thai government for the actions it has taken to alleviate the plight of Indochinese refugees, and to consider what additional steps the United States and other nations might take to provide food and medical

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 42, Kampuchea, 11–12/79. No classification marking.

care to those who have fled Cambodia as well as those who remain there.<sup>2</sup>

At the refugee camps in Thailand, I witnessed incredible starvation, disease, dislocation and suffering. At the Sakeo Holding Center for Cambodians I saw many children separated from their parents, afflicted with malaria and malnutrition. In the Lao Refugee Camp at Ubon, conditions were substantially better, yet many of the camp's inhabitants have waited three or four years for approval to resettle abroad. They wait, hoping not to be forgotten by the world. At the Refugee Transit Center in Bangkok, I observed overcrowded and humiliating conditions which refugees awaiting final processing for emigration must endure. These were emotionally wrenching scenes, and I shall never forget them.

As bleak as these conditions were, however, they pale in horror by comparison to those which must be experienced by those still living in Cambodia. In particular, I was informed that nearly a quarter of a million people gathered near Sisophon close to the Thai border face the most desperate situation. Intensified fighting—anticipated in the coming weeks—will probably send them into Thailand where they may overwhelm existing capabilities to provide relief.

The plight of the children is particularly distressing. Indeed, a generation of Cambodian children is in danger of being lost. We saw few children under five at Sakeo, and there were virtually no toddlers. I held one infant who had survived despite malnourishment because aid was available. We must not allow others to die because our assistance was either too little or too late.

The Thai government is dealing with the massive influx of refugees with compassion. They have opened their borders to fleeing Lao and Cambodians as well as Vietnamese boat people. And they are now establishing holding centers to handle these displaced people away from the border areas where fighting threatens.

These decisions pose risks and pressures for the government of Prime Minister Kriangsak. Failure by the international community to provide visible and demonstrable political, economic, and security support to the Thais could undercut their current humanitarian approach. We must give Thailand our support and understanding.

The relief efforts of international agencies and voluntary groups in Bangkok is impressive. They have performed heroic services under the most trying circumstances. Yet I return with the conviction that coordination of such efforts in Thailand *must* be improved to assure maximum use of limited financial and human resources.

---

<sup>2</sup> For Carter's November 11 meeting with Kriangsak, see Document 180.

The most urgent issue is to get more food and medical supplies into Cambodia and to see that they are more widely distributed. UN Agency representatives have stated that the authorities in Phnom Penh may be willing to increase the amount of international relief reaching Cambodia. The Phnom Penh authorities have said they will permit delivery of food and medicines up the Mekong River, as well as expanded air and sea deliveries. These are vitally important. However, implementation is bogged down by political bottlenecks, and proposals for essential land deliveries into Cambodia from Thailand remain stymied.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

With these circumstances in mind, I believe the United States must act urgently to stimulate and contribute to expanded international efforts to relieve the suffering of refugees in Thailand and to find additional ways of delivering food and medicine to people in Cambodia. To this end we should consider the following actions:

1) The United States is fully committed to the principle that food should reach all the people of Cambodia. Right now, the overwhelming problem facing the relief effort is how to deliver food to the people who remain in Cambodia. During my visit, I discussed the problem of approval by the authorities in Phnom Penh with Congresswoman Holtzman's delegation before their departure for Cambodia. I raised the issue of land deliveries with Prime Minister Kriangsak who affirmed his approval of the delivery of food from Thailand with the approval of the appropriate authorities. The continued delivery of food to the Thai-Cambodian border area is essential. Finally, the relief effort based in Phnom Penh should be commensurate with the task at hand. The international agency presence there—currently thirteen people—is clearly inadequate.

2) While commodities and services are essential, so is cash. We must disburse available funds immediately to permit the procurement of goods and services urgently needed in Cambodia and in the Thai holding centers. We should immediately provide \$2 *million* from our refugee funds to cover the U.S. share of World Food Program requirements through the end of 1979, and we must tap the generosity of the American people to supplement through private charity those programs to which we are contributing government funds. In this connection, the United States Commission on the International Year of the Child has already launched an appeal for Americans to give a special offering this Thanksgiving to "Children Without." High on the priority is the refugee child. Contributions are to be donated to the charity of one's choice with a list of relief organizations available. We must help to save the children of Cambodia by urging all Americans to participate in this fund-raising effort.



3) To meet urgent requirements in Thailand we should initiate immediately an airlift to provide, in full cooperation with pertinent international agencies, vegetable oils and special foods needed for infants and small children, mobile equipment to provide water to refugee holding camps, and communications equipment to improve coordination between the refugee camps and support agencies in Bangkok. Subject to the concurrence of authorities in Phnom Penh, we should also be prepared to transport by air such equipment as fork lifts and cranes to facilitate handling and distribution of food and medical supplies arriving at the seaport of Kompong Son and the river port at Phnom Penh.

4) We need to work with the international relief agencies and voluntary groups in Thailand to develop integrated contingency plans for coping with a massive influx of additional Cambodian refugees across the Thai border during the weeks immediately ahead. The identification of sites for additional holding centers should be expedited, construction materials for hospitals identified and earmarked, and plans initiated for providing food, water and medical services.

5) In the light of additional heavy burdens anticipated by the Thai, we should earmark more of the monthly refugee entry allocations to Thailand during the next quarter. This would help offset large numbers of new arrivals from Cambodia and offer more equitable resettlement possibilities in other camps such as Ubon. Thailand's need is so great that it demands special attention and support.

6) We must also urge the UNHCR to construct new facilities for refugees transiting Bangkok. For our part we must accelerate the paperwork involved in processing requests for resettlement abroad.

7) We must increase the numbers of American volunteers participating in the relief effort. I was proud of the contributions being made by Americans. More can be done. The UNHCR in particular needs assistance, and I believe the Peace Corps should be asked to make volunteers available to the UNHCR at once.

8) Because malnutrition complicates and intensifies other disease problems, all efforts should be made to provide adequate food supplies to the populations of the refugee camps, in the border areas and in Cambodia. And for purposes of extending medical services to these people, the Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service should work with the voluntary health organizations to assure that a national clearing house and response capacity for the refugee health volunteer effort is established.

9) In view of the desperate situation in Western Cambodia, some of the representatives of voluntary agencies with whom I spoke in Bangkok proposed initiating unilateral early truck deliveries from Thailand. While there are practical difficulties and risks associated with



this proposal, I believe that it should be given serious consideration as a last resort measure.

10) We must renew our efforts to increase the contributions of other countries as we increase ours. When I stopped in Japan, for example, I discussed this matter with the new Foreign Minister<sup>3</sup> by telephone and with the Japanese press.

11) We must swiftly appoint a new Coordinator for Refugee Affairs<sup>4</sup> who can relate larger U.S. contributions—including initiatives stemming from my mission—to a broader international relief and refugee resettlement effort.

---

<sup>3</sup> Saburo Okita assumed office November 8.

<sup>4</sup> Richard C. Clark resigned as Coordinator for Refugee Affairs in early November. Victor Palmieri was appointed Coordinator in late December. Matthew Nimetz served as Acting Coordinator during the interim.

---

## **72. Telegram From the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Posts<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 17, 1979, 0114Z

298308. Subject: Meeting With Soviet Ambassador on Humanitarian Relief to Kampuchea.

1. (S–Entire text).

2. In his capacity as Acting Coordinator for Refugee Affairs, Counselor Matthew Nimetz called in Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin on November 15, to present a demarche on US efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to Kampuchea. The meeting was attended by EA DAS Oakley, Director for Refugee Programs John Baker and Deputy Refugee Coordinator George Barbis.

3. Nimetz began by informing Dobrynin that in his activities as Acting Coordinator for Refugee Affairs, he had encountered many questions from US officials about Soviet assistance to Kampuchea and about the effect of the current crisis on US-Soviet relations. He was, therefore, interested in informing Dobrynin of the US view of the

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Molander, Box 80, Refugees (Indochinese), 11–12/79. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Sent to Moscow, Bangkok, Beijing, USUN, and the Mission in Geneva.

current situation and of learning about Soviet relief to Kampuchea. He also wanted to assure the Soviet Government that in providing aid to the people of Kampuchea, our interests were motivated by humanitarian, and not political, concerns.

4. In describing the situation in Kampuchea and the steps needed to facilitate the international relief effort, Nimetz made the following points:

—Two–three million Khmer out of the estimated 7–8 million total population probably have perished in the period since 1975.

—Thousands of old people and a whole generation of children under five years of age may have died from disease and starvation.

—35,000 Khmer have fled the famine and fighting and are now at the Sa Keo holding center just inside Thailand; 10,000 more reportedly entered Thailand November 13; and 300,000 others are poised along the border.

—This influx has imposed an enormous burden on Thailand, which has generously agreed to accept them all on a temporary basis.

—There are great dangers presented by the continued fighting along the border. This affected the lives of hundreds of thousands, as well as the security of Thailand.

—The situation inside Kampuchea is equally disturbing. Although the international relief agencies, working through the Phnom Penh authorities, have gradually begun to get some food and medicine into the country, the size of this effort to date is wholly inadequate to the requirements of the situation. Phnom Penh authorities themselves have estimated that 27,500 tons of food per month will be needed during the next six months. Despite recently increased daily flights into Phnom Penh and shipments through Kompong Som port, the target of 1,000 tons per day is not yet in sight.

5. Describing the current problems being encountered by the international relief effort, Nimetz said that problems of logistics, access and personnel will have to be resolved if the relief effort is to be successful. He pointed out that:

—The Phnom Penh authorities continue to impose an unrealistic ceiling of 11 ICRC/UNICEF people to manage the whole international relief program inside Kampuchea.

—To date, food distribution has been confined to the Phnom Penh area. Only this week have two truck convoys been permitted to go beyond a 100 kilometer radius of the city. Most of the country has yet to receive any of the food.

—We are pleased to learn that the Phnom Penh authorities have now agreed to permit food shipments up the Mekong. But unloading facilities and manpower at the Phnom Penh port, as well as at Kompong Som and the Phnom Penh airport, are inadequate.

—Only one airport is now being used to bring supplies, and Phnom Penh authorities continue to reject probably the most effective way of bringing food in large quantities, i.e., over the road from Thailand.

6. Turning to the Soviet role, Nimetz said we knew that the Soviet Government had some influence in the area and that it was also interested in assuring the survival of the Khmer people. He urged the Soviet Government to exert its influence to encourage the authorities in the region to:

—Permit food to be brought in by road from both Thailand and Vietnam;

—Permit relief flights to land at airports other than Phnom Penh;

—Permit direct flights from points outside of Kampuchea to airports inside the country;

—Permit more truck convoys from Phnom Penh to other parts of the country; and

—Permit more ICRC/UNICEF people in the country.

7. In response, Dobrynin said he would of course immediately report Mr. Nimetz' views to his government. However, speaking informally, he wanted to inform the group about recent Soviet discussions with the "Kampuchean Government" and about its views of US proposals for increasing the relief effort. He said the Soviet Government had spoken to the Kampucheans, not to pressure them, but to encourage Phnom Penh to accept humanitarian aid. As for the Soviet Government, he said it had few representatives in Kampuchea (none outside Phnom Penh) and therefore did not have first hand information about conditions within the country.

8. Outlining what he said was the Kampuchean response Dobrynin said Phnom Penh:

—Placed the blame for the current situation on the past actions of the United States and China;

—Was willing to accept aid from any source, including the United States, and had opened ports and airports for that purpose; but,

—Categorically rejected the idea of establishing an overland supply route from Thailand, largely because it was suggested by the United States.

9. Dobrynin said the Soviets had raised the issue of the overland route with the Kampucheans "several days ago". In reply, the Kampucheans said they opposed the route because it ran through areas where the Pol Pot forces are still fighting. They also were deeply suspicious of the idea because of fears that it was part of a US effort to aid Pol Pot and thereby prolong the war. The Kampucheans reported that the Pol Pot forces were herding people toward the Thai border where they created separate camps full of pitiful women and children to show

foreigners while keeping well-fed able bodied men in other camps out of sight.

10. Turning to the Soviet relief effort, Dobrynin said that socialist countries which had sent some 200,000 tons of aid, mostly by ship, were also perplexed by Phnom Penh's refusal to open its ports at an earlier date. However, Dobrynin said the Kampucheans want to be masters of their fate and do not want Americans or anyone else telling them what to do. In this regard, Dobrynin said, we should know that the relationship between Moscow and Hanoi/Phnom Penh was not one of master and servant and that the local authorities had their own ideas about how things should be done.

11. In the discussion that followed, Nimetz began by assuring Dobrynin that the "land bridge" concept was not an American idea, but one worked out in consultation with the international relief organizations. He said there was no question of organizing American convoys and putting in US personnel. Our approach remained one of channeling our contributions through the UN and of urging the utilization of all routes into Kampuchea not just the road from the Thai border.

12. Deputy Refugee Coordinator Barbis then informed Dobrynin that the international organizations had raised their estimates of the amount of assistance needed from 30,000 a month to 34,500 tons a month. This, he said, increased the necessity of using more than present means available to get aid into Kampuchea. Director Baker then asked what means the Soviets were using to distribute their relief supplies within Kampuchea?

13. Dobrynin replied that aid from the socialist countries was being distributed by the Kampucheans utilizing their own means. These included using men and animals to carry aid into the interior. Dobrynin said Soviet supplies were delivered to Phnom Penh where they were turned over to the local authorities. Dobrynin then turned aside questions about Soviet efforts to improve the port of Kompong Som by saying he did not have detailed information on Soviet aid projects to improve the country's infrastructure. He did, however, appear to accept a request to provide information on the amount and type of assistance the Soviet Union planned to supply for the harbor.

14. Returning to the situation in Kampuchea, DAS Oakley said we were concerned by the fact that the Vietnamese and Heng Samrin force were using food as a weapon in their fight against Pol Pot. He said we had urged the Thais to keep combatants out of the refugee camps and to move the non-combatants away from the border. He noted that an agreement by Phnom Penh to open airports around the country, particularly in western Kampuchea, would greatly aid the work of bringing in relief supplies, even if the land route from Thailand could not be opened.

15. Dobrynin responded that in a perfect world it would be possible to do many things but reality was not so simple. He said the Soviet people had their own tragic experience with war and famine and understood suffering. Although the Kampuchean and Vietnamese were Marxists, they had their own brand of Oriental Communism and would do things in their own way. Speaking forcefully, he said, we would have to accept the fact that there was a war going on, and that the Vietnamese/Phnom Penh forces would do nothing to strengthen the remnants of the Pol Pot forces, even if this meant suffering and death for thousands.

Vance

---

**73. Telegram From the Embassy in China to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Beijing, November 23, 1979, 0936Z

8475. Subject: Dilemma Posed by Kampuchea. Ref: A) State 269925, B) State 292057, C) 293370, D) State 295111, E) Manila 21721, F) State 298371.<sup>2</sup>

1. (S—Entire text).

2. We have been both enlightened and discouraged by the recent go-around of cables on this subject, including the report of the recent ASEAN COM meeting in Manila (Ref E). Our main conclusion, reluctantly arrived at, is that we lack a coherent policy<sup>3</sup> for dealing with

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 42, Kampuchea, 11–12/79. Secret; Priority; Exdis. Sent for information to Bangkok for Abramowitz and Woodcock, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Singapore, Tokyo, and Hong Kong. Woodcock visited Bangkok November 27–29. Carter wrote in the upper right-hand corner of the first page: “Zbig—Send cc Cy, Fritz. J.”

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 269925 has not been found. Telegram 292057 to Bangkok, November 9, and telegram 293370 to Bangkok, November 10, discussed the review of U.S. policy toward Kampuchea and Indochina initiated by Abramowitz in telegram 45547 from Bangkok (see Document 70). (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790516–0237 and D790518–0050) Telegram 295111 to various posts, November 13, which repeated the text of telegram 16148 from Kuala Lumpur, and telegram 298371 to various posts, November 17, which repeated the text of telegram 46865 from Bangkok, also discussed the policy review. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, N790008–0687 and D790529–0180) Telegram 21721 from Manila, November 14, reported on the ASEAN Chiefs of Mission meeting in Manila. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790528–0127)

<sup>3</sup> Carter underlined “we lack a coherent policy.”

the issues we are confronted with in Indochina. In large measure this is because we lack the means to achieve our stated policy goals; and yet, because of the unattractiveness of realistically obtainable objectives, we seem unprepared to define our goals in terms of our capabilities.

3. Above all, we seem to lack any consensus on the nature of our interests in Kampuchea, and by extension in Indochina as a whole. Not surprisingly, therefore, we have difficulty agreeing on our objectives in that region. Vice President Mondale told Deng Xiaoping in August that we and China share the same objectives in Indochina,<sup>4</sup> i.e., to create an independent Kampuchea that is not threatening to its neighbors, to prevent Laos from falling further under Vietnam and Soviet sway, to protect Thailand and other ASEAN states and to show Vietnam that its increasing dependence upon Moscow will hurt badly over time and should be abandoned.<sup>5</sup>

4. Unfortunately, with the possible exception of protecting Thailand and other ASEAN states we lack the means to accomplish these goals. Moreover, the COM meeting in Manila reached the very different conclusion that we must avoid appearing as traveling the same path as Beijing.<sup>6</sup> We can hardly expect a coherent policy to emerge if on the one hand we are assuring China we share common objectives in Indochina while on the other hand we contemplate embarking on an effort to persuade the Vietnamese that we and ASEAN do not share Chinese objectives.

5. The hard reality is that the only immediate objective we seem to have any hope of realizing is that of providing more food to the starving Kampuchean people. Even in this worthwhile effort, our actions involve political consequences which may or may not accord with our policy preferences. In other respects, we sense considerable policy confusion. We speak of "legitimate SRV interests in Kampuchea and Laos" but have not defined what these are. There is no consensus on the degree of SRV influence in these areas that we can accept, or apparently even on whether Hanoi's brutal means have destroyed any claim to legitimacy for its ends.<sup>7</sup> We talk of pressing Hanoi to accept a political solution when the reality is that Hanoi will either impose a

---

<sup>4</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vol. XIII, China, Document 265.

<sup>5</sup> Carter wrote in the right-hand margin adjacent to this paragraph, "These are still our goals + humanitarian efforts."

<sup>6</sup> Carter underlined two phrases in this sentence, "COM meeting in Manila" and "we must avoid." Additionally, he wrote in the right-hand margin, "I do not agree with this conclusion," and drew an arrow from his note to the highlighted sentence.

<sup>7</sup> Carter highlighted this sentence. In the right-hand margin adjacent to it, he wrote, "SRV interests in Laos & Kam[puchea] should be kept at a minimum."

political solution of its own or will fail because of scoundrels like Pol Pot, whom we have written out of our policy.

6. The above is not meant to suggest that we are more clear sighted than our colleagues. It is merely meant to highlight the danger of letting the unattractiveness of the available options lead us into well meaning but misguided policy paths that ignore the fundamental incompatibilities between Vietnamese and Chinese goals at this time, nor does it appear likely that we will see policy shifts in either Beijing or Hanoi in the immediate future that would pave the way for the emergence of a *modus vivendi* in the area. Accordingly, we agree that there are no quick-fixes on the horizon.

7. What we find missing from the recent round of exchanges is any recognition that even if our interests and objectives are not identical with those of Beijing, in most respects our goals in Indochina, and indeed in Southeast Asia as a whole, are much more compatible with those of China under its present leadership than with those of Vietnam.<sup>8</sup> While Beijing has demonstrated its willingness to use force, it is not bent on the destruction of the Hanoi regime or on the imposition of Chinese puppet governments in the region. In contrast, Vietnam seems bent on establishing domination in both Laos and Kampuchea to a degree that can only be accomplished through forceful occupation of these countries. While serious Chinese errors, such as its last ditch and ultimately ineffective support for an intolerably brutal and anti-Vietnamese Pol Pot regime helped launch Hanoi on this course, this should not obscure the fact that it is Vietnam's current efforts to dominate Indochina that are at the root of current instabilities in the area rather than specific Chinese actions (although these are contributing factors).

8. We would also strongly endorse the point made by Roger Sullivan<sup>9</sup> that whereas our interests vis-a-vis Vietnam are basically regional in character, our relationship with China is of much broader significance. This does not mean, of course, that our policies and those of China overlap in every respect. On the contrary, in Indochina they diverge in two important respects: First, our own differences with Vietnam are less severe than those of China, and secondly, China's security interests in the area are greater than our own. In short, we can tolerate what Beijing cannot tolerate. However, recognition of these

---

<sup>8</sup> Carter underlined the following passages in this sentence, "in most respects our goals," "are much more compatible with those of China," and "with those of." In the right-hand margin adjacent to the sentence, Carter wrote, "True. Pol Pot's being so obnoxious is a major obstacle."

<sup>9</sup> Telegram 293370 to Bangkok, November 10, transmitted Sullivan's analysis (see footnote 2 above).



differences, and awareness of Southeast Asian reservations about China, should not distort our perceptions of Chinese goals in the area, which were nicely summed up in Ref E's summary of the COM meeting.

9. In general, we do not believe that a new and more stable balance of power can be arrived at in the Indochina regime as long as China's and Vietnam's goals remain as incompatible as they are. Thus, we agree with Bob Miller<sup>10</sup> that in our approach to Kampuchea it is the stability and integrity of Thailand that should be our primary concern. But we come to a somewhat different conclusion since we doubt that any political solution in Kampuchea that would be acceptable to Hanoi under present circumstances would be compatible with preserving the security and stability of Thailand or be tolerable to the Chinese. Secondly, we agree with Roger Sullivan's basic point that we should not lightly consider splitting with China over policy toward an area as crucial to China as is Southeast Asia.

10. We do not have a solution to offer to these dilemmas. Perhaps we should borrow a card from the Japanese, curb our activist impulses, stop trying to promote political solutions whose time has not yet come, and limit ourselves to the more modest effort of trying to define with greater clarity the basic tenets of our policy, which as a minimum should include support for Thailand, humanitarian aid to the Kampuchean people, and refusal to consider any political steps vis-a-vis Phnom Penh or Hanoi as long as SRV troops occupy Kampuchea.<sup>11</sup> From our particular perspective here, this hardly seems the time to undertake efforts to convince the Vietnamese of our good intentions.

11. Perhaps the first steps toward a more coherent policy would be to start asking the questions differently. It is not really a question of whether we are prepared to accept SRV domination in Kampuchea and Laos but rather whether China and Thailand are. In essence, our disturbing conclusion is the same as that of Mort Abramowitz,<sup>12</sup> i.e., that we have little hope of accomplishing what we want in Indochina in the short run. (At the same time, neither can our adversaries achieve their goals). The best we may be able to do under the circumstances is to try to keep our policy realistically grounded on our capabilities and to avoid the self-delusion that could result from defining our goals in terms well beyond our reach.

**Woodcock**

---

<sup>10</sup> Telegram 295111 to various posts, November 13, contains Miller's analysis (see footnote 2 above).

<sup>11</sup> Carter placed a closed bracket in the right-hand margin around the portion of this sentence beginning with "limit ourselves to the more modest effort," and wrote, "Sounds good."

<sup>12</sup> Telegram 298371 to various posts, November 17, contains Abramowitz's conclusion (see footnote 2 above).



**74. Article in the National Intelligence Daily<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 3, 1979

*KAMPUCHEA: Harsh Vietnamese Policies*

*The Vietnamese appear to be pursuing policies designed to starve or drive out Kampucheans living in areas controlled by the Heng Samrin puppet government. [portion marking not declassified]*

Refugees recently arriving in Thailand report that the Vietnamese have been mining rice paddies, forbidding access to fields, and killing Kampucheans attempting to gather ripening rice. Vietnamese forces apparently have also been taking food out of the country and confiscating relief supplies for their own use. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The distribution of international relief stocks to Kampucheans is being limited, and Red Cross and UN officials say that large quantities of undistributed food are piling up in Phnom Penh. Other obstacles that the Vietnamese have placed in the way of relief efforts include refusing to permit trucking of supplies from Thailand, limiting air access, restricting the number of international relief personnel in Kampuchea, and curtailing movement of relief officials already in the country. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Some 400,000 to 500,000 refugees have fled to the Thai border area in recent months—the highest total ever. Refugees once came primarily from western Kampuchea, but many are now fleeing Heng Samrin-controlled areas in the central and eastern provinces. The refugees report that the same deteriorating food and health conditions exist in those provinces as in the areas controlled by Pol Pot's forces in the west. There are also reports that ethnic Chinese are being segregated and forced out of the country. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Expulsion of large numbers of Kampucheans will facilitate Vietnamese efforts to gain total control of Kampuchea and to establish a long-term presence. The presence of Vietnamese agricultural brigades, instructions to Vietnamese military cadre that they would be in Kampuchea for 10 to 15 years, and pervasive Vietnamese control over governmental functions in occupied areas are further indications of Hanoi's intent. *[portion marking not declassified]*

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of the Director of Central Intelligence, Job 81B00401R: Subject Files of the Presidential Briefing Coordinator for [the] Director of Central Intelligence, Box 14, Folder 7. Top Secret; *[handling restriction not declassified]*.

## 75. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 10, 1979, 10–11 a.m.

### SUBJECT

Thailand-Cambodia Situation

### PARTICIPANTS

Vice President Mondale

*State*

Warren Christopher

Richard Holbrooke

Victor Palmieri

*OSD*

W. Graham Clayton, Jr.

Michael Armacost

*JCS*

Lt. Gen. John Pustay

*DCI*

Frank Carlucci

Amb. John Holdridge

*OMB*

John White

*White House*

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski

David Aaron

*NSC*

Nicholas Platt

Maj. Gen. Jasper Welch

Don Gregg

### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

The SCC met on December 10, 1979 to discuss U.S. policy in the light of possible Thai-Vietnamese hostilities on the Cambodian border. (C)

The meeting reached the following conclusions:

—A Vietnamese clash with Thai military units is quite likely in the coming weeks, given Hanoi's determination to end resistance in Cambodia, the movement of Khmer resistance forces to seek food and sanctuary across the Thai border, and Thai assistance to those forces both in Thailand and Cambodia. (S)

—If a clash occurs, Prime Minister Kriangsak, whose political situation is threatened, will turn to the U.S. and China. (S)

—The U.S. is committed under the Manila Pact and the Rusk-Thanat Agreement<sup>2</sup> to meet the danger to Thailand in accordance with our constitutional procedures. (S)

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, 1977–1980, Box 106, SCC 223, Thailand-Cambodia, 12/10/79. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. Carter signed his initial "C" in the upper right-hand corner of the first page of the summary.

<sup>2</sup> The Rusk-Thanat joint statement, signed March 6, 1962, pledged U.S. support for Thailand's defense. See Department of State *Bulletin*, March 26, 1962, pp. 498–499.

—Deterrence of Vietnam and particularly the Soviet Union may depend more on the prospect of a second Chinese attack on Vietnam than the prospect of U.S. involvement under the Manila Pact. The U.S. might need to explore ways of signaling to the Soviets how closely identified our security interests are with the Chinese. (S)

—The more food getting into Cambodia the less the danger of mass influxes of refugees pouring into Thailand and causing further instability. The U.S. is having relatively little success getting supplies directly into Cambodia; is moving considerable amounts of food through Thailand to Cambodia; and has helped Thailand prepare for a mass influx of refugees. More must be done to get food to the Cambodians through all routes, and to dramatize and publicize both those efforts and Vietnamese/Cambodian poor performance in distributing food. A unilateral U.S. air drop of food into Cambodia remains an option if other measures fail, and the Thai approve the operation staged from their soil. (S)

—The U.S. should seek ways to enhance the safety of the large and growing concentrations of refugees straddling the Thai-Cambodian border, if possible through unilateral declarations by members of the international community that these camps are safehavens, and through the establishment of international presences in the camps. (S)

—The following papers were requested for transmittal to the President:

- A study of the ways of enhancing the safehaven status of refugee camps on the Thai-Cambodian border by unilateral international action.<sup>3</sup> (S)

- A report on the capacity of current programs and arrangements to supply food to Cambodia.<sup>4</sup> (S)

- A plan for significant increases in food supplies to Cambodia via Thailand and ways of dramatizing these increases.<sup>5</sup> (S)

- A Presidential message to Brezhnev on Thai security.<sup>6</sup> (S)

- A study of ways the U.S. can respond to requests for assistance from Thailand.<sup>7</sup> (S)

---

<sup>3</sup> An undated paper entitled "Safehavens" is in Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, 1977–1980, Box 107, SCC 236, Thailand/Cambodia, 12/22/79.

<sup>4</sup> Not found.

<sup>5</sup> An undated paper entitled "Increasing International Food Supplies to Kampuchea" is in Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, Meeting File, Box 18, SCC Meeting #236 Held 12/22/1979, 12/79.

<sup>6</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Document 238.

<sup>7</sup> Not found.

—A small interagency working group will be formed under General Welch and Donald Gregg to monitor intelligence, coordinate military-related options, and develop policy guidance for use in contingencies. (S)

—The SCC agreed to meet again in a week.<sup>8</sup> (C)

---

<sup>8</sup> The SCC meeting originally scheduled for December 18 was rescheduled for December 22. See Document 78.

---

**76. Memorandum From Director of Central Intelligence Turner to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 11, 1979

SUBJECT

Vietnamese Starvation Policy in Kampuchea

Reference is made to your memorandum, dated December 3, 1979,<sup>2</sup> concerning the above subject. Following receipt of the President's directive we tasked all Stations (50) with media assets or potential media assets to urgently publicize the Vietnamese starvation tactics in Kampuchea. As of 7 December 1979, three Stations in East Asia, [*less than 1 line not declassified*] had surfaced approximately twenty-four stories and editorials on this subject in both the vernacular and English language press. Most of these placements have taken place during the past six weeks. [*less than 1 line not declassified*] was able to get an international conference of over 10,000 delegates to adopt a resolution calling for humanitarian support and help to sufferers in Indochina. An African Station, [*less than 1 line not declassified*], was also able to place an editorial on death and starvation in Kampuchea. We are also awaiting the placement of a story in a prestigious [*less than 1 line not declassified*] newspaper based on a fact sheet sent out some weeks ago which highlights the

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, CADRE C01434041. Secret. Denend and Rubenstein initialed the top right-hand corner of the memorandum.

<sup>2</sup> Brzezinski's December 3 memorandum to Turner is in the Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 6, Cambodia, 1979.

Vietnamese starvation policy and war of genocide in Kampuchea, as well as the magnitude of Soviet aid to Vietnam. Additionally, [less than 1 line not declassified] has obtained some good film footage of Vietnamese atrocities in Kampuchea which will be shown on [less than 1 line not declassified] TV within the next two weeks. To further facilitate and exploit new information as it becomes available from refugees and Vietnamese ralliers in Thailand, we plan to have the [less than 1 line not declassified] advise all Stations worldwide with media assets of all new news stories placed on the Vietnamese starvation tactics in Kampuchea for possible replay or use by appropriate assets.

Stansfield Turner<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Turner signed “Stan Turner” above his typed signature.

---

**77. Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>**

PA M 79–10600C

Washington, December 20, 1979

*Sihanouk: Prospects for a Return*

[2 paragraphs (18 lines) not declassified]

*The Prince's Position*

[1 line not declassified] certain themes are consistently reiterated by the prince. These include:

—*Political Solution.* Sihanouk expects an ultimately political, rather than a military resolution of the situation in Kampuchea.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 82T00267R: Production Case Files, Box 2, Folder 62: Sihanouk: Prospects For A Return. Secret; [handling restriction not declassified]. A note on the first page indicates the memorandum, “based on information as of 20 December 1979, was prepared by [name not declassified], East Asia and Pacific Division, Office of Political Analysis, for Donald Gregg of the National Security Council. It was coordinated with the Directorate of Operations and the National Intelligence Officer for China and East Asia/Pacific.”

—*International Conference*. An international conference leading to a political solution would ideally suit the prince; he has long urged a Geneva convention to guarantee Kampuchean neutrality.

—*Continued Resistance*. Sihanouk maintains that continued military resistance is needed to prevent the consolidation of Vietnamese control over Kampuchea and eventually to force all parties to the conference table.

—*Pol Pot, Enemy No. 1*. Sihanouk has steadfastly refused to cooperate with the forces of Democratic Kampuchea since his escape from their captivity.

—[1 paragraph (3 lines) not declassified] [portion marking not declassified]

#### *Recent Activities*

Late in September, Sihanouk announced the formation of a “Confederation of Khmer Nationalists” at a meeting in Pyongyang, North Korea. His supporters came from the Paris-based General Association of Khmers Abroad, an umbrella organization for non-Communist Kampuchean exile groups. Former Lon Nol officials In Tam and Cheng Heng figured prominently among Sihanouk’s subordinates in the new confederation. Despite vague allusions to military forces, there is no evidence Sihanouk’s group is physically represented in Kampuchea, and Thai opposition to Sihanouk will hamper his ability to establish a viable presence there. [portion marking not declassified]

Sihanouk earlier rejected a leadership position in a Chinese-sponsored front group that was essentially Pol Pot’s Democratic Kampuchean regime under another name. [5 lines not declassified] [portion marking not declassified]

#### *Current Plans*

At the moment, Sihanouk is in France on a world tour scheduled to include the United States. He says he hopes to organize support among exiles for a government and army to be established “in the Kampuchean jungle.” [1 line not declassified] the prince plans to travel extensively publicizing his position. [3½ lines not declassified] [portion marking not declassified]

The prince has been very successful in keeping himself in the public eye. He has sent several well-publicized letters to the Vietnamese proposing troop withdrawal and self-determination [7 lines not declassified] [portion marking not declassified]

#### *Existing Resistance—Friends or Foes?*

Disparate resistance groups operating along the Thailand-Kampuchea border comprise a “third force” alternative to the Pol Pot and Heng Samrin regimes. Elements of this force could be the raw material

for Sihanouk's army, as Sihanouk believes will be the case. Lacking overall unity or leadership, the many movements comprising the third force are loosely linked in a tangle of personal relationships. Although their search for international patronage so far has had only limited success, third force elements will become more important as the chances for Pol Pot's survival are reduced. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Third force resistance is based on ethnic war against the Vietnamese. Some third force leaders are apparently professional revolutionaries; others are merely bandits or black marketeers; many are former Lon Nol officials. All are opportunists hoping to attract indigenous followers and international recognition. Although all of the groups are avowedly anti-Communist, a promise of support or collaboration could induce them to cooperate with ideologically-opposed forces. Most would readily accept Chinese aid if offered, and some seem to be receiving it already. [*2 lines not declassified*] The present level of third force military initiative appears fairly low as the various leaders adopt a wait-and-see attitude while continuing to proselytize. Vietnamese troops, however, appear to be increasingly seeking out and engaging third force elements. [*portion marking not declassified*]

*Khmer Serei.* Independently led anti-Communist groups known collectively as Khmer Serei (Free Khmer) have long been an irritant to various Kampuchean governments. Each Khmer Serei group appears to function with near autonomy among other self-proclaimed liberation movements. Khmer Serei obtain supplies at thriving markets just across the Thai border. Compared to the Pol Pot forces, the Khmer Serei living standard is reputedly higher, their fighting ability lower. [*portion marking not declassified*]

[*1 paragraph (7 lines) not declassified*]

*Son Sann.* The Khmer Serika (Khmer Liberation Movement) currently seems the most significant and cohesive among organizations comprising the third force. Its leader, the 68-year-old Son Sann, who was prime minister under Sihanouk, and is also president of the General Association of Khmers Abroad, on 9 October declared the creation of the Khmer People's National Liberation Front. Dien Del, a former Lon Nol general, is military chief. Although increasing clashes have occurred lately between its forces and the Vietnamese, the movement's leaders have adopted a strategy of lying low, avoiding contact, and building a political infrastructure. The movement is predicated on the assumption that Khmer nationalism and hatred of the Vietnamese will eventually compel the invaders to withdraw. [*less than 1 line not declassified*] Son Sann and Sihanouk are in contact via the General Association of Khmers Abroad, [*2½ lines not declassified*] [*portion marking not declassified*]

Son Sann is a favorite of the Thai, who have vigorously promoted his cause. [*8 lines not declassified*] [*portion marking not declassified*]

*Pol Pot, "Enemy No. 1"*

Sihanouk's bete noir, Pol Pot, is still the most important guerrilla leader operating in Kampuchea today. Pol Pot maintains a communications network with Democratic Kampuchean forces around the country. These forces, though hard pressed, continue to harass Vietnamese and Heng Samrin troops in many areas. Guerrilla resistance, probably augmented by the activities of spontaneous bands of anti-Vietnamese sympathizers, makes few areas in Kampuchea safe for Phnom Penh troops. Heng Samrin and Vietnamese forces controlling major towns and roads are vulnerable to ambush; their grip on the countryside is even more tenuous. [portion marking not declassified]

[2 paragraphs (17½ lines) not declassified]

*China's Game*

China's fondest hopes seem predicated on the integration of Pol Pot forces and other resistance groups into a unified front. One Chinese scenario proposed close military and political cooperation between Pol Pot and Son Sann forces, with Sihanouk a prominent member of the coalition. [portion marking not declassified]

Beijing tried to foster such a united front with the proclamation by Pol Pot representatives in Beijing on 6 September of the Patriotic and Democratic Front of Great National Unity. Sihanouk, however, turned down offers of the presidency of both the front and the Presidium of Democratic Kampuchea, and the new front failed to become a rallying point for resistance. [4 lines not declassified] [portion marking not declassified]

Sihanouk claims that when Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge disappear, he will be able to elicit Chinese support on his own terms. The often antagonistic attitude of the prince toward his potential supporters in Beijing creates a highly ambivalent atmosphere, but the Chinese are keeping their option of support for Sihanouk. [3½ lines not declassified] [portion marking not declassified]

*Prospects*

If the contending parties in Kampuchea decide that a political solution is the only way out of the conflict, Sihanouk would indeed be a major factor, especially as international opinion strongly favors him. This situation would arise only if the Vietnamese decide military victory is not feasible and the price of continued occupation too high. [portion marking not declassified]

If resistance persists at a level sufficient to contest control of the country and effectively block recognition of the People's Republic of Kampuchea by the world community, the Vietnamese could decide that a political compromise involving Sihanouk is acceptable. They



might even unilaterally place the prince in power in a rearguard action as they withdraw. This scenario, however, is most unlikely. [*portion marking not declassified*]

At present, the Vietnamese apparently are prepared to stay in Kampuchea despite any foreseeable costs. In the face of Khmer hatred, they are willing to maintain an army of occupation and a policy of depopulation, and possibly to institute Vietnamese colonization of rich Kampuchean ricelands. Although resistance may continue, the Vietnamese will doubtless strive to contain and control it, while waiting patiently for international recognition of their puppet government. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Sihanouk also appears willing to wait. He has shown the wisdom to back off unless chances of success are good. If a very special constellation of factors were to converge, the prince's star could rise again. It is more likely, however, that he will remain "the former head of state." [*portion marking not declassified*]

---

## **78. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 22, 1979, 9:45–11:15 a.m.

### **PARTICIPANTS**

*Office of the Vice President*  
Denis Clift

*State*  
Cyrus Vance  
Richard Holbrooke

*OSD*  
W. Graham Claytor, Jr.  
Michael Armacost

*CIA*  
Admiral Stansfield Turner  
Ambassador John Holdridge  
[*name not declassified*]

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330–82–0270, 1, Cambodia 1979. Top Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. Carter signed his initial "C" at the top of the first page.

JCS

General John Pustay

OMB

John White, Assistant Director, OMB

Edward Sanders, Deputy Associate Director-International Affairs Division)

White House

Zbigniew Brzezinski

David Aaron

NSC

Don Gregg

SUBJECT

SCC Meeting on Thailand-Cambodia Border Crisis

*SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS*

The DCI gave an intelligence update citing the following points:

—The expected SRV push across the Thai border, designed to eliminate Cambodian resistance groups, has not yet started. SRV plans are set. (TS)

—Thai forces are no match for the SRV units near the border. Thai deployment seems designed to give them maximum flexibility in choosing to engage or disregard SRV incursions. (TS)

—Cambodian groups opposing the SRV are poorly organized, and lack cohesion. (TS)

—A large-scale defeat of Thai forces by SRV units would pose a danger to the Kriangsak government, which then might invoke the Manila Pact. (TS)

—The role of the PRC remains both crucial and unclear. Two to three weeks would be required for them to build up forces along the SRV border sufficient to administer a “second lesson” to the SRV. (TS)

Means to deter SRV incursions into Thailand were then discussed:

—*Safehavens*. The concept will be pushed, although the SRV remains opposed, and UN support is mixed. All efforts will be made to create de facto safehavens and to deter SRV attacks on the refugee centers by increasing the international presence along the border. (TS)

—*Increasing food supplies to the refugees*. Use of trucks in Thailand will be stressed. This will increase the flow of food. Additional publicity will also be given to this effort. The Thais appear to agree to this concept as long as the trucks do not enter Cambodia. (TS)

—*Thai requests for aid*. The aid package is with the President for decision. Some subsidiary OMB decisions also await Congressional Conference action. It was agreed that Kriangsak’s letter to the President

need not be answered until the aid package is set up.<sup>2</sup> DOD was asked to expedite delivery of 19 of the 30 M-48 tanks the Thais have asked for. Secretary Claytor and General Jones agreed that these could be shipped quickly. (TS)

—*Approaches to Hanoi.* Five meetings with SRV leaders have been held since August,<sup>3</sup> all protesting obstructions to the flow of food aid to the refugees, and urging the SRV not to go into Thailand. No further steps seem indicated. (TS)

—*Pressure on the USSR.* No reply has been received to the President's letter to Brezhnev.<sup>4</sup> No further moves indicated now; at least until the Soviet Ambassador to the U.S. returns to Washington. (TS)

—*Approaches to the PRC.* Nothing additional needed now. The PRC appears to understand our position. What if anything to say to them will be decided before Secretary Brown's trip.<sup>5</sup> The question left to be decided is what the U.S. says publicly if the PRC again attacks the SRV in response to an SRV attack on Thailand. (TS)

In discussing Soviet attitudes toward the Thailand-Cambodia crisis, it was agreed that:

—The Soviets understand the difference between Cambodia and Thailand in terms of U.S. interests. (TS)

—The Soviets are not interested in a confrontation with the PRC over this issue. (TS)

—The Secretary of State can tell Dobrynin that the substance of Secretary Brown's trip to the PRC will be influenced by what happens along the Thai-Cambodian border. In passing this message, it will be made clear that the U.S. wants a neutral, non-aligned Cambodia, with no foreign troops on its soil, to emerge from the present situation. (TS)

At a restricted meeting, the implications arising from a newly-discovered Pol Pot base deep in Thailand were discussed. The base may be known to the SRV, and may be attacked by them. Such a deep incursion might cause the Thais to consider invoking the Manila Pact. The questions of telling the PRC and the Thais that we know of the base were discussed, as was the issue of notifying selected Congressional leaders. (TS)

Dr. Brzezinski stressed that the basic issue involved is a strategic one—SRV efforts, with Soviet support, to establish a dominant position in Southeast Asia. Any tactical moves made with regard to the Pol Pot

---

<sup>2</sup> See Document 178.

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 64, 67, and 68.

<sup>4</sup> See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Documents 238 and 242.

<sup>5</sup> See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XIII, China, Documents 287–295.

base should be in that larger context, so as not to discourage either Thai or PRC opposition to the SRV. There was general agreement on this point. (TS)

The conclusion of the restricted meeting was to take the following steps:

—Draft talking points to be used with the PRC.

—Consider separately what, if anything, should be said to the Thais.

—Consider briefing specific Congressional leaders on the extent to which the Thais and the PRC are giving covert support to the Cambodian elements opposing the SRV. The Secretary of State said he would like to brief Senators Church and Javits, and Congressman Zablocki. The DCI indicated that he would want to brief the Chairmen of the two intelligence committees. In this connection, no specific mention of the Pol Pot base will be made. (TS)

Dr. Brzezinski asked that the talking points be prepared for the next VBB meeting. (U)

Those attending the restricted meeting were: Vance, Holbrooke, Brzezinski, Claytor, Armacost, Jones, Turner, Holdridge and Gregg. (C)

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m. (U)

---

## 79. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Bangkok, December 24, 1979, 1131Z

52664. Dept please pass to Paris and others as desired. Subj: (S) Demarche to Vietnamese on Offensive. Ref: A. State 330503, B. Bangkok 50320, C. Bangkok 51796.<sup>2</sup>

1. (Secret—Entire text)

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Cables File, Far East, Box 13, 12/79. Secret; Immediate; Sensitive; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 330503 to Bangkok and Paris, December 22, contained instructions for the demarche to the Vietnamese. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840175–2007) Telegram 50320 from Bangkok, December 7, transmitted the text of an earlier demarche to the Vietnamese on Khmer relief. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790564–0722) Telegram 51796 from Bangkok, December 18, reported the closure of Kompong Som to relief shipments. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790582–0278)

2. In Ambassador's absence from Bangkok (and SRV Ambassador's absence in Hanoi), DCM made demarche Dec 24 as instructed Ref A to SRV Political Counselor Luu Doan Huynh. Huynh promised to convey the message faithfully to Hanoi, but asked the U.S. to send the message also directly to the PRK Embassy in Moscow or Havana. DCM held out no hope that this would be done.

3. In conversation which ensued, Huynh commented that Vietnam has acted with restraint on the border in view of many things, "including U.S. commitments", but Thais also should restrain themselves. Huynh reiterated standard SRV charges that Thailand is facilitating supply of Pol Pot and violating the Khmer border.

4. In response DCM noted that any problems of this nature were a direct consequence of the presence of Vietnamese troops along the border. He stressed again the importance of Vietnam's not violating the Thai border or engaging in military action against Thailand, and the particular importance we also attach to Vietnam's forces not attacking the large concentrations of civilians along the border, particularly at Nong Samet and Non Mak Mun. Huynh commented that Heng Samrin authorities wish to protect its people, but if armed Khmer Serei continue to use the concentrations for their military activities, no one could be responsible for the consequences and action against them and "could not be construed as attacks on the people."

Huynh made the point that so far, the Vietnamese have shown restraint toward these concentrations. DCM told Huynh that efforts have been made to remove armed elements from the concentrations and it is our understanding that some progress has been made.

5. Huynh also responded to our earlier demarches by the Ambassador Dec 7 concerning distribution of food in Kampuchea, (Ref B) and by ADCM Dec 18 concerning the reports of closure of the Kompong Som port to all but socialist shipping starting January 15 (Ref C). On former, Huynh said Hanoi categorically rejects all such reports and notes that the PRK Government (and Vietnam) were doing everything possible to expedite distribution of relief supplies. Huynh added that inadequate transportation facilities "in a country emerging from a period of genocide" were a major factor inhibiting distribution efforts. He charged that the U.S. was orchestrating an international campaign against Vietnam on the relief effort and advised that this could add to further misunderstandings and the perpetuation of tension in the area. DCM countered that international community had made clear its willingness to be of greatest possible assistance to needy Kampuchean people. It had been rebuffed by PRK. It was inexcusable, for example, that nation with such pressing medical needs and only fifty doctors for entire population, would not let foreign medical personnel in. Whatever the problems on the ground, it was clear that the Heng Samrin

authorities were placing their own concerns, suspicions and sensitivities ahead of the need of their people. It was also clear that Vietnamese had considerable influence with PRK and unfortunately were not using it to further the relief effort.

6. Concerning the reports of closure of Kompong Som port, Huynh was instructed by Hanoi to respond that the U.S. should approach the PRK Embassies in Moscow or Havana about a matter which concerns the PRK and not Hanoi. In response to further probe, Huynh said that he had no information about the matter.

7. Comment: Most striking part of Huynh's comments was reference to restraint by Hanoi, at least partly, because of U.S. commitments. Huynh also made clear that the Vietnamese were carefully watching the situation at Nong Samet and Non Mak Mun and that their future actions would be determined by the assessment of the degree to which these concentrations harbored Khmer Serei resistance elements. In his treatment of subject, Huynh conveyed the impression of some Vietnamese sensitivity toward international concern for the fate of these people.

**Abramowitz**

---

## 80. Paper Prepared in the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 31, 1979

### BRENNAN/HOLMES REPORT EVALUATION AND ACTION TAKEN

We are in overall agreement with the analysis and recommendations in the Brennan/Holmes report "Cambodian Border Relief."<sup>2</sup> Kampuchea faces severe food shortages at least until the December 1981 rice harvest. Khmer who flee to Thailand—121,000 are in holding camps with roughly 750,000 poised along the border—may have to rely on

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Molander, Box 80, Refugees (Indochinese) 11-12/79. Confidential.

<sup>2</sup> Dennis Brennan, Director of the Office for Project Development in the Bureau for Asia, and Christian Holmes, Deputy Director in the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance, both in the Agency for International Development, submitted a report on December 7 from Bangkok. The report, entitled "Cambodian Border Relief," is in the Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Global Issues, Bloomfield Subject File, Box 20, Refugees: Kampuchea: Relief, 12/12-31/79.

international aid for months or years; they may become permanent refugees. The relief organizations in Thailand must plan a long-term program as well as meet urgent needs. They must provide better conditions in holding centers; increase aid to the border concentrations to avert a mass influx of Khmer and speed contingency planning for Vietnamese military action and the feared exodus across the border.

We are already working to realize many of the Brennan/Holmes recommendations. Most require action by the international organizations (IOs) and the voluntary agencies (VOLAGS) in cooperation with Thai civil and military authorities. Embassy Bangkok was the catalyst for many improvements in coordination and contingency planning in recent weeks. We reinforce its efforts in our contacts with senior IO officials and through diplomatic initiatives on the safehaven concept. While the U.S. can motivate the IOs and VOLAGS to act, the relief organizations themselves must gear up to quicken the pace of the relief operations. We are seeing encouraging progress in some areas, but there are only limited results so far on coordination, contingency planning and increased aid on the border. Sir Robert Jackson aims at a mandate that would help considerably.

Brennan/Holmes heard serious criticism of ICRC's approach to medical relief along the Thai-Khmer border, which gave rise to very specific proposals for changes. We endorse the rationale behind the report's recommendations: to improve ICRC coordination and contingency planning. We have already urged ICRC to increase its presence in the border concentrations as rapidly as conditions permit; and it has already done so. Brennan/Holmes question whether ICRC methods will be appropriate for a longer term relief effort requiring more than the narrow definition of emergency care. We will look carefully at this issue in the context of the long-term planning discussions which Sir Robert Jackson intends to hold in mid-January. We would be cautious, however, about getting out in front in an effort to displace ICRC from a longer term program (if it wishes to participate).

ICRC has a valuable role in the relief effort inside Kampuchea, persistently negotiating with Phnom Penh on the difficult distribution and monitoring issues. A loss of status in the Thai relief program for ICRC could perhaps undermine its credibility in dealing with Heng Samrin authorities. We will have to consider the whole picture for the relief effort and for health care. In any event, we believe there has already been some progress in persuading ICRC to look into its relief strategy on the border and to better coordinate with the other IOs and VOLAGS.

Brennan/Holmes' 19 recommendations and our comments on action taken to date are given below.

1. *IO/Donor conference to plan for long-term needs*

Sir Robert Jackson is laying the groundwork for an IO planning session in January, followed by a donor conference. Jackson urged major donor representatives December 16 to commit themselves to relief operations over 18 months. He plans to convene UN agency and ICRC representatives in Bangkok in mid-January to consider the scope and costs of all facets of the relief program. Jackson would like to be able to present to donors in early February a forecast and cost estimates through March 1981. We are privately encouraging Jackson in these plans. We would of course carefully consider our contribution to a long range relief program, including the need for front-end financing.

2. *Endorse protection of border concentrations from military action; publicly applaud Thai humanitarian role*

Embassy Bangkok originated the safehaven concept in November to protect the large civilian concentrations at Mak Mun and Nong Samet.<sup>3</sup> Discussions between UN officials and the Vietnamese indicate that the SRV is unlikely to accept formal safehavens. Despite reservations on sovereignty grounds, the Thai would like to discourage Vietnamese military actions against the encampments, and have come out in favor of safehavens. We have sought declarations from other governments and international entities on the need to protect civilians along the Thai-Khmer border, in the hope that these pronouncements may deter Vietnamese attacks on Mak Mun and Nong Samet. The Japanese and the EC-9 have already made helpful statements, and we will be releasing one shortly.

We take every opportunity to highlight Thai cooperation in Khmer relief. Mrs. Carter's trip to Thailand in November<sup>4</sup> and her statements to the press emphasized our appreciation for the Thai role. Only recently Mrs. Carter repeated this theme in an address to the Council on Foreign Relations.

3. *Increase the international presence in the border concentrations to create de facto safehavens*

In response to our strong encouragement, ICRC now has 50–60 workers each day in the Mak Mun and Nong Samet border concentrations, a dramatic increase in the last few weeks. Shelters are under construction to protect relief workers in the event of shelling.

The Secretary General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) are considering a Thai Government request

---

<sup>3</sup> Abramowitz recommended internationalizing the refugee concentrations and establishing them as safehavens in telegram 47265 to various posts, November 17. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790529–0320)

<sup>4</sup> November 8–10. See Document 71.



to place the border concentrations under UNHCR management. We strongly supported this idea with UNHCR officials, and we understand that UNHCR is willing to take on the responsibility provided it operates solely on Thai territory. If the Secretary General approves, this change should enhance the international presence on the border, and also improve care for Khmer in the concentrations.

#### *4. Contingency planning for a sudden influx of Khmer*

Embassy Bangkok is working to focus IO attention on contingency planning for a mass influx of Khmer across the border during the anticipated Vietnamese offensive. Arrangements are still inadequate, however. About 400,000 Khmer occupy Mak Mun and Nong Samet, of a total of roughly 750,000 persons camped along the border. About 120,000 more Khmer could move to the well-constructed Khao I Dang holding center in an emergency. The UNHCR is negotiating with the Thai army to evacuate Khmer to an assembly area if fighting breaks out near the border concentrations. The plan is flawed because the route to the assembly area may be mined. Also, the evacuation must proceed quickly to avoid Khmer being caught between Thai and Vietnamese army lines.

At Embassy Bangkok's instigation, ICRC and the United Nations Children's Fund recently developed an evacuation plan for relief workers. The plan still needs some refinement.

#### *5. Food stockpiles in Bangkok*

Despite initial reservations, we now endorse the Brennan/Holmes proposal to stockpile a three-month supply of food in Bangkok. It takes 2–3 weeks to move new food deliveries to the border, an unacceptable delay in an emergency, and a stockpile would also reduce the possibility of price-gouging by local dealers if the World Food Program (WFP) had to make sudden large purchases for a mass influx of Khmer. If no influx occurs, the stockpile provides a secure food pipeline for border feeding. WFP will have a rice shortfall of 10,000 metric tons in January, and similar problems could arise in succeeding months. (We set aside \$3 million for WFP's use in purchasing Thai rice to make up the January rice deficit.)

#### *6. Increase border feeding to channel food to the interior of Kampuchea*

As Phnom Penh continues to impede food distribution in contested areas of Kampuchea, the volume of backdoor feeding is expected to grow. Relief workers report a large and variable transient population of Khmer along the border who collect food from the international agencies and return to their villages. The estimated 10,000 persons at Nong Chan are largely transients. While the backdoor channel is subject to Vietnamese interdiction and confiscation, it presents one of the most promising means to increase food supplies in Western Kampuchea.

Embassy Bangkok is encouraging VOLAGS to participate in border feeding through the WFP food management program, funded with a \$891,000 grant from the U.S. We made a \$513,500 grant to WFP this month for food processing for the border feeding program. This latter grant enables the IOs to repackage commodities in smaller amounts, thus facilitating carrying food inland. The amount of border feeding is, we believe, increasing although the IOs and VOLAGS have not yet produced comprehensive statistics. The price of rice in Battambang declined in the last two weeks, a sign of increased supplies from the Thai border.

*7. Increase food outreach on the border*

Food outreach programs are still quite limited, but there should be progress in the coming weeks through WFP food management and food processing programs mentioned above. The food management program will probably include soup kitchens to feed children and the infirm.

*8. Timetable to improve conditions at Sa Kao I*

The UNHCR has moved ahead on improvements at Sa Kao I. The Thai Government authorized expansion of the grossly overcrowded camp into a 64-acre plot of adjacent land. The camp extension was scheduled for completion December 26, and 3100 persons occupied the camp as of December 20. With the extension, camp area per person will be eight square meters. Three wells provide an adequate water supply. A sanitation team has arrived to upgrade sanitation facilities. Drainage structures and off-ground shelters for the rainy season are not completed.

*9. Various improvements in ICRC coordination*

In response to frequent criticism of ICRC performance during their survey, Brennan/Holmes proposed several specific changes in ICRC coordination. So far as we know, ICRC is not integrated into the UNHCR Regional Office Kampuchea Unit as recommended. However, Embassy Bangkok reports that medical coordinators from ICRC, UNHCR and the VOLAGS are in frequent contact on questions of personnel and material flow. ICRC is also engaged in contingency planning, although we have no information on whether this planning constitutes a full or part-time assignment for the official involved. It appears that medical coordination is improving.

*10. Contingency planning for casualty flow from possible military action*

ICRC is implementing the recommendations of the U.S. medical survey team on surgical requirements in a border emergency. ICRC has identified surgical personnel in-country and called up stand-by teams abroad. It plans to reinforce the surgical capabilities of local Thai hospitals and to obtain a field hospital. In Embassy Bangkok's view, ICRC preparations are not sufficient to handle a crisis at this time.

11. *Encourage ICRC to place permanent medical teams and clinics in the border concentrations*

We have clearly informed ICRC of our hope that the international presence in the border concentrations can be increased. As noted above, ICRC has 50–60 personnel in Mak Mun and Nong Samet each day, although there is no “permanent” staff in the camps.

12. *Consider whether ICRC, UNHCR or another agency should manage the long-term medical effort*

We will consider our position on the long-term medical program in connection with Sir Robert Jackson’s consultations in Bangkok in mid-January and the projected February donors conference. Brennan/Holmes heard many complaints about ICRC’s concept of emergency medical care, which may in fact be inappropriate for long-term refugee care situations. ICRC is already reassessing its approach, however. We will consult carefully with Embassy Bangkok, ICRC, and other organizations on this question as well as the effect a change in the ICRC role in Thailand may have on other aspects of Khmer relief.

13. *Time-phased plan to complete all holding centers within three months*

UNHCR continues to upgrade facilities at Sa Kao I (see #8 above) and Khao I Dang, although we are not aware of a specific timetable for completion. Kamput holding center, now occupied by 2500 Khmer, has capacity in place for 20,000 persons, and its hospital is operating. The future of proposed Sa Kao II and Mairut holding center is unclear. UNHCR officials believe plans for Sa Kao II may be abandoned in favor of using the excess capacity at Kamput. Mairut has a major water supply problem, and UNHCR and the Thai Government have not agreed on the ultimate size of this camp. The Thai continue to plan to place an unrealistically large number of Khmer at Mairut.

The dilemma is that if there is a sudden large influx of Khmer, on the scale of several hundred thousand, facilities do not currently exist to accommodate them. On the other hand, building centers that may never be occupied would be a major waste of resources. A further problem is that the border encampments are on low ground, and some provision must be made for the current inhabitants either to go deeper into Kampuchea or enter Thailand by the time the rainy season begins, usually in late May.

The Kampuchean Emergency Group in Embassy Bangkok reports to Washington regularly on the status of all of the holding centers, and in the course of its liaison with UNHCR, it has the opportunity to stress the importance of completion of the centers before the rainy season.

14. *Water supply improvements*

UNHCR and ICRC/UNICEF December 15 appointed a joint project manager for water supply in the holding centers and in the border

concentrations, opening the way for improved coordination of this aspect of the relief program. The manager is a UNHCR engineer detailed from AID. We expect that he will assume responsibilities along the lines recommended by Brennan/Holmes.

*15. Press for the appointment of a UN special coordinator for Khmer relief, resident in Bangkok*

The Secretary General will formally appoint Sir Robert Jackson in January as coordinator for Khmer relief. His title, mandate, and office location are still to be determined. We have closely consulted with Jackson regarding his responsibilities and urged him to consider working from Bangkok, or at least spending a maximum amount of time there. Although the Secretary General apparently intends that he work in New York, Jackson himself is coming around to the idea of a headquarters in Geneva and spending a substantial amount of time in Bangkok.

*16. Improve coordination in Bangkok including a regular senior staff meeting*

Embassy Bangkok reports improvement in coordination among the IOs and between IOs and VOLAGS, although there is apparently no senior staff group such as Brennan/Holmes recommend. The IOs hold regular meetings dealing with food, water and VOLAG activity which some donors also attend. Medical coordinators from ICRC, UNHCR and the VOLAGS communicate frequently. The IOs and VOLAGS are now working out a system to share information on the volume food deliveries. It remains clear, however, that UNHCR on the one hand and ICRC/UNICEF on the other have yet to establish regular meetings of fixed periodicity.

*17. Encourage the VOLAGS to propose long-term programs*

We agree on the importance of long-term planning for the relief program, and we will consider the role of VOLAGS in this effort in the context of the Jackson meetings in mid-January and February on the forecasts for Khmer relief.

*18. Assignment of permanent personnel to Embassy Bangkok's Kampuchea Emergency Group (KEG)*

We place a high priority on staffing the KEG with well-qualified candidates who will spend at least one year in the office. So far we have met the first criterion but not the second. Mode ceilings and other limitations currently restrict the number of AID and State personnel who can be assigned to the KEG. We have analyzed the problem in writing, and made recommendations on long-term staffing of both the KEG and the Kampuchean Working Group to the newly appointed U.S. Refugee Coordinator.

19. *Augment the Ambassador's contingency fund*

We are prepared in principle to add to the contingency fund (now \$250,000) as needed.

---

**81. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to Secretary of State Vance<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, January 11, 1980

SUBJECT

Contingency Plans on Kampuchean Relief Efforts (U)

In the light of (1) the continued blockage of internal distribution of food within Kampuchea, (2) the desirability of avoiding further mass migration of Khmers into Thailand, (3) the deadlines the ICRC has privately set for continuation of operations in Kampuchea, (4) the hold which the World Food Program has put on shipments because of filled warehouses, and (5) the reports of possible plans temporarily to close Kampong Som and Phnom Penh to international deliveries, it is essential that we make plans for avoiding famine in the event of the possible contingencies we can envisage. (S)

Such contingency planning should include alternatives for both U.S. and multilateral actions, and should deal with both Kampuchea and Thailand. It should answer the following questions:

a. How can the maximum number of Khmer civilians inside Kampuchea be fed if the blockage of relief supplies continues? What specific options are available for getting food inside the country? (U)

b. What plans for cross-border feeding via Thailand can be made which might substitute for internal distribution if that proves inadequate to prevent mass starvation? Should additional feeding points be established? Can such planning minimize additional strains on, or potential threats to Thailand? (C)

c. In elaboration of *a.* and *b.* what specific methods for both internal and cross-border distribution can we now tentatively plan that will be responsive to the magnitude of the problem? (U)

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 6, Cambodia, 1980. Secret.

d. How does the above planning relate to the predicted early exhaustion of indigenous food supplies in Kampuchea? (U)

e. What deadline should be fixed for new U.S. policy decisions and implementation of alternative plans should they become necessary to avert a famine? (C)

The Department's analysis should be available by January 23. (U)<sup>2</sup>

**Zbigniew Brzezinski<sup>3</sup>**

---

<sup>2</sup> The paper that Tarnoff sent to Brzezinski under a January 29 covering memorandum is in the Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 43, Kampuchea, 1/80-1/81.

<sup>3</sup> Aaron signed for Brzezinski above Brzezinski's typed signature.

---

## 82. Paper Prepared by Lincoln Bloomfield of the National Security Council Staff<sup>1</sup>

Washington, February 12, 1980

### *KAMPUCHEA: DEMOGRAPHIC CATASTROPHE (C)*

There follows for your information my summary of the assessment prepared by the Office of Geographic and Cartographic Research, NFAC (CIA), 29 January 1980 on the Kampuchean population. (C)<sup>2</sup>

In what appears to be a very seriously-researched demographic analysis, using statistical and other methodology approved by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, CIA has reached conclusions on basic population data for Kampuchea, and arrived at some devastating conclusions: (C)

Population in 1970: *7.1 million* (U)

Population in December 1979: between 4.7 million and 5.5, most likely *5.2 million* (U)

This means that *between 1.2 million and 1.8 million* were, in effect, murdered by the Khmer Rouge Pol Pot regime. Another estimated 700,000 died from inadequate diet, disease, and wartime dislocation

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Global Issues, Bloomfield Subject File, Box 19, Refugees: Kampuchea, 12/79-6/80. Confidential.

<sup>2</sup> The CIA assessment is *ibid*. The copy is dated March 1980, not January 1980.

following the December, 1978 Vietnamese invasion. The expected population of Kampuchea in December 1979, in the absence of war, mass execution, famine, and emigration, in the medium range of normal projections used by the United Nations, would be close to 9 million. The estimated present population of 5.2 million is 57% of that normal expectation. (U)

Even if food and health conditions were to improve markedly, rebuilding Kampuchean society would be a long process. Pol Pot executions effectively wiped out the whole leadership class; the ranks of those over 20 years old are thin; the life expectancy has been shortened so drastically that the adult population will in any event decrease further over the next two decades. Few children were born during the Pol Pot years, and those who survived are now suffering from disease and severe malnutrition. The fertility of unhealthy mothers and fathers is low, so not many babies will be born in the next few years. At best, the prospects for regeneration of the population by the end of the century are poor. (U)

To repeat what I recently quoted in the evening report:<sup>3</sup> “The grim demographic outlook is for a Kampuchean population of few children, few elderly people, and many prematurely old people whose life span has been drastically shortened by events. Decimated by disease, famine, and war and bereft of its leaders and labor force, the Kampuchean society will need decades to come back, if it survives at all”. (U)

The report is available in my office for examination or copies for those interested. (U)

**Lincoln P. Bloomfield<sup>4</sup>**

---

<sup>3</sup> Bloomfield's evening report to Brzezinski, January 30, is in the Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Global Issues, Opinger/Bloomfield Subject File, Box 37, Evening Reports, 1–3/80.

<sup>4</sup> Bloomfield initialed above his typed signature.

### 83. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, February 21, 1980, 5 p.m.

SUBJECT

Situation in Kampuchea

PARTICIPANTS

Prince Norodom Sihanouk

Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for EA

John D. Negroponte, Deputy Assistant Secretary, EA

Stephen R. Lyne, Director, EA/VLC

SIHANOUK: Thank you for your warm generous hospitality.

HOLBROOKE: I want to tell you that it is at the personal instructions of Secretary Vance.

SIHANOUK: Please convey to him my personal gratitude and salutations.

HOLBROOKE: The Secretary and I believe you are a great historic figure who has played an important role in the past and has an important role to play in the present. He wanted to demonstrate his regard for you.

SIHANOUK: I am deeply grateful and honored to be considered a friend of the U.S. Please also transmit my very affectionate salutations to Ambassador Mansfield.

HOLBROOKE: Last week I was in the refugee camps along the Thai-Kampuchean border. I asked the people about the future of Cambodia. I asked them: What about Pol Pot, Heng Samrin? Everyone talked about Prince Sihanouk. All of them loved you; all of them remembered you.<sup>2</sup> They wanted to know where you were. They did not know you were in Europe. You need to let your people know where you are.

SIHANOUK: I have many contacts with my supporters along the frontier. Delegates come to me from my sympathizers. I have sent them

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330-82-0217, Box 4, C, 1980. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Lyne on February 22. The meeting took place in the Sheraton Carlton Hotel. "SECDEF has seen" is stamped at the top of the page. A notation in an unknown hand in the top right-hand corner of the page reads, "Harold Brown eyes only," and Brown wrote, "2/27 HB." An unknown hand wrote adjacent to Brown's notation, "Show this to Nick Platt."

<sup>2</sup> Sihanouk lived in exile following the Lon Nol coup in 1970. After the Khmer Rouge takeover in 1975, Sihanouk returned to Kampuchea, where he lived under house arrest. Sihanouk was released in January 1979 and disassociated himself from the Khmer Rouge.



messages and tape recordings. In many of the Thai refugee camps and in parts of Cambodia they have received my messages. I do not know why the others don't know where I am.

I have to explain that I have been unable to go to Cambodia despite my great desire. I cannot achieve my great dream. The government of Thailand will not let me go. I cannot reach them because of the government of Thailand. I am anxious to meet with my people. I want to go visit them.

HOLBROOKE: I am disappointed that you did not go to Singapore. I know your explanation. We agree with you that there can be no support for Pol Pot or Ieng Sary. I would have thought that it would have been to your advantage to go to Singapore to talk with Lee Kuan Yew and to discuss the issues directly. It would have been a way to improve relations between you and the Thai. Let us hope that you can go to Singapore.

SIHANOUK: Maybe I can go in June. I have to go to Kim Il Sung's birthday and he wants me to stay for one to two months after that. I can't travel until after that. I will go to Australia, and I can stop in Singapore.

HOLBROOKE: May I ask you some things about Kim Il Sung? You know him, and we do not. What does Kim Il Sung think about the Soviet-Chinese rivalry?

SIHANOUK: He is clearly hostile to the Soviet Union. He is very clearly sympathetic to China. He condemns Vietnam and he criticizes the invasion of Kampuchea by Vietnam. Officially he does not dare let the world and the Soviet Union know his views. With me he made his position clear. He condemns Vietnam. He condemns the Soviet Union. He likes China. He is very independent vis-a-vis China but he likes the Chinese.

HOLBROOKE: What does he think about the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan?<sup>3</sup>

SIHANOUK: I left before the invasion. I am sure he must be very angry toward the Soviet Union. He used to criticize the Soviet Union and very violently condemn Vietnam.

HOLBROOKE: What do you think his objectives are regarding South Korea? You know he has just sent letters to individuals in the government in South Korea using their government titles. This is a first.

SIHANOUK: He may hide his ideas and his thinking from me. It seems to me, however, that he was sincere when he assured me that

---

<sup>3</sup> The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan began on December 24, 1979. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Documents 244–246.

he didn't want any war, that he wanted South Korea to remain non-communist if that is what the people of South Korea wanted. He wanted the South and the North united as equal states in a federation which he called Koryo.

He pointed out he does not want any war. I believe he is sincere. He has done a lot for the development of his country; he has built schools, hospitals, cultural centers, and other facilities for his people and youth. This shows he does not want war. For himself he has built beautiful palaces in the mountains and at sea resorts. He has many luxury houses. He likes expensive cars, Mercedes, Lincolns. I think that since he likes luxuries so much he will not wage war.

He is a lot like Tito. There are three "imperial communist" heads of state: Tito, Ceausescu, Kim Il Sung. They are very imperialistic; very luxurious; they do not want war. They would lose their imperial style of life.

On the question of reunification of Korea. I remember that it is true that North Vietnam said it would accept a non-communist South Vietnam if that is what the people wanted. In fact North Vietnam communized South Vietnam without delay. I cannot give you any guarantee about Kim Il Sung's intentions toward South Korea. He is intelligent. He realizes he can't fight a war. If he achieves his dream of a federation he may respect South Korea as a nationalist state for many years. He knows he cannot fight against you, the U.S. He knows he cannot rely on the Soviet Union. He does not want to rely on the Chinese.

That is Kim Il Sung. I know him very well. He is not in good health. He has a growth on his neck which increases in size. It is very visible. It may be cancerous. He is the guarantor of stability and peace in North Korea, and his people fear that he may not have much life left. I guarantee you that if he lives he will not fight a war.

HOLBROOKE: What is his attitude toward the DK and Pol Pot?

SIHANOUK: He condemns them but allows them to have an embassy in Pyongyang.

HOLBROOKE: Does he pressure you to form a united front with Pol Pot, as China does?

SIHANOUK: China pressures me all the time. Kim Il Sung never pressures me. That is one reason I went to Pyongyang. He tells me: I support you. He says I believe you should cooperate with the DK, but I follow and support you. That is all he says.

HOLBROOKE: Has this issue strained relations between China and North Korea?

SIHANOUK: Kim Il Sung said that North Korea and China will remain good friends even if they do not share the same opinions about

Cambodia. He said they have decided not to speak about it. He said North Korean-Chinese relations are based on bilateral issues and they put the others aside.

In Pyongyang the DK has tried to contact me through the Romanians and the Swedes but not the North Koreans. The Romanians support the DK. The Khmer Rouge asked the Swedes to arrange a meeting for them with me. I rejected this appointment with the Swedish Chargé to meet the DK. He has since refrained from pushing this idea. I have made it clear to him that when I meet with him the condition is that we will not discuss the DK. Each time I saw the Romanians they tried to press me on behalf of President Ceausescu to accept the post of president of the DK.

HOLBROOKE: I want to assure you that we are totally opposed to the DK, to Pol Pot, to Khieu Samphan, to Ieng Sary. We see no differences among them. Do you agree?

SIHANOUK: Yes. Fully. Khieu Samphan is not less cruel. He is the thinker, *le penseur*, of the team. He said that to create a revolutionary society one must physically liquidate the people.

HOLBROOKE: I want to be sure that you understand our vote for the DK at the UN.<sup>4</sup> We believed that it was the best tactical way to avoid legitimizing the Vietnamese takeover. ASEAN, our European allies, and other non-aligned countries all agreed. When we voted we stressed that we opposed all that Pol Pot stood for and would not recognize or help him. Mr. Burchett says in a recent article in THE NATION<sup>5</sup> that Ambassador Woodcock urged you to join the Khmer Rouge.

SIHANOUK: No. He did not ask me to join the Khmer Rouge. He did explain that the Khmer Rouge were the only armed force that could fight the Vietnamese in Kampuchea. He did not urge me to join the Khmer Rouge.

HOLBROOKE: This is a simple statement of fact. Ambassador Woodcock did not mean that we supported the Khmer Rouge or that we wanted you to support them. Burchett must have misrepresented what you said.

SIHANOUK: Mr. Burchett is not honest. He did not quote me accurately. He misquoted me for the benefit of the Vietnamese and the Soviets, he is one of their sympathizers.

---

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 4, Document 60.

<sup>5</sup> Not further identified.

HOLBROOKE: I hope you will clarify this in your interviews in the United States. I hope you will clarify that we have never pressured you to join the Khmer Rouge.

SIHANOUK: I never said it. Ambassador Woodcock never said anything like that. The thing he did say was that on the battlefield only the Khmer Rouge were capable of resisting the Vietnamese.

HOLBROOKE: That's a fact at this time.

SIHANOUK: That's a fact.

I want to let the world know I have a large army. I have officers in France and the United States who have been trained in French and American schools. They are ready to serve me. From Thailand and Kampuchea I have received many letters from young Cambodians who are ready to serve under me in a national army to fight for the liberation of Kampuchea. But China does not want me to fight unless I am with the Khmer Rouge. Thailand does not allow me to enter Cambodia through Thailand. I met with your Embassy officers in Paris. I presented to them an expose of my position and of my army.<sup>6</sup> I beg your help to persuade Thailand to give me sympathy and cooperation and to help me struggle for the national liberation of Cambodia. Also I ask you to persuade China to help me. We have many men. We have no weapons and no arms. King Hassan of Morocco told me: You will not be successful in your political objectives to liberate your country, to call an international conference, and to give your people the right to determine their own future unless you have an army, unless you lead an army to fight the Vietnamese and to weaken the government of Heng Samrin. He said: You must return to let the world know clearly that you are a valid alternative to Heng Samrin and the Khmer Rouge. The world must have a reason to support you and to recognize you as the leader of Cambodia. You must fight on the battlefield.

HOLBROOKE: There are some things I don't completely understand. The Chinese saved your life and brought you out of Phnom Penh in 1979. You came to New York. We thought you were going to stay here or in France. Then you had dinner with Deng Tsiao Ping. The next morning you had breakfast with Mr. Oakley and you told him that you were going back to China.<sup>7</sup> Why?

SIHANOUK: Because China could not let me go to Paris to fight the DK in the political field. I had promised Mao Tse Tung and Chou

---

<sup>6</sup> Oakley met with Sihanouk in Paris on December 13, 1979. Telegram 39040 from Paris, December 13, transmitted a memorandum of conversation of the discussion. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790573-0911)

<sup>7</sup> Oakley met with Sihanouk on February 1, 1979. Telegram 30886 to Tokyo and Beijing, February 5, reported on the meeting. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790055-1143)

En Lai that if I was ever not in Cambodia, I would stay in China. Deng reminded me of my promises. I made it clear that I would go to China only if Deng promised not to try to persuade me to join the Khmer Rouge.

HOLBROOKE: Is there any difference between Chou En Lai and Deng?

SIHANOUK: During the 1970–1975 war the situation in Cambodia was different than it is now. I cannot say whether if Chou En Lai were alive today he would behave differently than Deng because the situation is different.

HOLBROOKE: In regard to Thailand, what is the problem between you? Are the Thai feelings based on the difficulties between your two countries in the 1950s and 1960s. Your problems with Thailand seriously limit your future, and we should discuss them frankly to see what can be done.

SIHANOUK: The key issue is Preah Vihear.<sup>8</sup>

HOLBROOKE: You won. Dean Acheson was your lawyer. You had the best lawyer in the U.S.

SIHANOUK: We had the best lawyer in the world. And we did win. But the Thai have never pardoned us. Also now, Thailand, with China, protects the Khmer Rouge and Son Sann. I am totally against the Khmer Rouge. Son Sann is not with me. The Thai are well aware that I cannot accept that part of Cambodia become a protectorate of Thailand. Thailand, like Vietnam, wants to swallow Cambodia and wants to establish at least a part of Cambodia as a protectorate.

NEGROPONTE: You mentioned Son Sann in the same way as the Khmer Rouge. What are your feelings about Son Sann?

SIHANOUK: Son Sann and his group, Dien Del, are not sympathetic to me. They are very ambitious. They want to gain power. They want to be the leaders of the people. They tell the people that Sihanouk does not want to serve the people, that he wants to lead the good life in Korea and France. Son Sann does not like me. He tries to discredit me and work against me with my people.

I want my people to be united, not disunited. I am ready to be friends with all Khmer. Ninety per cent of the Cambodians here in the United States fought against me. Now we are friends. *My duty is not to be a leader of my own group but to represent the nation.* I want to unite not divide the nation. I am aware we are weak. Each day we are weaker and weaker. We cannot have disunity. As chairman of the Federation of all patriotic groups I cannot beg Son Sann to accept me as his servant.

---

<sup>8</sup> See footnote 5, Document 60.

Son Sann and his group should join our Confederation. I should not join Son Sann; he should join me.

I am not here for your support for me. I have been invited by my compatriots. You said you wanted to see me. I have no personal ambitions. I am happy in Korea. I am unhappy when I see my people facing misery. I don't seek help from foreign countries for myself. I don't plan to be the leader of my nation. Once the Cambodian people are liberated, they can elect their leaders. Cambodia and the Cambodian people have the right to determine their own future.

HOLBROOKE: Yes, we agree, but how do we get there? How do we get the Vietnamese to agree to a neutral non-aligned Cambodia?

SIHANOUK: King Hassan said I cannot achieve this goal of liberation of Cambodia by peaceful means. He said: You must go to the battlefield. How can I go if no one helps?

HOLBROOKE: Do you want to go to fight in order to drive out the Vietnamese or to force the Vietnamese to negotiate?

SIHANOUK: We cannot defeat the invincible army of Vietnam. We want to give credibility to our efforts to liberate our country. If I oppose Heng Samrin, Vietnam will always be weak psychologically and politically in Cambodia.

HOLBROOKE: Do you believe the Vietnamese would accept a political solution involving your return to Cambodia?

SIHANOUK: Vietnam says it is in Cambodia to protect the Cambodian people from the genocidal policies of Pol Pot and Ieng Sary. Therefore, to support Pol Pot and Ieng Sary is to strengthen the Vietnamese pretext for being in Cambodia as a protector of the Cambodian people against the Khmer Rouge. If I lead a movement of liberation without the Khmer Rouge, the Vietnamese will no longer have a pretext to remain.

HOLBROOKE: How do you propose to fight the Vietnamese who have 200,000 troops and twenty divisions in Cambodia who are destroying the country? When I was in the border camps I asked: Who was worse, Pol Pot or Heng Samrin? The Cambodians said they were equally bad; Pol Pot killed us and Heng Samrin is starving us.

SIHANOUK: According to Mao Tse Tung if one cannot get the support of the people, one can never win. The Vietnamese 200,000 troops do not have the support of the people. You see that the Khmer Rouge are still fighting and cannot be crushed. Son Sann is still alive. My own army would be much bigger than theirs.

NEGROPONTE: Back to an earlier question, with some armed resistance would you be willing to enter into negotiations?

SIHANOUK: Yes. Also we would continue to fight.

HOLBROOKE: Will the Vietnamese agree to a political settlement which will take their troops out and yours back in?

SIHANOUK: What would happen would be that Heng Samrin would collapse internally and internationally.

HOLBROOKE: Heng Samrin doesn't exist as an important factor. He is the creation of 200,000 Vietnamese troops.

SIHANOUK: If my proposal is not interesting, how can you and the Chinese believe that the Khmer Rouge and Son Sann will be able to get back Kampuchea? You will simply be creating further Thai instability. We have to fight to weaken Heng Samrin and to harm the Vietnamese. If we do nothing, if we accept the Vietnamese, we will have no answer to recovering Cambodia. We will remain under Vietnamese colonialism. We will have to accept the *fait accompli* as in Afghanistan.

HOLBROOKE: I agree with your view that Vietnam is the cause of the problem and we must get them out of Cambodia. We see three problems: One is the refusal of many Khmer Serei elements to work with you.

SIHANOUK: Many of the Khmer Serei groups are pro-Sihanouk. That is why the Thai will not give them humanitarian relief.

HOLBROOKE: The second is the attitude of the Thai government toward you. You have explained this. The third is the attitude of the Chinese who want to create a united front between you and the Khmer Rouge.

SIHANOUK: This is impossible.

HOLBROOKE: We have to concern ourselves with your relations with Son Sann and others.

SIHANOUK: Son Sann only.

NEGROPONTE: You said if the Khmer Rouge came to join your federation you would not accept them. If Son Sann came to join your federation, would you accept him?

SIHANOUK: Yes. There is no reason to refuse. But my compatriots in France and the U.S. tell me they will abandon me if I accept the Khmer Rouge.

HOLBROOKE: We understand and share your view about the Khmer Rouge. The difficulties between you and Son Sann are crucial. It is important to resolve the differences. The public appearance of disagreement is very damaging. The Khmer Serei groups are fighting each other at the refugee camps.

SIHANOUK: But the Khmer Rouge have attacked some nationalist camps too.

HOLBROOKE: Yes.

SIHANOUK: They were not battles between nationalists. The Khmer Rouge attacked nationalist camps.



HOLBROOKE: What about the Vietnamese? You know Pham Van Dong and the other leaders very well. Do you think the Vietnamese leadership would ever accept you?

SIHANOUK: The Vietnamese are Vietnamese. We cannot change them. Henry Kissinger told me in Peking that no one should ever rely on the Vietnamese. They are immoral. I cannot speculate about the future. It all depends on their situation in the international arena, the situation inside Vietnam, Indochina events, and the changing attitudes of the U.S. and other great powers. Vietnam will make its policy in conformity with its interests and capabilities. They are not sentimental. They are without morality. They are intelligent and opportunistic. They can understand where their interests lie.

NEGROPONTE: You will meet with Secretary Vance in a few days. Could you and I meet informally during the next few days? Perhaps Saturday,<sup>9</sup> in order to prepare the best possible meeting with the Secretary. You and I could meet on Saturday and try to prepare what you want to discuss with the Secretary.

HOLBROOKE: You should know clearly what we want. We want an independent Cambodia, neutral and non-aligned, free of foreign troops, able to choose its own leaders. If my experience on the border is any indication, the people want you.

SIHANOUK: It's up to them.

HOLBROOKE: Yes, it's up to them.

SIHANOUK: Yes, I will never propose myself. I simply wait for the chance to have my party compete with the Khmer Rouge and Heng Samrin. Please convey to Ambassador Woodcock my apologies. I apologize for any misunderstanding. I understood him very well. He said nothing like what Burchett has written. I mentioned only that he acknowledged that the Khmer Rouge possessed the only effective armed force against Vietnam. That is all he said.

HOLBROOKE: Burchett twisted what you said. The issue here is your relationship with the Thai government, your relationship with Son Sann, your relationship with China, and your relationship with the Vietnamese. We should talk more about it. I propose that when you meet with John you focus on what you want to discuss with the Secretary.

SIHANOUK: Son Sann is no problem. I am anxious to get his friendship, and that of his group. If he decides to join Sihanouk and the federation we will all welcome him.

---

<sup>9</sup> February 23. See Document 85 and footnote 2 thereto.



HOLBROOKE: Are there any conditions under which Vietnam would accept you, and remove its troops?

SIHANOUK: We have to wait for Vietnam to determine its political, diplomatic, and military position. I can't guess. Vietnam might shift its position vis-a-vis Son Sann, the Khmer Rouge, and Pol Pot.

HOLBROOKE: You were writing Pham Van Dong a series of letters. Have you received any response?

SIHANOUK: Yes, I wrote three letters. There was no reply to either the first or the second. The third letter was returned unopened. They are not very polite. When they have the Cambodian cake in their mouth, they want to swallow it.

HOLBROOKE: You are still thinking of going to Singapore in June?

SIHANOUK: I am going to Australia in June. I can combine the two trips as they are in the same area.

HOLBROOKE: The Foreign Ministers of Australia and New Zealand will be here next week.

SIHANOUK: I am going to Australia; I am invited by my countrymen.

HOLBROOKE: What about China? Are they keeping in contact with you?

SIHANOUK: Yes, I keep friendly contacts with them.

HOLBROOKE: Will you see Ambassador Chai while you are here?

SIHANOUK: Yes, I think he will ask to meet with me. In Paris I kept close contact with the Chinese Embassy.

I have a message to deliver to you on behalf of President Kim Il Sung. He wants to improve his relations with you. I hope that the day will come when the U.S. will be able to establish commercial relations with Pyongyang.

HOLBROOKE: I hope so too. But North Korea has proposed direct talks with us. We can't do that unless South Korea comes too.

SIHANOUK: But France and other western countries have established commercial relations. You could do the same.

HOLBROOKE: We can't do that without weakening our friends in South Korea.

SIHANOUK: I am not coming here to promote my personal ambitions.

HOLBROOKE: We understand that. I have always admired you. As I told Lacouture, I have always regarded you like DeGaulle, a man who personifies his country and is above party or faction.

SIHANOUK: I do not pretend to be a DeGaulle. I just want to fulfill my duty as a Cambodian citizen.

HOLBROOKE: I understand. We have to resolve the internal rivalries and your problems with Thailand.

SIHANOUK: I have told the Chinese I will not attack the Khmer Rouge on the battlefield. They don't have to worry. I won't cooperate with them but I won't attack them. China should be satisfied with such behavior on my part.

HOLBROOKE: Is China still pressing you?

SIHANOUK: Yes. China still presses me. Some westerners also advise me to become the Chief of State of Democratic Kampuchea and to reshuffle the government in order to prove that it is a humane one. I say I am ready to do it if the Khmer people want me to, but they do not want me to.

HOLBROOKE: Whatever you do you mustn't form a government in exile.

SIHANOUK: I will never form a government in exile.

HOLBROOKE: Good. You are above parties.

SIHANOUK: Some of my supporters have urged a government-in-exile but I will never do it.

NEGROPONTE: It will reduce the possibilities of any settlement.

SIHANOUK: Rest assured I will never do such a thing.

HOLBROOKE: We are devoted to peace in Cambodia. Tomorrow Ambassador Palmieri will explain what we are doing to save the Khmer people. We are spending hundreds of millions of dollars. We are working night and day. Mrs. Carter herself visited Thailand in an important gesture.

SIHANOUK: I express my profound gratitude to the U.S. Government, to the American people, to President Carter. I appreciate your efforts.

**84. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, February 22, 1980

## PARTICIPANTS

Prince Norodom Sihanouk  
Ambassador Victor Palmieri  
Ambassador Frank Loy  
Deputy Assistant Secretary John Negroponte  
EA/VLC Director Stephen Lyne

*Ambassador Palmieri* (P): Our special responsibilities concern the humanitarian effort in Kampuchea. I have visited SE Asia twice in the past month. We have great interest in your views on the issue of international support for Khmer relief. This problem involves many nations. In your travels have you found an awareness of the humanitarian need in Kampuchea? Is concern being maintained or is the situation slipping out of people's minds?

*Prince Sihanouk* (S): I have received many letters from Thailand sent to me by my compatriots in refugee camps in Thailand and along the Thai-Cambodian border. In some camps, people are receiving large amounts of humanitarian relief. In other camps, the people are facing difficulties as far as humanitarian aid is concerned. They do not get as much food and medicine in some groups as other refugees and armed groups receive. They must buy food and medicine which is provided by the UNICEF and ICRC. In brief, there is some discrimination between refugees and armed groups. Furthermore, unarmed refugees and so-called liberation soldiers are mixed in each camp. The armed elements are the minority, control the civilian elements or the majority. The unarmed majority depends on the goodwill or the badwill of the soldiers and the military leaders. They are all Cambodians. According to my supporters, the Khmer Rouge and the Son Sann group get everything. Those who are not pro-Khmer Rouge or pro-Son Sann cannot get humanitarian relief. I have stressed to UNICEF and ICRC that their generosity is real and genuine but that there are difficulties when relief goes to Cambodians through the Thai. Some people make bad distribution. I myself cannot make any comment on it. I cannot support the views of my supporters; I only mention what they tell me. I don't know the truth. I am not allowed by the Thai Government to visit the refugee camps. I cannot say that my supporters are right or

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Sullivan Subject File, Box 71, Sihanouk Visit, 2/80. Secret. Drafted by Lyne; cleared in draft by Palmieri, Loy, and Negroponte. The meeting took place in the Sheraton Carlton Hotel.

wrong. In Paris there are men and women who have very recently come from Thailand to serve as liaison between me and my supporters along the Thai-Kampuchean border. They are still in Paris. They want me to get humanitarian relief for those people who cannot get it. I do not know what I can do. I simply mention it to you. I have no comment.

P: If your supporters can identify specific areas that are not receiving support, we can attempt to rectify it. Your information is correct. In the two main refugee camps, Nong Samet and Nong Mak Mun, armed groups have great influence. You are right to be concerned. We will seek to use our good offices with the international agencies and the Thai if your supporters can identify areas of concern.

S: In Paris I introduced a diplomat from your Embassy to a lady and gentleman who represent my supporters. He has their address and telephone numbers in Paris. I can provide you with the names and addresses of the lady and gentleman. If your Embassy in Paris wants information about what I have just said, I suggest that your Embassy contact the representatives of my supporters in Cambodia and Thailand. You can then have more precise information about the problem.

P: Can we talk about this effort at another level, a level above the Thai-Cambodia border or the situation inside Cambodia? Can we discuss the situation in this country and in other capitals? Let me present the problem at another level. It is the most important need from a humanitarian standpoint; it is also an opportunity from another standpoint. The great danger is that the suffering in Cambodia will disappear from public view over the next few months.

S: I know.

P: One of the things I want to suggest, and which was touched on in your talk with Mr. Holbrooke,<sup>2</sup> is that there are certain realities. There are two which I wish to focus on. One reality is that you are the only individual with worldwide recognition with positive connotations related to Cambodia. Your name has worldwide recognition. No other person can claim such worldwide favorable recognition.

Secondly, events so far have established the plight of your people as one of the great tragedies of this century. That is understood.

Everything else represents hope and speculation: getting the Vietnamese out of Cambodia, giving freedom and independence to Cambodia, all those things which Mr. Holbrooke spelled out. It is a reality on the one hand and speculation on the other.

---

<sup>2</sup> See Document 83.

There is a need for continuing perseverance in the world community on this humanitarian issue. It puzzles me that you have not concentrated your tremendous recognition and personal prestige in bringing the message to the world that it needs to focus on the humanitarian issue.

I want to argue, with great respect, that what the situation needs more than anything is a personality around whom future possibilities can form. We have a problem which will be competing for attention with other great humanitarian problems. It seems to me it is a great opportunity for Prince Sihanouk to pursue the humanitarian issue in this country, in Europe, in Canada. The issue on its face is not a political one. He would simply be calling world attention to this human tragedy. No one can criticize you. No one can cut you down. No one can accuse you of seeking personal aggrandizement. No one can take a position against you. You would raise the whole level of consciousness and debate. You would identify yourself with the need to support the relief effort on the border and in Kampuchea and the medical assistance efforts and the pressure to open distribution channels within Kampuchea. If you could do that, by the end of this year you would make an important difference in keeping visible the plight of the Khmer people and you would strengthen your own position and your possibilities for the future, more strongly than if you had 10,000 AK 47s.

S: Since my arrival in France, I have raised humanitarian questions. I have many contacts with all people who have compassion for my people. We have discussed ways to help the the Cambodian people.

P: I know, but there is not enough passion. I argue for more passion and less politics.

S: No. The problem is not a lack of relief goods. The problem is a lack of distribution. I do not need to push for greater amounts of aid.

Loy (L): The problem is that time may erode the sense of urgency. We need to maintain an adequate amount of food. There are large amounts involved. They must come from many countries. We need to keep up the pressure.

Negroponte (N): What exactly do you suggest that the Prince does if he wishes to make progress in terms of what you would have him do?

P: I suggest that in public statements he focus primarily on the humanitarian issue. It is a platform which will join in time with the idea of a political solution, but a political solution needs to coalesce over time around a personality. I am sure you understand. There must be a continuing effort now to raise the level of consciousness about the humanitarian problem. In maintaining this pressure you would be preserving your own position.

S: I don't have to preserve my position. If I have to plead for a better solution to the humanitarian problem I should be allowed to

visit the refugee camps. I cannot represent my people since I can't have contact with them. I can't understand why I must change my activities. I have no contact with the Cambodians along the Thai-Cambodian border. The plight of my people has an exact location—the Thai-Cambodian border. That is where my people are. From Paris or Pyongyang I cannot speak for my people who because of foreign powers are separated from me. I must practice restraint in my declarations.

N: Mr. Holbrooke asked me to mention that our Ambassador in Bangkok is arriving this evening. We will have an opportunity to discuss the Prince's point.

S: When I was in Peking I had contacts everyday with TV teams and reporters. I talked all the time about the plight of my people and humanitarian questions.

P: True.

S: My voice does not have that much importance in the international field. I have already fulfilled my duty to my people. I regret that my people and I can't see each other. I see my people here and in France, but 90% of them have no problems. The humanitarian problem exists because there is a political problem. The political problem is at the root of all the misery and plight of my people. We have to choose. We cannot liberate Cambodia with AK 47s. We have to choose. We have to either continue to search for a political solution or to dedicate ourselves only to the humanitarian effort. I cannot be dedicated only to the humanitarian effort. I would have to declare that I had no more interest in the political and military aspects of the problem and that from now on I dedicate myself to humanitarian matters. I am sorry, I can't do that. I should be allowed by the Thais and the UN to have contacts with refugees in Thailand and along the Thai-Cambodian frontier. I should be able to have free circulation round the world like Sahrudin Khan, the former High Commissioner for Refugees. I will refrain from putting passion into my statements if I am not allowed to have contact with my people. It is ridiculous for me to be the lawyer of people I have never met.

P: That may be the key to your seeing your people.

S: There are people in France and here who want me to go to war and to examine the political aspects. You'd want me to resign as a political/military leader. If all of you agree, I should resign as a political/military leader.

P: I don't suggest that.

S: The situation is ambiguous.

P: I like your passion.

S: I know very well the problems of my country. Some people say I have lost a sense of Cambodian realities. It is not true. Day and night

I meet Cambodians. I remind you that I stayed in Cambodia more than three years with the Khmer Rouge. I was not a refugee outside Cambodia during the reign of the Khmer Rouge. I left one day before the arrival of the Vietnamese. I have not lost a sense of Cambodia realities. I know the situation.

P: I believe that that kind of passion before US audiences, what you said and how you said it, puts you above the level of political intrigue, at the level of the real issue. People here in the United States have responded to the humanitarian need. There has been an impressive display of compassion. Our hope is for a political solution. What I suggest is that while waiting we try to save the Cambodian people. This effort will involve a great many people and great many countries. Out of that kind of effort can come a political solution, if a personality can be projected on a broader basis. You are the single person with worldwide recognition that can be important for both the humanitarian effort and a political solution. I have tried to point out the intersection between the two.

L: There is no need to choose. There is no choice between a political solution and the humanitarian effort. They are related. The highest form of politics would be to insure the world remembers who is pushing the cause of the Cambodian people and insuring that the money keeps coming in to support the humanitarian effort.

P: We have given you our argument. Mr. Holbrooke has given you his argument. I am confident you can cope.

---

**85. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, February 25, 1980

**SUBJECT**

Norodom Sihanouk's Views

**PARTICIPANTS**

Prince Norodom Sihanouk

Michael Armacost, Deputy Assistant Secretary, EA

John D. Negroponte, Deputy Assistant Secretary, EA

Ambassador Mort Abramowitz

Stephen R. Lyne, Director, EA/VLC

ABRAMOWITZ: I am very much interested in pursuing with you elements of our discussion on Saturday,<sup>2</sup> particularly what can be done in regard to the growing crisis in Kampuchea, which has already had too much adversity. It looks like the last rice crop was very bad. In Battambang there was virtually nothing. The prospects are that unless there are sizable deliveries, much storage in Kampuchea, deliveries of seed, and increased distribution there will not be a rice crop next year either. Therefore, the people of Cambodia will be kept alive only through the international effort. I would be interested in your evaluation of this. Are my concerns merited or overdrawn? What role do you feel you can play to insure a wider distribution of food in Kampuchea? It seems to me that the problem is the indifference or the unwillingness of the Vietnamese to permit distribution. How do you feel about these aspects of the problem? We can talk about a political solution forever. But over the next few months these humanitarian problems will be the key ones.

SIHANOUK: I share fully your concern about the humanitarian and social problems. I came here because my compatriots invited me. I do not want to play a role in the political or military field but I could not avoid involving myself in these fields since my compatriots wanted me to play the role of the traditional leader of my nation. But I share the opinion of Ambassador Palmieri when he advised me to concentrate on humanitarian issues.<sup>3</sup> If the U.S. could establish contact between me and a Thai representative I can discuss with Thailand about our common concern—the fate of the refugees and the necessity to help

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Sullivan Subject File, Box 71, Sihanouk Visit, 2/80. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Lyne on February 27.

<sup>2</sup> February 23. No record of this meeting has been found.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 84.



the Cambodian people who will have almost nothing from December on because it appears that neither Battambang nor the rest of Cambodia will be able to produce any amount of rice. My problem in brief is this: How can I serve my people in Thailand and in Cambodia in the humanitarian field? I should have permission from Thailand and the Heng Samrin regime to enter Cambodia. If neither Thailand nor Heng Samrin will give me permission, I can't be useful. I should return to Pyongyang. Can Sihanouk go to Thailand or Cambodia? It seems it is easier for me to go to Thailand if I promise to play no political role. I am ready to give up political and naturally military activity. I am ready and eager to play a role only in the humanitarian field. It would please me very much. I am conscious that for the time being my efforts in the political, military, diplomatic areas would not give me a good result. Priority must go to saving Cambodian lives and people. I have to save my people from hunger and disease.

ABRAMOWITZ: Let me ask a number of things about the possibilities of a humanitarian role. In the first place, a humanitarian role is not just in Thailand. In the first instance it is in the West, in UN organs, to make clear that Cambodia is undergoing great suffering. If we are to cover the situation it is the West that must play the major role in providing adequate support and in doing its best to pressure the Vietnamese to allow food to be distributed throughout the country. Is there not a mission to be performed in the West? If that mission is performed in the West in that way, that lays the basis for a possible visit to Thailand as the Thai government sees the role you are playing, appreciates that role, and recognizes the necessity to facilitate the saving of the Kampuchean people. It seems to me that this humanitarian role is throughout the world. It starts in the West where money must be raised. It is the West which must pressure Vietnam, which obviously dominates most of Kampuchea. That is the logic of events. There is the possibility of a humanitarian conference to raise money. There is a lot of activity to do in the West, and in that activity there is a role as spokesman, recognized by most of the West as the principal voice of Kampuchea.

NEGROPONTE: I believe that the recollection of the Prince, reflected in his talk with Ambassador Palmieri, is that he is doing exactly what you propose by his travelling and playing the role of keeping the Kampuchean issue alive in the front of the eyes of the world. The Prince spoke of his relationship with Thailand. Our Ambassador to Thailand, since he deals personally with the Thai leaders, would be interested in what we both could do in order to improve your relationship with Thailand.

SIHANOUK: I would like very much to have the opportunity to meet with the Thai Ambassador. In Peking I often had the opportunity

to meet with the Thai Ambassador; we had very good meetings. At any time I am ready to have a friendly meeting with the Ambassador of Thailand. I am not hostile to Thailand. I want to improve my relations with the Royal Thai government in order to help my people. Certainly I will follow a humanitarian relief role in the West, but I also must have contact with the refugees. I can have contact with the West in Bangkok through Ambassadors and the UNHCR. If I am allowed to go to Thailand I can speak out for Thailand, not in the political field but strictly on humanitarian relief. I will not embarrass Thailand. I can guarantee it. I share your opinion and, as Ambassador Palmieri suggested, it is necessary to concentrate on humanitarian affairs.

NEGROPONTE: There may be concern about the public attitude you might adopt toward Thailand. What can be done to reassure the Thai?

ABRAMOWITZ: If your concern is to go to Bangkok to go to the border to see your people it will be necessary to lay the appropriate background over the next couple of months for your profound humanitarian mission. I do not know if it will ever work out. If it does work out, it will be necessary to establish your humanitarian mission in the West, to establish your recognition that Thailand has played a tremendous role in saving the Cambodian people.

Obviously you view Thailand in relationship to various forces in Kampuchea. Whatever Thailand is doing or not doing, their position is one of neutrality and they should not be gainsayed publicly.

NEGROPONTE: The Thai deserve credit for providing refuge to the Khmer people and for helping to feed them.

ARMACOST: We are required to praise Thailand because they deserve it and to encourage them to continue to accept more refugees and to help in the feeding. If we acknowledge their role, it is easier for them to get public support. Your access to Thailand might be enhanced by paying tribute to its humanitarian role.

NEGROPONTE: Yes, you should do the same. There are no political ramifications. It is a question of a humanitarian role.

ABRAMOWITZ: Thailand faces political difficulty for its policy of allowing large numbers of Cambodians to enter Thailand. It is not popular. Some important men, some of whom you know well, have publicly attacked the Kriangsak government for letting the Cambodians in. So the refugee policy of Thailand, which has let in a lot of Khmer refugees whose numbers are not insignificant and which arouse the Thai, is very generous. The people and the legislature criticize, and the government must take the political heat, to use an American expression. From that point of view it is not costless, not cost-free. For Thailand the most important thing is to see Vietnamese forces withdraw; that

is the most significant. They want a non-Vietnamese Cambodia. How to get there is everyone's problem. You want it. We want it. How do we get there? It is a long difficult road. But the most immediate problem is how to manage the humanitarian problem. You as the voice in the West for the Cambodian people could have a major role in arousing the consciousness of the West.

ARMACOST: I understand that you have recently been meeting with the Chinese. Have you talked with the Chinese about playing a humanitarian role? How would they react to this?

SIHANOUK: They are interested in one thing: my cooperation with the Khmer Rouge. They want me to be Head of State of Democratic Kampuchea again. They think of nothing else other than resistance against Vietnam. They did not talk about humanitarian issues with me, not at all. I have very good relations with them. Yesterday I and my wife spent many hours with them; we had dinner with the Ambassador and his wife. This morning I had a haircut at the Embassy. I go to the Chinese Embassy to improve my relations with them. China is my second homeland. After the *coup d'état* of Lon Nol China did much for me. I cannot forget them.

ARMACOST: They want you to improve your relations with Pol Pot?

SIHANOUK: No, they want me to be Head of State.

ARMACOST: You say you will not do it, it will not work?

SIHANOUK: Yes. I can never again be Head of State of Democratic Kampuchea. I prefer to go to Pyongyang. The Khmer Rouge killed my children and grandchildren. My people are my children also. I cannot fight for them because of their crimes. To be Head of State of Democratic Kampuchea would be terrible. I cannot do it.

NEGROPONTE: About an international conference. We all want a political solution at some time in the future. It is a goal we all share. When you talk about an international conference what exactly do you have in mind? What countries?

SIHANOUK: I have proposed the United States, Great Britain the Soviet Union and France. I have in mind it will be like 1954 when five great nations, China, United States, Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union met in Geneva in order to end the war in Indochina and to neutralize Cambodia and Laos.<sup>4</sup> That was the result of the 1954 International Conference. It was a very good result for Cambodia. It succeeded in safeguarding our territorial integrity and national unity. We held free elections under the ICC, with Poland, Canada and India. We got

---

<sup>4</sup> For documentation on the Geneva Conference, see *Foreign Relations*, 1952–1954, vol. XVI, The Geneva Conference.

many, many advantages for peace and progress in Cambodia. I would like something like that again. It could be either in Geneva or New York at the UN. I think we should also ask India, Poland and Canada in order to have continuity from 1954 up to now. If we could have the 1954 Geneva Conference as the basis of the work we should keep alive the ICC with India, Poland and Canada. Those three countries should attend. Yugoslavia as dean of the non-aligned may attend also. Naturally the countries concerned, Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia, and also Japan, Australia and New Zealand. They are in the same region as Indochina. Stability in Indochina is a guarantee of stability for the region.

NEGROPONTE: And the subject would be a conference on all of Indochina or just Cambodia?

SIHANOUK: If possible, just Cambodia. Vietnam considers the fate of Laos sealed. So there remains only the Cambodian issue. So we should try to persuade China on the one hand and Vietnam and the Soviet Union on the other to accept the neutralization of Cambodia to serve the interests of both sides. China cannot accept a Soviet-sponsored Cambodia. Vietnam cannot accept a Chinese-sponsored Cambodia. We should have a neutral Cambodia friendly to all countries in the world, with the Soviet Union, with China, with Vietnam.

ABRAMOWITZ: How do you see this occurring in a practical sense? What do you see as the Chinese objectives in Cambodia?

SIHANOUK: The situation in Cambodia is this. In the framework of the Indochina dispute between the West, represented by the U.S., and the East, represented by China and the Soviet Union after World War II, after 1975 all that remained in Indochina was communist. America was out. There remained only the two red giants. Indochina must belong either to the Moscow church or the Peking church. I call these Communists "churches". We are the victims of a dispute between two communist churches. China and Cambodia were together. China, with the Khmer Rouge, got Cambodia in her camp. There remained Vietnam, which had tried to be neutral.

Since the 1970's the leadership in Hanoi, although officially neutral, leaned to Moscow. In Hanoi I had close relations with Giap and Le Duan; Pham Van Dong less. Even Giap did not like or approve of China. Since 1976-1977 it became clear that Vietnam was in the Soviet camp.

So China, Vietnam and the Soviet Union cannot imagine my Cambodia other than communist. They want the Prince to become a communist. They will never agree to decommunize Cambodia. They want to keep Cambodia communist. China cannot accept neutralization. If China would move to decommunize, it could be achieved by working with Sihanouk, Lon Nol, etc. Cambodia could be decommunized. But China wants Cambodia to remain fully communist. That is the reason

why there is a deadlock. Neither can accept a decommunized Cambodia. Therefore, they must continue a proxy war in Cambodia in order to have either a pro-China Cambodia or a pro-Vietnam-Soviet Union Cambodia. It is a dispute between two communist states—between two communist churches. They reject any idea of interference by other people. They state it is a domestic affair, it is a domestic affair of two communist churches.

NEGROPONTE: Either one church wins or both churches agree on a solution along the ideas of the Prince.

ABRAMOWITZ: How do you get the two to agree?

SIHANOUK: I propose a neutral Cambodia under my leadership. China will accept it because everyone knows how I feel about the Chinese. The Soviet Union knows I am not hostile to it; up to the time of the Lon Nol coup I had good relations with them. As for Vietnam, I was helping Vietnam; that is why the coup happened. After that I allied with them. My friendship with Vietnam is very long. I am the solution for Cambodia. But I am not communist, not an authentic communist. Therefore they will not accept me. I have to become a communist head of state.

The Khmer Rouge are not acceptable in a neutralized Cambodia. The Soviet Union and Vietnam will never accept the Khmer Rouge. China will have to withdraw the Khmer Rouge and Vietnam and the Soviet Union will have to withdraw Heng Samrin. China should withdraw the Khmer Rouge leadership to Peking. Vietnam should withdraw Heng Samrin to Hanoi and Moscow. I told the Chinese they have built me a great palace; they can accommodate Pol Pot, Ieng Sary, and Khieu Samphan.

ABRAMOWITZ: Under which conditions can the two churches agree?

SIHANOUK: The U.S. should study the situation.

ARMACOST: Our assessment of Chinese objectives is close to yours, though frankly we think power realities are more decisive than ideology. Our impression is that China's objective is to counter Vietnam's effort to treat the situation in Cambodia as irreversible. To this end they are obliged to emphasize support for the Khmer Rouge as the only viable fighting force in Cambodia at the moment. If the fighting produced a more conciliatory mood in Hanoi, then China might be more amenable to a compromise. It is not that they are dogmatically committed to a communist government in Cambodia. Do you think the Chinese will insist on Sihanouk becoming a communist?

SIHANOUK: Both sides want to keep Cambodia communist. In all of history there is no example of a country which is already communist becoming non-communist. My dream would never become a reality

as far as de-communizing Cambodia. My problem is I can't be a communist. It is not possible. Even if it were to become possible to become a communist I could never become a communist with Pol Pot, Ieng Sary, Khieu Samphan, Son Sann. I can't be a communist with those killers.

NEGROPONTE: Time is needed until the churches resolve their differences. No matter what you decide, the two churches have to reach a *modus vivendi*.

SIHANOUK: China let me know very clearly that the situation in Cambodia is not irreversible despite what Pham Van Dong said. The Chinese say that Cambodians must unite and fight against Vietnam until the end. Deng Xiao Peng told me that if I don't succeed in three to four years, after eight to ten years I will succeed in liberating my country; I will win. He did not take into account that our people will have disappeared by then. How can China continue to fight by proxy like that in Cambodia against Vietnam and the Soviet Union? The day will come when there are no more Cambodians to be their proxies. How will they continue the fight then? In order to continue the fight there they will have to introduce Chinese soldiers. Is China realistic or not? Chinese are not unrealistic.

ABRAMOWITZ: Did you tell Deng that?

SIHANOUK: I tell the Chinese Ambassadors. I prefer not to tell Deng. He is very tough. I prefer no disputes.

ABRAMOWITZ: Do you believe the Vietnamese will ever leave Cambodia?

SIHANOUK: No they will never leave.

ABRAMOWITZ: They have to be driven.

SIHANOUK: Yes. Otherwise they will never leave. I know them.

NEGROPONTE: They are having a difficult time at home, their economy is in bad shape.

SIHANOUK: Don't expect much from that side. Even if their economy is in bad shape, if their people are starving, they will not change.

ABRAMOWITZ: Even if Le Duan dies do you think there will be any change?

SIHANOUK: No change.

NEGROPONTE: You studied in Saigon, did you not?

SIHANOUK: Yes. Since then I have had many Vietnamese as friends. Since then some of them have become communists, some have become non-communists. I have many Vietnamese friends on both sides. I know them. I know them well. Economic difficulties mean nothing to them. They can be imperialistic in Cambodia and Laos forever. They don't mind troubles.

ABRAMOWITZ: Do you believe that Vietnam really believes in the Indochina Federation?<sup>5</sup>

SIHANOUK: Oh, Vietnam does not believe in the Indochina Federation; it is a Vietnamese Federation. You usually have a federation among equal members with equality for each other. An Indochina Federation means that Indochina belongs to the Vietnamese, and that the Lao and the Cambodian people are wiped out.

NEGROPONTE: Do you believe that is their intention?

SIHANOUK: Oh yes. They plan genocide, only they are subtle. They do not kill outright like the Khmer Rouge. They are more subtle. In Laos already many people flee to Thailand from Laos, not just the tribespeople but the lowland Lao too. The Vietnamese encourage marriages between the Vietnamese and Lao. They encourage mixed marriages. Like Kaysone. Kaysone is more Vietnamese than he is Lao. Souphanouvong is completely under the control of his Vietnamese wife.

---

<sup>5</sup> See footnote 2, Document 23.

---

## 86. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, February 27, 1980, 3 p.m.

### SUBJECT

Secretary's Meeting with Sihanouk

### PARTICIPANTS

*United States*

The Secretary

Warren Christopher, Deputy Secretary

Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary for EA

John D. Negroponte, Deputy Assistant Secretary, EA

Stephen R. Lyne, Director, EA/VLC

Prince Norodom Sihanouk

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330–82–0217, Box 4, C, 1980. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Lyne on February 28. The meeting took place in Vance's office.



*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* It is very nice of your Excellency to receive me. I know how busy you are. I appreciate very much your gracious hospitality.

*THE SECRETARY:* I am very pleased to have this chance to meet with you again.

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* I thank you and your government for its so noble moral support through me to my people and country.

*THE SECRETARY:* I hope you are comfortable and that your trip has been fruitful.

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* Yes. I have received much friendship, much sympathy, much support. I am enjoying your gracious hospitality. I am very satisfied. My wife also. We are very grateful to you.

*THE SECRETARY:* Please extend my very best wishes and respects to your wife.

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* She sends her best regards and affection to you. She remembers very well when we met you when you visited us at the Lenox Hill Hospital in New York.<sup>2</sup>

*THE SECRETARY:* How is your health? Are you feeling well?

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* Much better, yes. Thank you.

*THE SECRETARY:* Everyone in the United States shares the same concern that I and the President have for the suffering of your people.

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* You have done very much for me and my compatriots.

*THE SECRETARY:* Have you had an opportunity to meet with many of your countrymen during your stay in the U.S.?

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* Oh yes, Your Excellency. We have met with many of them. There are meetings day and night. A few days ago we had a big assembly of Cambodians at the Hilton Hotel, meeting me, welcoming me. We spent the evening together. They made very clear that they support me as their leader, and that they support my efforts to liberate my country.

*THE SECRETARY:* I read the memorandum of your meeting with Mr. Holbrooke.<sup>3</sup> I am particularly interested in hearing from you an up-date of the situation and your views on your future. I would be very pleased if you would share your views with me.

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* I am always very happy to share them with you, Your Excellency.

---

<sup>2</sup> Sihanouk was in the hospital in January 1979. His note of appreciation to the U.S. Government, January 15, 1979, is in the Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 42, Kampuchea, 1/77-10/79.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 83.



Since my liberation in January 1979, my country has faced two problems: a humanitarian/social problem and a political/military problem. There are many refugees in Thailand and inside Cambodia. I know that my compatriots, despite their dedication to their homeland and their love for their homeland, were anxious to leave Cambodia in order to find freedom and dignity because under the Khmer Rouge regime they did not enjoy any liberty or dignity. Now under Vietnamese colonialism they have lost their dignity and freedom once again. It is a terrible humiliation for our nation which is being colonized by Vietnam. I request that the rich countries of the west accept more and more of my people until the time comes when my compatriots can go back to a free and independent Cambodia. We are all anxious to go back to our homeland. It is simpler for me. I am wonderfully accommodated in Peking and Pyongyang. Nonetheless, I am desirous to go back to Cambodia. I am a Cambodian. I do not want to live and die on foreign soil. That is the psychological and moral problem of all my compatriots. They are like me. They want to go back to Cambodia, even if they can only go back as soldiers or guerrillas fighting against Vietnam. All they need is weapons.

I ask all justice-loving, peace-loving, freedom-loving, friendly countries in the world to demand the convening in Geneva, or in New York at the United Nations, an international conference to neutralize Cambodia. I think that the tragedy of Cambodia cannot be ended until Cambodia is completely neutralized and internationally guaranteed like the status given Austria after World War II. Austria got assurances from the Soviet Union on one hand, and from the U.S., France, and the United Kingdom on the other, as a neutral country, a neutralized state, so that Europe could enjoy stability and peace. If one does not definitively neutralize Cambodia, Southeast Asia can never enjoy peace and stability. The war in Cambodia may one day spread to other countries in the region. The ASEAN countries are quite conscious of this danger. For the time being the Chinese, ASEAN, and some in the west—in Europe—think that the seat of Cambodia at the UN should be reserved for the Khmer Rouge regime. They think they should support the Khmer Rouge regime in fighting against Vietnam in Cambodia. That is not enough. It is a temporary measure to stop temporarily the advance of Vietnamese expansionism and Soviet hegemonism. The real solution for the problem of Cambodia should be the neutralization of Cambodia. The idea of such neutralization is not realistic at this time because neither China nor the Soviet Union nor Vietnam would agree. But I think that if the great states, like the U.S., the western states in Europe, Japan and Asian countries, and China herself, would support the idea, heavy pressure would exist against Vietnam and the Soviet Union. They may one day go to the conference table in order to discuss these issues.

*THE SECRETARY:* Do you think that the People's Republic of China would support a neutralized Cambodia?

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* For the time being the People's Republic of China is not ready to compromise on Cambodia. It insists on the continuation of the armed struggle against Vietnam in Cambodia. China lets me know clearly that it can accept only one solution, the continuation of the armed struggle under the Khmer Rouge.

*THE SECRETARY:* We applaud and support your refusal to cooperate with the Khmer Rouge. We agree that it is out of the question. We are pleased that we share the same perceptions.

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* If I reject the idea of cooperation with the Khmer Rouge, China will not help me. You are aware that in the meetings here the nationalists want me to form an army to go with them to Cambodia to fight against the Vietnamese. They do not claim to be able to defeat Vietnam, but want to create new conditions to get Vietnamese approval of the neutralization of Cambodia. We should make things more difficult for the Vietnamese in Cambodia. But it seems that the United States and other countries disapprove of this idea. I am ready to give up this plan. I insist, however, on a political aspect of my plan. We cannot solve the humanitarian aspects of the problem unless we go to the root of the evil; we must go to the political problem.

*THE SECRETARY:* How do you see resolving the political situation?

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* May I repeat? I wish for strong support from all peace-loving and justice-loving nations for the idea of an international conference and the neutralization of Cambodia. We should allow the Cambodian people to have general elections to elect a government which really represents them, which is genuinely Cambodian. I have suggested to the Vietnamese that they accept this idea of a general election. Heng Samrin's group in Phnom Penh, which claims to be supported by the Cambodian people, should not fear them. They claim to have the support of the people. If they present themselves to the Cambodian people in a general election, they should win, they should triumph. I have suggested to the Chinese that they allow a general election since their proteges the Khmer Rouge, according to their propaganda, enjoy the support of the Cambodian people and so they might be able to win also. Neither the Chinese nor the Vietnamese should fear a general election. Other political parties should be allowed to participate as well, like me. I have many supporters in Thailand and inside Cambodia. I can organize a political party. It should be up to the Cambodian people to decide the political system, the leadership, and the government of Cambodia.

*MR. HOLBROOKE:* You spoke about China in response to the Secretary's question about the international conference. As you know,

the UNGA resolution calls for an international conference.<sup>4</sup> We are ready for one. But the Chinese and Vietnamese do not appear ready to participate. Without the Chinese and Vietnamese there is no use in having the conference. You know the Chinese very well. You have known them since 1954. Do you think that there are any conditions under which China would agree to an international conference this year?

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* For the time being the Khmer Rouge is still strong in fighting against Vietnam. Therefore, China is not yet ready to accept an international conference and the neutralization of Cambodia. If next year, for example, China sees that the Khmer Rouge cannot challenge the Vietnamese effectively, China which is intelligent, will certainly accept the neutralization of Cambodia. Otherwise it would have to accept a communist Cambodia, but one that belonged to the other side, the mortal enemies of China—Vietnam and the Soviet Union. As far as Vietnam is concerned, it will not accept the neutralization of Cambodia or an international conference on Cambodia unless it faces more difficulties in Cambodia. That is why I speak about the necessity of armed struggle against Vietnam in Cambodia. Without additional difficulties Vietnam will not accept the idea of an international conference or the neutralization of my country.

*THE SECRETARY:* Let me comment on two or three things which are on my mind. Then we can come back to how you assess the political situation. As Secretary Holbrooke has said, I want to repeat that there is an urgent need for new pledges of relief and support for your people. There is also a need to exert concerted pressure on all the authorities in Cambodia to permit relief to go forward to meet the needs of your people. Although the situation has improved in the last few months, our estimate is that the situation may worsen in the near future. By March or April. As the symbol of the Cambodian people yours would be an important voice raised in the search for international assistance. In the long run, it would enhance your political position. It would identify you as a nationalist above all political parties and as a political catalyst for a resolution of the problems. In this connection we believe it is important to you to improve your consultation with ASEAN. As I understand it, you plan to go to Singapore. When?

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* In June.

*THE SECRETARY:* I had lunch today with Andrew Peacock,<sup>5</sup> the Foreign Minister of Australia, he hopes that when you come to the area you will come and pay him a visit.

---

<sup>4</sup> Reference is to UN General Assembly Resolution 34/22 adopted on November 14, 1979. See footnote 3, Document 70.

<sup>5</sup> No record of the luncheon meeting has been found. Peacock was in Washington for a meeting of the ANZUS Council. See Document 271.

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* Yes. I plan to go to Australia. His government already knows.

*THE SECRETARY:* I know you want to visit your people in the refugee camps in Thailand. I know that there are practical problems with that. We would be glad to do what we can to assist you in the region. Your role in the humanitarian aspects of this problem would lay useful groundwork for better relations with the Thai. I would also like to mention that we believe that the lack of unity among Cambodian nationalist groups is hampering movement toward a political solution. It seems to us that closer political relations between you and Son Sann would help further things.

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* That is no problem. I am ready to welcome him very warmly if his group decides to join me. There is no problem. At the Hilton Hotel meeting I received much applause from hundreds of Cambodians for my appeal to Son Sann and his group to join me. We are very anxious to have him with us in a genuine national union of all Cambodian nationalists. There is no problem as far as I am concerned.

*THE SECRETARY:* That brings us back to your dilemma. On the one hand you have China, which wants you to support Pol Pot. On the other hand you have Vietnam which has intensified its activities. How can we move these forces to consider a second step, one we would support, a political conference out of which would hopefully emerge a resolution which would let the Cambodian people decide their future and government

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* We must be patient. There are many obstacles. The problems are quite difficult.

*THE SECRETARY:* That's an understatement.

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* Yes, you understand well. I do not want France and other friendly countries in the west to move strongly now. It is not time.

*THE SECRETARY:* How do you see the situation developing? What are you doing? How are you proceeding to ensure that the process moves in a measured way to achieve the objectives that you want to see?

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* I have no personal ambition. I am tired of politics. After my liberation in January 1979 I fulfilled my mission at the Security Council in New York. After that I went to Pyongyang where I was prepared to stay quietly. But my compatriots want me to be more active. I have to see them. I am not anxious to engage to further political activity. I am fed up with political activity. I am forced to engage in politics. It is very unpleasant for me. As far as Cambodia is concerned, its fate is almost sealed. I know the Vietnamese well. Vietnam will not give up. Vietnam will not withdraw its troops from

Cambodia unless there is an extraordinary unforeseen event which would force Vietnam and the Soviet Union to soften their present stand. Cambodia, like Laos, is firmly in the hands of Vietnamese colonialism. Vietnam will not give up. I am not optimistic. I personally think we must accept a *fait accompli*. If my compatriots want me to go to the battlefield, I will do so. I will return to Cambodia. I will fulfill my duty to my homeland. The Czechs, the Bulgarians, and the Afghan people want to be free and liberated from the domination of the Soviet Union. But they have to accept the *fait accompli*. My people are like people of Dubcek,<sup>6</sup> of Bulgaria. What can we do? Unless there is a new world war, an international war, we cannot wish for the liberation of Cambodia. We cannot hope for it. It is an impossibility.

*THE SECRETARY:* The tragedy is that your people are being crushed between two forces, the Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese. In the process your people are being devastated.

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* Yes. What can we do?

*THE SECRETARY:* That is what I am trying to get from you.

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* I don't know. The U.S. is very powerful.

*THE SECRETARY:* But you understand your people better than anyone. They are in a desperate situation.

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* My people want liberty, territorial integrity, national sovereignty, etc. But we have no way to reach our goals. I apologize. I have nothing to say.

*THE SECRETARY:* What will you seek to do when you meet with ASEANs? What will you seek to do when you go to Thailand to meet with your people?

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* I want to visit the refugees. There are 700,000 of them in Thailand and along the Thai-Cambodian border. I want to observe them as their lawyer and supporter. There are three categories of refugees. The majority want to settle in Europe and America. I can deal with the western embassies in Bangkok and Singapore to get permission for these refugees to leave Thailand. The second category are those refugees who may agree to stay temporarily in Thailand to be close to their homeland. Finally, a small minority may choose to go back to Cambodia. I want to make lists, to divide my people into the three categories. I can be their diplomat and lawyer in the international field. I could be helpful and useful to them directly. Now I just speak and travel. I am not useful.

*THE SECRETARY:* ASEAN shares the same humanitarian objectives. They are also concerned about stability in the region. They want

---

<sup>6</sup> Presumably Alexander Dubcek, former leader of Czechoslovakia.

a stable situation and an independent Cambodia. They have the same objectives that you do.

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* There are problems there too.

*THE SECRETARY:* We have to deal with the reality of large powers, people with guns.

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* ASEAN countries, like China, want me to cooperate with the Khmer Rouge to attract national support and international sympathy. If I become the head of State of Democratic Kampuchea, which is a full member of the UN, I weaken the position of the Russians and the Vietnamese and Heng Samrin. Heng Samrin will not succeed in getting the seat of Cambodia at the UN. The ASEAN countries fear that if Sihanouk does not join with the Khmer Rouge before next year's UNGA, the UN may change its mind and give the seat to the pro-Vietnamese regime in Phnom Penh. For Thailand, China, and ASEAN, that would be terrible. They do not want a Cambodia definitely colonized by Vietnam. If they have a common frontier with Vietnamese that would be terrible.

I am not allowed by Cambodian nationalists to go to the Khmer Rouge. If the U.S. should persuade my compatriots to let me become head of state of the Khmer Rouge (shrug). I depend on my people. Even if the nationalists in the U.S. agree that I should become head of state of Democratic Kampuchea—it is not possible. My compatriots in the rest of the world will condemn me.

*THE SECRETARY:* We cannot support the Khmer Rouge. We cannot support Heng Samrin. There must be another solution.

*MR. HOLBROOKE:* If that solution includes you, that requires a change of attitude by China, ASEAN, Thailand. This is what we have been talking about over the past week. You have a problem with Bangkok, it goes back to Prear Vihear. It must be reduced. Do you agree?

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* Yes. I am a man of good will. I don't want to make the situation more complicated. I am ready to accept all and any conditions to work with Son Sann and Thailand to save my country. I have no personal ambition. I have no demands. I did not come to become a national leader again. I am comfortable in Pyongyang. I would be happy to go back. Others have pressed me. The ASEAN countries have a problem. The U.S. has a problem with the Soviets in Vietnam. I have no problem.

*THE SECRETARY:* You yourself may have no problems, but your people have problems.

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* Yes. My people have problems. But I am a man of the past, not the future. I have found a second homeland. I am happy.

*MR. HOLBROOKE:* What about the Vietnamese? Would they be willing to accept less than the full cake? Is there any way that the

Vietnamese could accept you as a part of a new political situation in Phnom Penh?

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* Unless they face more difficulties there, they have no use for me. I have tried. I have sent many letters. They reject me. They consider themselves strong enough to keep the Cambodian cake in their mouth without making any compromises with anyone. I cannot predict the future. If one day they see they cannot go on with a tough position because of difficulties in Cambodia they may invite me to talk. They may invite me to Hanoi. I have let them know through common friends that I am ready at any time to go to Hanoi to talk with them. In France I asked common friends to let them know that I am always available for talks. In the past I went there many times. They are not interested.

*THE SECRETARY:* What kind of a situation can you envisage in which they would be interested in you? I understand that the Chinese want you to come in as head of state. What do the Vietnamese have in mind for you?

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* Nothing. They have nothing in mind for me. They want to swallow Cambodia and turn Cambodia into a Vietnamese province. If over the next few years they do not succeed in pacifying the country and the Khmer Rouge remain very strong, they may reexamine the possibilities of dealing with Sihanouk. No one can predict the future or the evolution of international events.

*MR. HOLBROOKE:* Do you see any chance of a change this year?

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* This year there is no hope. We have to wait until next year. Even ASEAN is helping China to get my approval for a coalition with the Khmer Rouge. With Son Sann they have no problem because he has no power. Son Sann is not a zero but the real force in any coalition would be the Khmer Rouge. What ASEAN and China want is the Khmer Rouge and Sihanouk; Son Sann is not important. But I repeat, I am at their disposal. Here in the U.S. the nationalists depend on you. If the U.S. government want me to cooperate with the Khmer Rouge, to become the head of state of Democratic Kampuchea, it should speak to the Cambodians here. They will agree with you. ASEAN would like to see me in Singapore because they want me to cooperate with Pol Pot and to join a coalition with the Khmer Rouge. The Khmer Rouge themselves have let me know that they are very anxious to have me back as head of state. They say they will allow me to reshuffle the government. But in fact the Khmer Rouge will keep power—they are the ones who control the communist party apparatus and army. They are the masters of everything. The government is just an honorary figurehead; it does not have any power in Cambodia. But I depend on the nationalists. If in France, in the west, if in the U.S., they gave me the green light, the *feu vert*, I have no prejudices. For the sake of my people, I am prepared to do whatever my people want.



*MR. HOLBROOKE:* There is one practical problem. When the Prince is in Pyongyang it is difficult to communicate with him. We value our contacts with him. We have to think of a way to communicate with him.

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* It is very easy: through the French mission in Pyongyang. You can send a message to your embassy in Peking, who can give it to the French Embassy, who can then send it to their trade mission in Pyongyang. They can see me at any time.

*THE SECRETARY:* We will be in contact with you.

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* Sweden also is very interested.

*THE SECRETARY:* I want to keep in touch.

*PRINCE SIHANOUK:* Sweden could be your intermediary very easily. And they are your good friends.

## 87. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

New York, March 27, 1980, 2 p.m.

### SUBJECT

U.S.-Vietnamese Issues

### PARTICIPANTS

#### *Vietnam*

Amb. Ha Van Lau, Permanent Representative to the U.N.

Mr. Ha Huy Tam, First Secretary, Vietnamese Mission

Mr. Tran Si Luong, Third Secretary, Vietnamese Mission

#### *U.S.*

John D. Negroponte, Deputy Assistant Secretary, East Asia and Pacific Affairs,  
Department of State

Gen. Thomas C. Pinckney, Regional Director, East Asia & Pacific Affairs,  
Department of Defense

John H. Willett, Political Officer, USUN (Notetaker)

1. *Summary:* DAS Negroponte opened discussion by fully reviewing the MIA question, underscoring its humanitarian aspect and urging SRV cooperation to resolve the issue, which was viewed as an obstacle to improved US/SRV relations. General Pinckney left material on four specific cases with Amb. Ha Van Lau. Negroponte expressed U.S. hope

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Sullivan Subject File, Box 71, Negroponte-Ha Van Lau Meeting, 3/80. Secret; Limdis. Drafted by Willett (USUN). The meeting took place at the Vietnamese Mission to the United Nations.



that Vietnam would prove more forthcoming on the orderly departure program. He stressed the need for the rapid importation of rice seed into Kampuchea. In conclusion, Negroponte underscored U.S. concerns on reports of poison gas use in Kampuchea and Laos.

Amb. Ha Van Lau did not accept that the MIA issue was a genuine obstacle to better relations. He expressed guarded optimism on the orderly departure program. He dismissed as slanderous reports of poison gas use. Finally, Ha Van Lau said SRV shares U.S. concerns on urgency of rice seeds for Kampuchea, and said that international community should act to halt “privateering” in the Thai camps. In conclusion, he urged that U.S. and Vietnam meet more often on matters of mutual concern. *End Summary*

2. After an exchange of pleasantries, Negroponte conveyed personal greetings from Secretary Vance, whom Ha Van Lau had last seen in November, 1979 in New York City.<sup>2</sup> He said Vance and Assistant Secretary Holbrooke had asked him to pay a courtesy call on Ha Van Lau in his (Negroponte’s) capacity as the replacement for Bob Oakley. He expressed appreciation for Ha Van Lau’s willingness to receive him on such short notice so soon after Ha Van Lau’s return from Hanoi.

3. *Missing in Action*: On behalf of Secretary Vance, Negroponte expressed thanks for Ha Van Lau’s prompt response to Vance’s letter of February 7 concerning MIA’s.<sup>3</sup> To remove this impediment to better relations, the United States proposed that Hanoi and Washington work towards a solution of accounting problem. So long as the SRV delays moving forward on this point, this will be viewed as an obstacle to improved relations.

4. Negroponte said that the U.S. was disappointed that the SRV had not found it convenient to invite Lt. Col. Mather<sup>4</sup> to Hanoi. To assist the SRV in developing the fullest possible accounting, Mather should visit Hanoi at the earliest possible date. The advantage to the SRV would be Mather’s help in reviewing case data assembled by the U.S., making available our experience, suggesting ways the SRV accounting efforts might be improved, and harmonizing SRV and U.S. methodology to improve understanding on this matter. Finally, the U.S. was available to assist the SRV in any other way possible on accounting.

5. Negroponte pointed out that the accounting issue is a humanitarian one. The mutual objective is to relieve the suffering and anxiety of

---

<sup>2</sup> See Document 68.

<sup>3</sup> Neither Vance’s letter nor Ha Van Lau’s reply has been found.

<sup>4</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Paul Mather, Commander of the Joint Casualty Resolution Center detachment in Bangkok.

the next-of-kin. Decency demands that attention be devoted to the accounting question, both to enable proper interment for recoverable remains, and so that the U.S. and Vietnamese peoples can remove a good portion of residual rancor.

6. Negroponte said that the U.S. has assembled known information on each MIA. Likewise, SRV media has released much information on a number of prisoners or casualties; obviously on these individuals, at least, the SRV can offer a full accounting. During the war, Hanoi released pictures and news releases on captives and corpses. Subsequent to the war, information was released on gravesites, etc. There was also the persistent case of the remains of 400 Americans. Suspicion could be easily reduced if Hanoi would permit a joint US-SRV party to visit the site, as was raised in Secretary Vance's last letter to the Foreign Minister.<sup>5</sup> This would be a positive gesture, and such a visit could take place during Mather's first trip to Hanoi.

7. Negroponte said that the United States was prepared to take these small but concrete steps, which are the only way to begin a meaningful process of setting our relationship on a firm foundation. The U.S. has always been and remains ready to assist the SRV in arriving at a proper accounting. In this respect there is considerable opportunity for expanded cooperation between the U.S. and the SRV, and Negroponte repeated that the United States would welcome the opportunity to assist the Vietnamese on the MIA issue. Both the United States and Vietnam know that more can be done. The 73 remains previously returned are a positive step, but they cannot substitute for a full accounting which, should it take place, would improve the SRV image in the United States, regionally and worldwide.

8. In conclusion, Negroponte said that the United States wished to eliminate areas of suspicion and mistrust in this aspect of our relationship. When Representative Wolff visited Hanoi in the summer of 1979, SRV officials stated that they were working on some cases and that they hoped to have information "soon".<sup>6</sup> But there has been no further information provided. The expectations which were raised by the SRV statement create suspicions that the Vietnamese authorities are not cooperating, and these suspicions produce a climate in which people are willing to accept rumors or information that has not been fully verified.

9. General Pinckney then presented four specific cases to Amb. Ha Van Lau.<sup>7</sup> He outlined the details of each case and left material with the

---

<sup>5</sup> Not found.

<sup>6</sup> See footnote 12, Document 53.

<sup>7</sup> Not further identified.

Ambassador for further consideration by the SRV authorities. Pinckney pointed out that in view of such hard evidence, there must be some records on the Vietnamese side that would help us answer the concerns of the families involved.

10. *Food Relief for Kampuchea*: Negroponte pointed out the particularly urgent need for seed rice with which to begin planting in Kampuchea, a process that must be completed in the forthcoming weeks. While there is still hope that sufficient funds can be raised for this seed rice, and that sufficient seed rice can be found for purchase, there is deep concern because of slow off-loading capacity in the port of Kompong Som and because of the collapse of a portion of the port facilities in Phnom Penh. As a result, it may not be possible to import the needed 30,000 metric tons of planting seed. Negroponte noted the SRV's reported decision to turn over 10,000 tons of seed for use in Cambodia, but he added U.S. belief that all avenues—barge transport, land routes, sea ports, and provincial airports—should be used to increase the intake of relief supplies, especially rice seed, during the coming crucial weeks. The U.S. assumes that the prospect of renewed starvation, and the flooding of Khmer to the Thai border in search of food and seed, concerns Hanoi to the same degree as Washington.

11. *Orderly Departure Program*: The U.S. has been trying in recent months to reach agreement with Hanoi on a common list of those eligible for emigration. While Hanoi had previously announced its reluctance to proceed before having 1,000 names on the list, the U.S. understands that there are now 1,300 names available. We also understand that the UNHCR Representative Myers<sup>8</sup> has been in Hanoi awaiting an opportunity to visit Ho Chi Minh City in order to begin interviewing those on the joint working list, so that the departure process can begin as soon as possible. Negroponte expressed the U.S. hope that Hanoi will accept more from the list of 9,000 names already provided, and reiterated in the strongest terms the desire of the U.S. for the program to succeed. The U.S. is anxious to do what is necessary to make the program effective in meeting its humanitarian objectives.

12. *Poison Gas*: Negroponte noted the SRV rejection of charges of use of poison gas by Vietnamese forces in Indochina, as well as rejections of similar charges by the Laotian and Soviet Governments.<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless the U.S. is impressed by the fact that the Vietnamese Government has taken no steps to dispel the deep international concern that arises

---

<sup>8</sup> Michael Myers, a staffer with the UN Human Rights Commission.

<sup>9</sup> The charges were made at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction held at Geneva March 3–21. See *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1980, p. 72.

from these reports. He urged that Hanoi accept a visit by impartial international observers for the purpose of evaluating the truth. If the charges are found to be untrue, that would put the matter to rest.

13. Amb. Ha Van Lau expressed appreciation for Negroponte's and Pinckney's visit. He said he had taken note of Negroponte's statements "with all necessary reservations", that his government would review them and that he would reply in more detail at a later date.

14. Ha Van Lau said he did not share the U.S. view that the MIA issue is an obstacle to improved relations between the U.S. and the SRV. He recalled telling Secretary Vance on November 5, 1979 and in his February 26 reply to the Secretary's letter—as well as to Representative Lester Wolff—that Vietnam works on the basis of humanitarian spirit and friendship between America and Vietnam because Hanoi knows that the families concerned are in a state of uncertainty. He pointed out that Vietnam understands, even more than the United States, the depths of feeling involved, because there are tens of thousands of people on the Vietnamese side in the war who remain unaccounted for. Seven million tons of bombs were dropped and there was enormous destruction. So far Vietnam has no accounting for thousands of its citizens and soldiers. Ha Van Lau said that he himself has cousins of whose whereabouts he remains ignorant. His own relations have asked him for facts about them but he was unable to reply. He said he was telling Negroponte this to show him the strong sympathy that Vietnam had for the position of the American families.

15. Recalling that he had previously spoken to Secretary Vance on this subject, Ha Van Lau pointed out that Vietnam had returned all living Americans. He said it would be against Hanoi's humanitarian goals to leave American families suffering. Likewise, it would bring no benefit to the SRV. He said that Hanoi acts upon information as it is given by the United States and that Washington should remove all suspicions of Vietnam's motivations. He recalled that when U.S. pilots were captured, North Vietnamese soldiers had protected them from physical violence on the part of the civilians. He promised to take the cases that General Pinckney had left with him into consideration. He said Vietnam would try to make a full accounting, but he could not share the U.S. belief that the MIA issue was an obstacle to better relations. In conclusion, he said that obstacles do in fact exist to improved relations, but that these obstacles were created by the U.S. side.

16. Ha Van Lau said that the subject of a visit on Mather's part to Hanoi was currently under review. He promised to remind his Foreign Minister of the issue. Personally speaking, he said he had no clear picture of exactly what was involved, but he promised to report faithfully what Negroponte had asked.

17. Ha Van Lau expressed his belief that the problem of the joint list of approximately one thousand (sic) names would be solved, but that good will was needed on both sides. He noted the complaint on his government's side that the American officer involved "does not have the right attitude to solve the problem", even though the UNHCR Rep does want the problem solved. (*NOTE: There was not time during the meeting to clarify exactly which American or what problem Lau was referring to here.*)

18. Ha Van Lau said that reports of use of toxic or poisonous gases on the part of the Vietnamese forces are slanderous and unacceptable, since Vietnam is incapable of producing toxic chemicals. He said if the U.S. side continues to raise one problem after another, this will simply create further suspicions. In this respect, he cited the case of those undergoing re-education programs. He said the SRV had stated its policy, but some do not believe in this honest profession of Hanoi's intentions. Recently, representatives of Amnesty International had visited those places but had seen for themselves that there was no basis in such allegations. If the U.S. continues to raise "unreal" problems and then base relations on a resolution of these problems, U.S.-Vietnamese relations would get nowhere.

19. The Vietnamese Ambassador said that his government fully shares U.S. concerns as regards the necessity of seeds for Kampuchea. On March 26, he spoke with Sir Robert Jackson (UN Coordinator for the Khmer Relief Program), Grant and Egger<sup>10</sup> of UNICEF and other UN officials concerned with Khmer relief. Ha Van Lau reportedly suggested to them that in order to solve the issue, they should talk directly with PRK officials on the capacity of the PRK to receive seeds and foodstuffs. On his just-completed trip to Hanoi, Ha Van Lau himself went to Kampuchea for two days and saw with own eyes the logistical difficulties involved. He said the Kampuchians are making a major effort because such is in their interest. The international agencies and organizations, Vietnam, and other socialist states are trying to help the Khmer. Ha Van Lau also reported that on March 26 the USSR told the UN that Moscow would help with providing port unloading equipment. He said the international agencies involved in the Khmer relief effort are prepared to accept assistance from any quarter.

20. Ha Van Lau said he would make one point that had not yet been covered. As regards Khmer relief, the major problem was how to provide assistance both inside Kampuchea and outside. Some people,

---

<sup>10</sup> James Grant, UNICEF Executive Director, and Charles Egger, UNICEF Deputy Executive Director.

he feels, should not be permitted to smuggle aid into Kampuchea as reported in the press.

In the camps along Thailand's border with Kampuchea, he said that war lords are fighting and that Vietnam had brought this to the attention of the United Nations at the beginning of the Khmer relief program. He accused the Khmer Rouge and the Khmer Serei of abusing the charity of the international community and engaging in black marketeering, profiteering and the killing of civilians. He called for an immediate cessation of such incidents. He accused the instigators of acting on political motives and working against the Khmer people and the "legal government" in Phnom Penh. He accused them of trying to sabotage the rehabilitation efforts of the Khmer.

21. Ha Van Lau said that he was not prepared to speak with Negroponte on general matters, "because our points of view on relations between us, as well as on security in Southeast Asia and friendship among peoples, have all been stated on many previous occasions." He said that the U.S. Administration and the State Department understood the Vietnamese point of view and told Negroponte that when he had spoken with Representative Wolff and with Secretary Vance, he had urged them "not to play the China card". He said it was "an established understanding" on the Vietnamese side that the U.S. was playing the Chinese card despite the fact that U.S. officials had denied it. In conclusion, Ha Van Lau said that if the U.S. is not playing the Chinese card, it should prove this with deeds. But since Ha Van Lau spoke with Vance, there has been nothing new.

22. Negroponte said that with respect to the concrete questions that had been posed, the U.S. hoped to have answers as soon as possible. Negroponte said he took note of Ha Van Lau's promise to remind the Minister of our request on Mather's trip to Hanoi. As for the orderly departure program Negroponte said that if obstacles exist, the U.S. stands ready to help resolve them. But it was our understanding that the next step rested with Hanoi. The U.S. sincerely believed that it had made every reasonable effort to get the program to succeed. He said that the U.S. was not playing the China card and that the three most important concerns of the United States in Southeast Asia were A) the security of Thailand, B) the humanitarian situation in Kampuchea, and C) the growing Soviet influence in the region. He said to Ha Van Lau that these matters had, it is true, been discussed at great length in the past, but since Lau had raised the matter, Negroponte felt compelled to set the record straight on this point.

23. Ha Van Lau said that he was ready to talk with Negroponte on general questions at any time, adding that it would be good to meet more frequently. He asked that his respects be conveyed to Secretary Vance, and Negroponte promised to do so. Before leaving, Pinckney

said that the United States appreciates Hanoi's concerns on the MIA issue, since they so closely parallel those of the United States. He said that by sitting down together with no recriminations, but just for the purpose of discussing specific cases, he was sure that many questions would be answered and that the air would be cleared on both sides. It would be a benefit to all concerned to familiarize themselves with the interests of the other side and to develop a habit of working together.

---

**88. Telegram From the Embassy in China to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Beijing, April 7, 1980, 0933Z

3134. Subj: Letter From Sihanouk to President Carter.

1. Following is Embassy translation of letter from Prince Sihanouk to President Carter received April 7. Begin text:

Mr. President:

Permit me to solicit from Your Excellency, who has always accorded such noble support to the Khmer people, his aid, that is to say that of the United States of America, so that the Khmer people can survive after long years of misfortune without precedent in the history of humanity.

The present situation of the Khmer people is as follows:

First, there are in Thailand along the Thai-Cambodian frontier more than 700,000 Khmers (men and women, old and young) who have fled the inhumane regime of the Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese colonialism established since 1979 in Cambodia. These refugees live in miserable conditions and have to face terrible dangers. They could be from one moment to the next forced back into Kampuchea by the Thai authorities. They are victims of a fratricidal war which is caused by different armed Khmer "red" and "blue" factions. They are humiliated slaves and are inhumanely exploited by Cambodian "war lords." The humanitarian aid (that of UNICEF, the Red Cross, etc.) which was destined for them has been in large part diverted by these "war lords," by the "government" and by the Cambodian "resistance," protected by China and Thailand.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 6, Cambodia: 1980. Immediate; Limited Official Use. Sent for information to Bangkok. Carter initialed at the end of the telegram.



Secondly, in "the Popular Republic of Kampuchea" under the Vietnamese protectorate, the fate of the Cambodian people is, it appears, much better than that known under the yoke of the Khmer Rouge. But four facts are undeniable: the humanitarian aid accorded by the international community to the Cambodian population has only been partially distributed to the latter; in limiting the entry of humanitarian aid to the port of Kompong Som and to Phnom Penh, the "government" of Heng Samrin is not permitting all of this aid to reach the Khmer people expeditiously; Western observers in Cambodia are not able to visit all the projects to investigate the situation; in several months there will be an extremely serious famine which, if it is not checked in time, will decimate hundreds of thousands of humble and innocent Khmers.

Mr. President, taking into account the tragic situation of the Khmer people outlined above, I beg you to do everything in your power to:

1. See that Thailand never expels to Cambodia the Khmers who have fled the Khmer Rouge or Vietnamese colonialism.

2. Have Western Europe and North America, the countries of choice of the refugee Khmer, accept a greater number of these refugees.

3. "Depoliticize" and "demilitarize" the collection and distribution of humanitarian aid to Khmers in Thailand and in the border zones.

4. See that the "government" of Heng Samrin in Phnom Penh and that of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam permit humanitarian aid coming from the West and elsewhere to be shipped by land routes in addition to ocean, river and air routes and to be distributed in the presence of representatives of the donating countries or organizations to the population over all the provinces, districts and communes of Cambodia.

5. Send in the months to come more food to the indigenous population of Cambodia and a large quantity of rice seed so that the rice growing season of this year (the rainy season will begin in a month) can at least have some success.

Mr. President, I take this occasion to thank once again Your Excellency and the United States for your generosity in regard to the Kampuchean people.

It is with sentiments of infinite gratitude that I beg you, Mr. President, to accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

N. Sihanouk, 6 April 1980. End text.

2. Original text being pouched to Department.<sup>2</sup>

3. Prince Sihanouk departed Beijing for Pyongyang April 6.

Woodcock

---

<sup>2</sup> Not found.



**89. Telegram From the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Posts<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 6, 1980, 2115Z

149398. Subject: Negroponte-Ha Van Lau Meeting.

1. (S–Entire text).

2. Begin Summary: DAS Negroponte met with Vietnamese UN Ambassador Ha Van Lau 4 June in New York to discuss several issues in our bilateral relations: MIAs, orderly departure and Vietnamese charges of U.S. use of toxic chemicals, and to review Geneva Conference on Kampuchean relief.<sup>2</sup> Ha Van Lau stonewalled all specific issues, but took initiative to restate Hanoi's view of situation in Indochina, following essentially same line as Vietnamese Foreign Minister Thach took in Bangkok.<sup>3</sup> Addressees may share fact and content of meeting in context of what we envisage as regular general exchange of views on issues between us and Vietnamese. Department will be doing same here. End Summary.

3. In 4 June meeting at the Vietnamese UN Mission with Vietnamese UN Ambassador Ha Van Lau, DAS Negroponte reviewed status of MIA and ODP issues, discussed results of Geneva Conference on Kampuchean relief, and responded to Vietnamese memorandum on U.S. use of toxic chemicals.

4. After first informing Ha Van Lau of Secretary's intention to attend ASEAN Foreign Ministers meeting in Kuala Lumpur,<sup>4</sup> Negroponte noted that in his March meeting with Ha Van Lau<sup>5</sup> he had left several dossiers on particular MIA cases, had reiterated the suggestion that Lt. Col. Mather be permitted to go to Hanoi at an early opportunity to establish a channel of information on MIA questions, and had noted specifically that the report of 400 remains in Hanoi needed to be clarified. He stated that as of yet we have had no reaction from Hanoi.

5. Negroponte then turned to the Geneva Conference on Kampuchean relief, expressing regret that the Vietnamese had not participated.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968–1991, Lot 94D430, Box 17652, POL 16 US-SRV Meeting, NY, June 4, 1980. Secret; Immediate; Limdis. Drafted by Lyne; cleared by Holbrooke; approved by Negroponte. Sent to Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Manila, Jakarta, Beijing, Tokyo, Wellington, Canberra, and Paris. Sent for information to USUN and the Mission in Geneva.

<sup>2</sup> May 26–27. For a description of the meeting, see *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1980, pp. 337–338.

<sup>3</sup> Presumably at the October 23 meeting with Holbrooke; see Document 64.

<sup>4</sup> June 25–26. See Document 146.

<sup>5</sup> See Document 87.

He drew Ha Van Lau's attention to the summing-up statement of Australian Foreign Minister Peacock, noting that it summarized extremely well our point of view and the principal observations of the conference. He pointed out that the statement also listed some concrete ways in which the relief effort to the Khmer people could be improved, and left a copy of Peacock's statement with Ha Van Lau.

6. On ODP Negroponte reviewed the past discussions between the U.S. and UNHCR, and Hanoi, discussed the status of the respective lists, and re-affirmed our willingness to interview people on the Vietnamese list with ties to the U.S. He stated that as far as we are concerned the next step is up to the Vietnamese, specifically to allow Mike Myers to proceed to Ho Chi Minh City at the earliest possible opportunity.

7. Negroponte concluded by referring to a Vietnamese memorandum on U.S. use of toxic chemicals in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia which SRV Embassy in Paris passed 22 January to Embassy Liaison Officer (Paris 02387 Notal).<sup>6</sup> He reiterated our concern over reports that lethal gas has been used in Laos and Kampuchea. He rejected the Vietnamese contention in the memorandum that the U.S. used toxic chemicals and gases to kill civilians and to destroy the environment in Vietnam, and rejected Vietnamese claims for compensation for the use of chemical defoliants and herbicides. He stated that we recognize that some of the chemicals used in Vietnam for defoliation and as herbicides may have produced some adverse effects. He noted that a Vietnamese scientist recently visited the U.S. in a private capacity to discuss this issue. He said we were prepared to entertain a request for discussion between our respective scientific and technical experts and suggested that a contact for further exchanges be through respective liaison officials in Paris.

8. On the MIA issue Ha Van Lau responded that he had transmitted the U.S. information and requests to the Foreign Ministry and the interested offices in Hanoi but had not yet received any response.

9. On the Geneva Conference, he said that Vietnam had explained its position fully in the ECOSOC meeting and in its letter to the Secretary General.<sup>7</sup> He said Vietnam opposed political conditions attached to humanitarian assistance and deplored the abuse of humanitarian assistance to interfere in the internal affairs of Kampuchea. He noted that the "initiator" of the idea of the humanitarian conference had made it

---

<sup>6</sup> Telegram 2378 from Paris, January 22, transmitted a Vietnamese memorandum alleging U.S. use of chemicals in Vietnam. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800038-0505)

<sup>7</sup> The April 26 letter objected to the convening of an international conference on Kampuchea without the agreement of Kampuchean officials. See *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1980, p. 336.

clear that part of the motivation for the conference was political. He said that Hanoi would not participate in a political conference or one that did not include the PRK. In light of the results of the conference, he said, Hanoi believed that it had been correct in staying away. He observed that the conference did achieve a positive result in stimulating contributions, but stated that the convening of a pledging conference along the lines of the November conference last year in New York<sup>8</sup> would have achieved the same result.

10. On the response to the Vietnamese memo on use of toxic chemicals, Ha Van Lau stated that he would relay our response to Hanoi. Speaking personally, he stated that he believed the specific concerns raised in Hanoi's memo were well founded, commenting that he was speaking from personal experience from his investigations after the war.

11. On orderly departure, Ha Van Lau stated that he was not responsible for refugee affairs but that he would convey our views to Hanoi. On Mike Myers travel to Ho Chi Minh City, he stated that "I think he is in Hanoi, and I think he should proceed with the authorized authorities in Hanoi."

12. Ha Van Lau then said he wanted to speak about U.S. policy and about the situation in Kampuchea. He spoke for roughly thirty-five minutes, making the following main points:

U.S. actions and policy

—Hanoi judged from the statements, activities, and actions of the U.S. toward Vietnam that the U.S. is continuing to "play the China card" and to support reactionary forces against the cause of the Kampuchea people.

—In addition, the U.S. in the international community has blocked international aid to Vietnam.

—Such actions and such an attitude on the part of the U.S. will only further complicate the relationship between our two countries and does not create a climate conducive to the resolution of the problems between us.

—On the contrary, such attitudes and actions work against the long-term U.S. interest.

Kampuchea

—Kampuchea is no longer an issue.

—After suffering the evils of the Pol Pot regime (which he reviewed at length) everything in Kampuchea has now returned to normal; people's lives have been stabilized.

---

<sup>8</sup> November 5, 1979. See footnote 5, Document 67.

—It is clear that the source of instability in Kampuchea is the collusion between the U.S. and China; such actions are detrimental to U.S. interests in the region and to peace and stability in the region.

—The U.S. needs to acquire a really objective assessment of the factual situation in Indochina; i.e. that Kampuchea is irreversible, and the U.S. should have no illusions about changing the situation in Kampuchea to please China or in favor of the U.S.

—Relations between Vietnam and Kampuchea are simply a question of two sovereign and independent nations which have been united for a long time in defense of their sovereignty and independence.

—As soon as the threat of Chinese interference is withdrawn, Vietnamese troops will be immediately and totally withdrawn from Kampuchea.

13. In response Negroponte again expressed our regret that Vietnam did not attend the Geneva Conference and urged a positive Vietnamese response to the specific suggestions in Peacock's statement.

14. He then stated that we obviously have serious disagreements about the source of instability in the region. He said he presumed Ha Van Lau was well aware of our recently stated views on these issues and would therefore not rebut each specific point. He did however stress that the U.S. pursues its own policy and interests in the region, and that these are focused on a strong and healthy relationship with ASEAN countries. It is for that reason, he said that the Secretary is going to Kuala Lumpur. He stressed we continue to support fully the ASEAN UNGA resolution<sup>9</sup> as the basis for moving toward any political solution and for peace and stability in the region. He specifically rejected any implication of U.S. support to Pol Pot, noting that we have repeatedly made clear that we do not advocate the return of his regime, and that neither we, the international community nor the Khmer people could accept such an outcome. He stressed that our goal was the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea and a political outcome in Kampuchea that would be decided by the Cambodian people.

14. Ha Van Lau concluded by discussing China, noting that China continues to threaten Vietnam with a second lesson. He observed that it would be no easy thing for the Chinese to attack Vietnam again because the Vietnamese are well prepared. He noted that China had invaded Vietnam twelve times in its history. He said that if China attacked again it will suffer an even more bitter defeat than last February and that any attack could result in unforeseeable consequences; the situations would be very serious. He said that the Chinese policy

---

<sup>9</sup> Reference is to UN General Assembly Resolution 34/22. See footnote 3, Document 70.

is one of adventurism and hegemonism and that the U.S. would be wise to understand it.

Muskie

---

**90. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassies in Denmark and the Philippines<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 23, 1980, 2132Z

165750. Copenhagen for Asst Sec Holbrooke; Manila for DAS Negroponte. Subject: Vietnamese Attack Across Thai/Kampuchean Border.

Following is memo that was sent to the Acting Secretary early morning June 23<sup>2</sup> on the Vietnamese attack across Thai/Kampuchean border:

We have talked to Mort Abramowitz on the telephone this morning about the reported Thai border crossing by Vietnamese troops early Monday<sup>3</sup> morning, Bangkok time. He confirms early reports that approximately 200 Vietnamese soldiers, perhaps a company, came into Muk Mun, one of the border Khmer refugee encampments, and were subsequently repulsed by Thai troops. A half dozen or more soldiers were reportedly killed on both sides and perhaps also some of the refugees and Thai civilians. There are a number of reports that Khmer refugees in the border encampments have moved into Thailand to escape shelling.

Mort said that there are also reports of an attack at another border encampment, Nong Chan, where there has been a major cross border feeding operation for some months, and where in recent days the Thai have begun voluntary repatriation to Kampuchea of several hundred Khmer. Details regarding this attack are very sketchy. Some Vietnamese may remain in this area.

Mort emphasized that the situation is very unclear and that reports he is getting from Thai military sources and our own Embassy people in the vicinity of the border are conflicting. He could not judge Vietnamese

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800304–0407. Confidential; Immediate.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> June 23.

motives as yet, but speculated that the Vietnamese may be seeking to eliminate some Khmer Seri units, with whom they have had a number of recent skirmishes. Alternatively, the attack may be designed to halt voluntary repatriation efforts. Interestingly, there have not as yet been any cross border attacks south of Aranyaprathet where Khmer Rouge units are located.

Mort reports that Bangkok is calm and that the Thai are saying it is all over. He is not himself sure of this, however. He will be telephoning us again later in the morning and we will keep you up to date on any important developments.

**Christopher**

---

**91. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State and the Embassy in Denmark<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, June 24, 1980, 0957Z

26421. Copenhagen for Asst Secy Holbrooke. Subj: Vietnamese Attack: SitRep at Noon 24 June. Ref: A. State 165874 (Notal),<sup>2</sup> B. USUN 2468,<sup>3</sup> C. Bangkok 26249.<sup>4</sup>

1. This SitRep updates Ref C with information current as of 1230 local time June 24. Details are still spotty.

2. Situation along border is reported uncertain, but relatively free of combat. Vietnamese forces apparently still remain in the area near the Thai villages of Ban Non Mak Mun and Ban Nong Chan although villages themselves are reportedly now held by Thai militia. We cannot confirm that Vietnamese have totally withdrawn from Thai soil. Reports from Aranyaprathet cite military activity still going on in the area of yesterday's attack including artillery fire and Thai air support. Overall casualty levels from yesterday are still unknown, but more

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800305-0270. Limited Official Use; Niact; Immediate. Sent for information to Beijing, Canberra, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Paris for Johnstone, Rome for FODAG, Singapore, Tokyo, Vientiane, Wellington, USUN, the Mission in Geneva, Hong Kong, and CINCPAC and also for POLAD.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 165874 to Bangkok, June 24, transmitted a proposed U.S. statement condemning the Vietnamese attack. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800304-0727)

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

<sup>4</sup> Not found.

than a dozen Thai soldiers died while about 30 Vietnamese were KIA with a few captured according to Thai military sources.

3. Information about evacuated Thai villages and Khmer refugees is fragmentary. In particular, the fate of the Nong Chan food distribution center is unclear. What we have is that:

—Several thousand Khmer went to Khao I Dang holding center where relief agencies set up a soup kitchen. The Khao I Dang hospital is treating 44 wounded, most probably from the concentration opposite Mak Mun.

—About 5–10 thousand Khmer and Thai villagers have been seen gathered at the Ban Ra Lom Tim bridge on the access road to Ban Khok Sung from the main highway. UNICEF has fed and watered here.

—Khmer from the camp opposite Nong Samet have fled indirect fire, possibly mortars and stopped around the new anti-tank canal about 2–3 km from the frontier. About 16 thousand have reportedly joined them from the Mak Mun and, perhaps, Nong Chan concentrations. UNICEF has fed and watered here, too.

—Unconfirmed reports claim several tens of thousands of Khmer and Thai villagers have fled to an area north of the road junction (VIC TA3525) from the Aranya-Khao I Dang highway to Ban Noi Parai.

4. Information from elsewhere in the Aranyaprathet area is fragmentary. Unconfirmed reports have it that the Son Sann camp opposite Ban Sangae, 40 km north of Aranyaprathet, has moved into Thailand due to menace from a nearby large, armor-supported Vietnamese force. That force also may threaten the Democratic Kampuchea (Pol Pot) base at Phnom Chat, 25 km north of Aranyaprathet. We have no rpt no confirmation of major Vietnamese activity against the DK areas just south of Aranyaprathet, but a Thai-Vietnamese firefight on the border directly south of the town was reported yesterday.

5. Radio Phnom Penh carried a short broadcast just before noon 24 June accusing the Thai of “provoking border engagements” in the contested area by arming bands of recently repatriated Khmer and sending them to open fire on Cambodian Government border guards.

6. Our information from Aranyaprathet is that no rpt no relief workers or Westerners have been injured. All are accounted for and evacuation plans updated. Agencies are exercising prudence in movement of staff in the area.

7. Since border area cut off, our information on confused situation remains fragmentary, but it appears that yesterday’s engagement has been broken off, although scattered shelling continues and regimental-size PAVN forces remain a few kilometers to the east of the main refugee sites, just north of Aranyaprathet.

**Abramowitz**

## 92. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State and the Embassies in Turkey and Malaysia<sup>1</sup>

Bangkok, June 26, 1980, 0544Z

26674. Ankara for USDel; Kuala Lumpur for Abramowitz and Negroponte. Subj: My Meeting With SRV Foreign Minister.

1. (S—Entire text)

2. I saw SRV FonMin Nguyen Co Thach for 20–25 minutes morning June 26. He was relaxed and very affable and while we had some repartee, the seriousness of our message was unmistakable. He occasionally became a little polemical, but he did not strike me as having his usual assurance. He was firm but devoid of threats or arrogance and seemed to want to convey that Vietnamese want no trouble. He denied the intrusion as he has publicly done and swore up and down that the Vietnamese would not invade Thai territory in any way. Following summarizes discussion which was conducted completely in English.

3. He opened by saying that he was pleased to see me and that he apologized for not seeing me last night. He was too tired. I said that I noticed that he had been greeted by a number of friendly Thais at the airport. He laughed and said he didn't need friends like that but the airport demonstration did not faze him. I alluded to his perpetual travel and major diplomatic campaign, the great attention of the press to it, and to his celebrity status. He laughed and said he wished he would get more feminine attention.

4. I then said that the Secretary knowing he was in Bangkok had asked me to deliver personal message from him.<sup>2</sup> The Secretary wanted to be sure that Thach knew the depth of our concern for Thai security and for what had happened on the border. I then read him very slowly the message and gave him a copy.

5. Thach replied quote I have told you repeatedly and I will tell you repeatedly now we will not in any way violate the Thai border. We will not attack Thailand. That is our policy and it will not change. End quote. He went on to deny that they had violated the territorial integrity of Thailand in this case and said this was slander against Vietnam. Every time there is a Ministerial meeting the tempo and

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Molander, Box 80, Refugees: (Indochinese) 7/80. Secret; Niact; Immediate; Exdis. Muskie was in Ankara attending the NATO Ministerial meeting June 25–26, then traveled to Kuala Lumpur June 27–28 to meet with the ASEAN Foreign Ministers (see Document 146). Abramowitz and Negroponte joined him there.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.



slander against Vietnam increases, particularly about troops and threats against Thailand. It had occurred at Bali,<sup>3</sup> at the UNGA and now again. He said in fact the Thais were making incursions six kilometers within the border and there would have to be reactions to that.

6. I interrupted to ask if the latest incident on Thai territory was such a response. He recovered and said no, that the reaction only took place in Cambodia. He went on to repeat Vietnamese concern for territorial integrity of Thailand.

7. I told him there was no use in mincing words and we should be clear about each other's positions. His assertions were simply not credible. All observers have seen and talked to the Vietnamese prisoners and there were Vietnamese troops dead on Thai territory. These are the facts. I said we were concerned about the future. SRV forces are along the border in significant numbers. What are your intentions? Is it your purpose to attack other Thai forces and villages and other refugee concentrations? Your military movements along the border are of serious concern to us. I also said that the fighting has left thousands of Cambodian people dead and wounded. Moreover the supply of food for people of western Cambodia has been completely disrupted. We are deeply apprehensive that there will be widespread famine and death in Cambodia and there will be another 500,000 Khmer at the border. The rainy season is here, distribution is more difficult and you are not assisting in it. The Vietnamese military action has the most serious political and military consequences, and the humanitarian consequences for the people of Cambodia are also very grave.

8. Thach did not respond to the problems of relief on the border or in Cambodia and said he only wanted to reiterate the Vietnamese position. He again said, we respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Thailand. Although you are supporting Pol Pot and the others we will not violate the territorial integrity of Thailand.

9. I said I did not want to engage in a verbal duel with him. He has been having them with Americans far more senior and far more capable than I. But I wanted to make two points: First, that I hope those assurances are conveyed to your military commanders in the field. Secondly, despite your views of what the U.S. is doing, I think I know what we are doing in Thailand. The U.S. has not involved itself in the Cambodian internal situation, with one exception: We have sought to do our best to provide food and medical attention to the people of Cambodia both through the Thai border and through Phnom Penh. But you have not facilitated that operation. We believe the Cambodia situation requires a political settlement urgently and that the

---

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to the 12th ASEAN Ministerial meeting June 28–30, 1979.

security of the region cannot be built on the security of one country and the insecurity of others.

10. Thach said he agreed on this last point, but added, your policy is shortsighted in support of the Thai. They look only to September and October and not to the long term. I said from SRV actions in Cambodia the same could be said of his policy. He said that is your judgment but he went on to say we are firm in our position of respecting the territorial integrity of Thailand. I said again there is no confusion as to Vietnamese presence here on Thai soil. The evidence is incontrovertible. He said evidence can be fabricated as you have done in the past with the Tonkin Gulf incident.<sup>4</sup>

11. As we got up to leave, Thach said restraint was needed on our part. I said restraint was a two-way street. He smiled and said, you must stop playing the China card. I said I had told him before I don't play cards. He again laughed and said the China card was an easy game to learn.

12. Thach never once mentioned the irreversibility of the Cambodian situation.

**Abramowitz**

---

<sup>4</sup> Reference is to the allegation that the United States fabricated the Tonkin Gulf incident in order to introduce U.S. troops into Vietnam. See *Foreign Relations*, 1964–1968, vol. I, Vietnam, 1964, Documents 255–308.

---

### **93. Intelligence Assessment Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>**

PA 80–10353

August 1980

Vietnam in Laos: Problems With a Model Client  
*[portion marking not declassified]*

#### *Key Judgments*

Under Hanoi's domination, the Lao regime is confronted by serious problems—a stagnant economy, stubborn and debilitating armed re-

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 82T00150R: Production Case Files, Box 1, Folder 23: Vietnam in Laos: Problems with a Model Client. Secret; *[handling restrictions not declassified]*. Prepared in the National Foreign Assessment Center.

sistance, a continuing exodus of refugees, a demoralized and largely inefficient bureaucracy, and chafing within the leadership over Hanoi's influence. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Vietnam is determined to control Laos but prefers to maintain a reasonably self-sufficient regime there. It has forged a "special relationship" based on close ties with the most senior Lao leaders, an authoritative role for Vietnamese advisers, and the presence of some 45,000 Vietnamese troops. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The doctrinaire political and economic policies of the Lao leaders, however, have caused widespread disaffection and driven nearly 10 percent of the population out of the country. The bureaucracy functions poorly or not at all, and many officials are increasingly hostile to the Vietnamese. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Within the leadership pro- and anti-Vietnamese factions have avoided direct clashes, but some mid- and low-level officials have been purged and tensions are continuing to build. Hanoi's proteges clearly have the upper hand. *[portion marking not declassified]*

China is waiting in the wings to take advantage of any political instability. Future Chinese support for Lao resistance forces could add considerably to Hanoi's already heavy military and economic burden in Indochina. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Hanoi's grip on Laos probably will remain firm, even if political infighting erupts. Over the longer term, the regime's weaknesses probably will require a more direct Vietnamese role that will increase the potential for a nationalist backlash. Without extensive Chinese support, however, anti-Vietnamese groups cannot seriously threaten the regime's stability or Hanoi's control. *[portion marking not declassified]*

[Omitted here is the Discussion portion of the Assessment.]

#### 94. Telegram From the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Posts<sup>1</sup>

Washington, August 5, 1980, 0014Z

206686. Subject: US-SRV Meeting in New York. Ref: State 202297.<sup>2</sup>

1. (S—Entire text).

2. Summary: UN Ambassador Donald McHenry and DAS John Negroponte met Vietnamese Ambassador Ha Van Lau in New York August 1 for a review of U.S. objectives in Southeast Asia and to make some comments on the Indochinese FonMins' four point proposal concerning the Thai-Khmer border.<sup>3</sup> U.S. side stressed search for peace, ASEAN and Thai security, political settlement on Kampuchea along lines of UNGA resolution, and concern about Soviet military presence in Indochina. We urged Vietnam to choose a constructive role in Southeast Asia and to address key issues of withdrawal of forces from Kampuchea and self-determination for the Khmer. Lau reiterated familiar Vietnamese positions charging U.S. collusion with China and Thailand in support of Democratic Kampuchea. Of interest in discussion of four point proposal, Lau described the proposals as conceptually a package, but said if progress was possible on elements of the package, it would still be possible to proceed. Action addressee posts may draw on this report to provide secret, close-hold background briefing for host governments on the talks. End Summary.

3. At our request, Ambassador McHenry and DAS Negroponte met with Vietnamese UN Ambassador Ha Van Lau in New York August 1 to review recent developments concerning Indochina, USG objectives and thoughts we have regarding the Indochinese four point proposal

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968–1991, Lot 94D430, POL–16 US-SRV Meeting NY, August 1, 1980. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Drafted by L. Desaix Anderson (EA/VLC); cleared by J. Willet and Seton Stapleton (S/S–O) and in substance by Melvyn Levitsky (IO/UNP); approved by Negroponte. Sent to Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Manila, Bangkok, Beijing, Tokyo, Canberra, Paris, and Wellington. Sent for information Immediate to Vientiane, Hong Kong, Moscow, and USUN.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 202297 to several posts, July 30, instructed recipients to inform their host governments of the proposed Negroponte meeting with Ha Van Lau in New York that week. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P870117–1996)

<sup>3</sup> The July 18 proposal by the Foreign Ministers of Laos, Vietnam, and Kampuchea, issued in Vientiane, called for the demilitarization of the Thai-Cambodian border, establishment of a Thai-Cambodian joint commission to agree on international control of the border, cooperation in resolving the refugee problem, and direct or indirect negotiations to solve outstanding problems. (*Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1980, p. 326) Thailand rejected it as an attempt to weaken its sovereignty over its border. (Henry Kamm, "Cambodia Charges Thailand With Military Intrusions," *New York Times*, July 27, 1980, p. 6)

made in Vientiane July 18. Ambassador McHenry recalled Secretary Muskie's message concerning Vietnam's incursion into Thailand delivered to SRV FonMin Nguyen Co Thach June 26 through Ambassador Abramowitz in Bangkok,<sup>4</sup> the ASEAN Kuala Lumpur meeting and the joint demarche to UN SG Waldheim urging that he play a more direct role in Khmer relief efforts.<sup>5</sup>

4. Ambassador McHenry outlined to Ambassador Lau U.S. objectives seeking peace and stability in Southeast Asia, support for ASEAN, development of mutually advantageous relations and communications between Vietnam and ASEAN states, and creation of a system of stable, independent states in the region. We made clear our concern about Thai security and our intention to stand by commitments to Thailand. We stressed support for survival of the Khmer people and nation. We seek an internationally accepted government in Kampuchea also acceptable to the Khmer people and regard both the Pol Pot and Heng Samrin regimes as unacceptable. We expressed concern about the access and buildup of Soviet forces in Indochina.

5. We expressed recognition of the legitimate interests of Vietnam for its security and in friendly relations with its neighbors. We stressed that Hanoi's willingness to deal flexibly with these issues would be a major contribution and help permit Hanoi to play a constructive role in the region.

6. In this context, DAS Negroponte noted that we had studied the Indochinese FonMin proposals and sought elaboration of such issues as a DMZ, an international conference, etc. We commented that if by "irreversibility" Hanoi meant that Pol Pot could not return to power, we could agree emphatically, but if the Vietnamese mean that the key political and military issues of the Kampuchean question are not subject to discussion and negotiation, then it was difficult to see how the proposals represent a basis for discussion. In our view, we told Lau, the proposal attempts to promote recognition of the Heng Samrin regime and to address narrowly only Thai-Khmer border issues and not the questions of withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Kampuchea and the establishment of a government in Phnom Penh acceptable to the Khmer people. We also commented that we could not accept political preconditions for relief urgently needed by Kampuchea and stressed that progress on this point was essential regardless of our ability to move or not on some of the other issues.

7. Ambassador Lau promised to forward the U.S. presentation to his government for considered response, and he made extensive

---

<sup>4</sup> See Document 92.

<sup>5</sup> See *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1980, p. 327.

preliminary commentary. Most of his response represented familiar Vietnamese positions focusing on China's "expansionist and hegemonist ambitions" as the source of tension in Southeast Asia. He accused the U.S. and Thailand of collusion with Beijing, aiding and abetting the survival of Pol Pot's Democratic Kampuchea (DK) forces. He asserted that China and Thailand have recently accelerated their efforts to feed, arm and infiltrate "remnant Pol Pot troops" into Kampuchea. Some refugee relief is actually funneled through Khmer Rouge military, he charged. Lau said that following the devastation of Kampuchea under Pol Pot, the Khmer needed time urgently to overcome basic food, housing, and medical needs. While "Vietnamese were tightening their belts to help the Khmer, Pol Pot forces were blowing up trains of relief supplies."

8. Citing Hanoi's leadership including FonMin Thach, Lau reiterated Vietnam's commitment to respect Thailand's sovereignty and territorial integrity. In a separate context, he also recalled Vietnam's commitment through treaties to aid Laos and Kampuchea, and stressed that Vietnam would honor those commitments.

9. Lau also referred to the closure of the Thai-Lao border, "arbitrarily," he said, by the Thai.<sup>6</sup> He described as "explosive" alleged Chinese attempts to foment disturbances on the Sino-Vietnamese and Sino-Lao borders.

10. Lau spoke of discrepancy in the U.S. position declaring that we do not support the Pol Pot clique, but vote for their credentials in the General Assembly. He called on us to make our action in the UNGA consistent with our words. He also accused U.S. officials in Beijing of publicly calling for China to attack Vietnam, and noted that while we raise alarms often about the Thai-Khmer border, we say nothing of the massing of huge numbers of troops on the Sino-Vietnamese border.

11. Regarding the four points, Lau described the Indochinese FonMin proposals as serious. In his view, while the proposal was conceptually a package, if progress could be achieved on elements of the package, then we should proceed. Lau touched several times on the subject of "irreversibility" of the situation in Kampuchea in somewhat abstruse language. He declared that the Khmer people were entitled to the right of self-determination. With the toppling of Pol Pot "the Kampuchean people have taken their destiny in their own hands." "They have stated that the situation is irreversible, and they are gradually consolidating their administration." Any effort by the Thai, Chinese, or U.S. to change the situation in Kampuchea is in vain, he

---

<sup>6</sup> Thailand closed its border with Cambodia after the June 23 incursion of Vietnamese troops.

declared. A page of history has been turned. At one point, in discussing China's and Vietnam's difficulties, he noted that no nation, however sophisticated their weaponry, could long suppress another people. At another point, referring again to the Chinese threat to Vietnam, Lau asserted that the peace and security could not be obtained through the sacrifice of the peace and security of one party alone. He showed no evidence of appreciation of the irony of his statements.

12. In response, Ambassador McHenry noted that while both sides employed the same language in describing objectives, we disagreed on actions to achieve those objectives, and also on the sources of tensions in the region. Lau responded that if we disagree on the source of tension, it seems unlikely that we would be able to agree on objectives. If, however, we reach a consensus on the source of tension, he said, we should work to get rid of the source. DAS Negroponte objected to the characterization of U.S. policy as one of collusion with China. We form our policy on the basis of our own interests, Lau was told. He stressed to Lau that the normalization of Sino-U.S. relations was an historical fact and one which was in part a function of China's emergence from its isolation. We are developing relations with China on their own merits. Negroponte also stressed to Lau that while Thai security and relief for the Khmer were the most urgent goals, other U.S. goals, such as a political settlement in Kampuchea were equally important.

13. Ambassador McHenry denied that we were deliberately feeding combatants on the border. Noting that relief supplies also leak to Heng Samrin combatants, he commented that we could not let the Khmer people starve in order to prevent a single grain of rice from getting to combatants, despite our policy of providing relief only to civilians. Mr. Negroponte also stressed that we had undertaken the cross border feeding only because thousands of starving Khmer had shown up at the border looking for food to survive. As soon as the administration in Phnom Penh could provide relief effectively, relief could be increased in that channel, and need would quite naturally decline on the border.

14. As a parting question, Mr. Negroponte asked Lau whether his comment that Vietnamese troops would leave Kampuchea the day the Chinese threat ended (and the Kampucheans so desired) referred to a Chinese threat in Kampuchea as Vietnam perceived it or also to the "threat" along the Sino-Vietnamese border. Both, Lau replied, "and in Laos too."

15. Comment: Talks were cordial and comprehensive although Lau's reaction was preliminary. No breakthrough was achieved, nor was one expected. We await a more considered response from Hanoi before reaching any definitive conclusions, although chances appear remote that Vietnamese will agree to discuss key issues affecting Kam-

puchea situation as we see them. Like the Indochinese FonMins' statement, Lau attempted repeatedly to shift blame to China, the U.S. and Thailand for the region's tensions and to focus on the narrow issue of the Thai-Khmer border as the only problem for negotiation. His statement that the proposal could be considered as a whole or as elements perhaps offers some grounds for further exploration, but overall there was no hint of genuine flexibility on the Vietnamese part.

6. DAS Negroponte briefed Australians and New Zealanders August 4 on the meeting, and will brief the ASEAN Washington Committee August 5. We also plan to brief the Japanese and Chinese.

**Muskie**

---

## 95. Telegram From the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Posts<sup>1</sup>

Washington, August 19, 1980, 0119Z

219884. Subject: Follow-Up Meeting With SRV Ambassador Ha Van Lau. Ref: State 206686.<sup>2</sup>

1. (S-Entire text).

2. Summary: In follow up meeting August 15 with UN Ambassador Donald McHenry and DAS John Negroponte, Vietnamese Ambassador Ha Van Lau responded to US presentation made August 1 (reftel) In repetitive, familiar fashion with no suggestion of substantive flexibility or willingness to negotiate the central issues concerning Kampuchea. Hanoi's response continued to focus only on border issues, as embedded in the Indochinese FonMins' four point proposal. Next opportunity to explore further Vietnamese positions will presumably be in New York in meeting during UNGA with SRV FonMin Thach by Thai FonMin Sitthi. US side also raised MIA/POW and Khmer relief issues.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968-1991, Lot 94D430, POL-16 US-SRV Meeting NY, August 1, 1980. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Drafted by L. Desaix Anderson (EA/VLC); cleared by Melvyn Levitsky (IO/UNP) and Jane E. Becker (S/S-O); approved by Negroponte. Sent to Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta, Manila, Singapore, Tokyo, Paris for Bigelow, Canberra, Wellington, Beijing, and Bangkok. Sent for information Immediate to Moscow, Hong Kong, USUN, Vientiane, the Mission in Geneva, and London.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 94.



Action addressees may use this report to provide background briefing for host governments. End Summary.

3. Vietnamese Ambassador Lau August 15 provided response on Hanoi's instructions to US presentation made in New York August 1. In his opening statement, Lau welcomed "any exchange of views aimed at promoting solutions for peace and stability in Southeast Asia on the basis of respect for sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity for all the countries and political systems, based on non-interference in the internal affairs of each country and settlement of disputes by peaceful means."

4. Lau then ran through a litany of well known positions concerning the situation in Kampuchea. He said that Hanoi's position is well known. The Pol Pot clique has been abolished for all time. The Heng Samrin regime is the legal and legitimate representative of the Khmer people. "That is an irreversible fact, and no one is allowed to interfere in the internal affairs of Kampuchea." PAVN troops would not remain in Kampuchea one day longer than the threat from China persisted and the Heng Samrin regime wished them to remain.

5. Lau confirmed that the four point proposal made by Indochinese FonMins in Vientiane could be discussed as a whole or in parts. Elaborating on the idea of an international conference, Lau made clear that the Vietnamese are proposing regional discussions by "concerned parties" i.e. Thailand, Heng Samrin regime reps, and the Vietnamese, either directly or through third parties, to reach agreement on only the points in the four point Vientiane proposal. Only subsequently, would the other non-regional powers, presumably including ourselves, convene an international conference to "confirm and guarantee" the agreements reached by the regional powers. Lau said that an international conference held before any resolution of problems by the involved parties of the region could not be successful.

6. Lau denied that the four point proposal was designed to obtain international, particularly Thai, recognition of the Heng Samrin regime. He said, nevertheless, "it is an undeniable fact that the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea is in control of the whole country and handling the domestic and foreign affairs of Kampuchea."

7. Lau declined to define the scope of their DMZ proposal, but asserted that it must be on both the Thai and Khmer sides of the border. He contended that Thailand's safehaven proposal provided only for the security of the Thai side of the border and not the Khmer side. He argued that a DMZ arrangement would not violate Thai sovereignty, since once the Thai authorities agree on a formula acceptable to them, there could be no question of violating their sovereignty. Negroponte commented that the concept of a DMZ in the four point proposal, as we understand it, would be unacceptable to Thailand since Thais would

see any DMZ on Thai territory as a derogation of Thai sovereignty and since they do not consider Thailand to be at war with Kampuchea.

8. Lau said Vietnam "respected" US concern for the security of Thailand, and called for US concern and respect for the security of the Indochinese countries. He stated baldly, "the independence and sovereignty of none of the countries of the region should be sacrificed." In this connection, he said that the US might make an important contribution to peace and stability in the region, if it is really motivated by goodwill.

9. In response, after agreeing to study his remarks further, the US side pointed out that Ambassador Lau's exposition indicated that nothing in the interior of Kampuchea is subject to negotiation. Lau's presentation, he was told, was understood as simply an elaboration of the four point proposal. We also noted that Thai and our opposition to dealing with the Heng Samrin regime was not narrowly a question of recognition, but because of the regime's lack of any legitimacy, since it was installed and maintained in power by foreign military force.

10. We also raised two other issues, the relief effort and MIA's/POW issues. On POW/MIA issues, we called for resumption and acceleration of efforts, which have been at a standstill since August 1978. Regarding relief, we noted that the Indochinese FonMins had called for discussions of ways to improve relief efforts, called attention to the Chairman's statement concluding the May conference on Kampuchean relief,<sup>3</sup> and urged discussions urgently with the IO's. Discussions should address, among other things, use of domestic airports, direct relief flights to Phnom Penh, and increase of medical personnel allowed to serve in Kampuchea. Lau gave pro-forma responses on both these issues. He noted that senior UN officials have recently commented favorably on progress in relief through the Heng Samrin administration.

11. Comment: There was no hint of willingness to negotiate issues other than those contained in the four point proposal, although Lau indicated that Hanoi could be quite flexible on the procedural aspects of such discussions. By limiting the scope for a conference both substantively and to regional participation, Vietnamese are keeping the door closed on any meaningful settlement except on Vietnamese terms. This precludes progress for time being except perhaps on trying to reduce tensions on the border itself, such as through the prospective talks by the Vietnamese and Thai Foreign Ministers in New York, and the continuing dialogue with IO's and UN on Kampuchean relief.

**Christopher**

---

<sup>3</sup> See *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1980, p. 337-338.

**96. Telegram From the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Posts<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 26, 1980, 0025Z

226408. Subject: Meeting With Khmer Resistance Figure.

1. (S–Entire text).

2. Summary: Khmer resistance leader and KPNLF Vice President Chhean Vam called on DAS Negroponte this week to provide his views on the situation in Kampuchea and to discuss his concerns about Kampuchea in the forthcoming UNGA. He urged the US to vote to maintain DK credentials, despite the KPNLF's adamant opposition to joining forces with the DK. Vam sought military and humanitarian support, but was assured only that US humanitarian assistance to the Khmer would continue. End Summary.

3. Son Sann's Khmer People's National Liberation Front, (KPNLF), Vice President Chhean Vam called August 19 on DAS John Negroponte and EA/VLK Director Desaix Anderson to discuss Kampuchea. Vam stressed concern about the Khmer credentials issue in the 35th UNGA. He worried that the empty seat formula might be adopted, partly because of political pressures which he thought might affect the positions of the US and UK, and thereby result in steady slide toward acceptance of Heng Samrin's credentials. He contended that Hanoi's known intention of having the Heng Samrin regime hold elections next year is designed to allow the Heng Samrin authorities and Vietnamese to claim that the regime having been elected by the Khmer people was entitled to the UN seat. Elections held under the supervision of PAVN would hardly represent the will of the Khmer. He urged the US to continue to vote for the DK credentials as an expression of opposition to the Vietnamese invasion and the regime the Vietnamese had installed. Secondly Vam urged US to help establish the principle concerning an evolution of Khmer UNGA credentials that not only must elections permit Khmer self-determination, but also that the elections must be held under the supervision of the UN or the great powers. During discussion, Vam noted that latter might be accomplished either through modification of the UN resolution on Kampuchea, or by other unspecified means.

4. Vam acknowledged the seeming contradiction of his advocacy of a vote to maintain the DK credentials despite the fact that the KPNLF

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Molander, Box 81, Refugees: (Khmer Rouge/Pol Pot). Secret; Priority; Exdis. Sent to Bangkok, Beijing, Hong Kong, Paris, Tokyo, Ottawa, and London.

has steadfastly refused to cooperate in a united front with the DK, but said that it was essential to protest the Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea and prevent legitimization of the Heng Samrin regime.

5. He said that the Chinese had put tremendous pressure on the KPNLF to form a united front with the DK, but this was impossible. Many KPNLF fighters have been fighting the Khmer Rouge for years, before and after April 1975, and they are unwilling to join forces with the DK, who killed members of almost every Khmer family. Moreover, the DK has no future because of the way they treated the people. They can never again establish a popular base of support.

6. Vam also asked if it would be possible for the KPNLF to open an information office in the US. They plan to open such offices in France, the UK, and Canada as well. The Quai had told them to go ahead and not seek any formal authorization. London also apparently has agreed. Vam also hopes to open an office in Canada. We promised to look into the matter and contact them later. Vam said that despite authorization given by the KPNLF Congress which met in Kampuchea in April, they had no intention of forming a government anytime in the near future.

7. In describing the conditions in Kampuchea now for the KPNLF, Vam said that following severe difficulties with the RTG in the spring, at Chinese behest, he said, the Thais were now treating them very helpfully. Adequate food supplies from the IO's and VOLAGs are reaching Ban Sangae with about 30,000 people, north of Aranyaprathet, and in Sok San with 3,500 Khmer, south of Pailin. Smaller enclaves opposite Thailand's Surin province have difficulties because Thais fear that supplies end up with the CPT which, Vam said, operates in the Dangrek range.

8. Vam thanked the US for humanitarian support. He recalled that we had told him in Bangkok last April that the US could provide only humanitarian assistance; provision of military equipment at that time was not possible. KPNLF needs for arms and ammunition were great and he hoped if not now at some future date the US would help with weaponry and ammunition or funds. There was no alternative to armed resistance to drive the Vietnamese out. China supports the DK and the Vietnamese support Heng Samrin. Nobody supports us, he said. He said that the KPNLF had 10,000 fighters, and could count on perhaps two thousand more from the other Khmer Serei groups. DK has between 25,000–30,000, despite their claims of 60,000 guerrillas and 50,000 militia. Several thousand DK soldiers came recently from the refugee holding center at Sakao. Heng Samrin has 15,000. DK has no base of popular support because of its previous policies and practices, and the Khmer people overwhelmingly favor the KPNLF's Sereikar, he claimed. There were in effect no limits on the number of troops who would join, if the KPNLF had arms.

9. Vam would not verify Son Sann's purported visits to Beijing. He said that Son Sann is currently in France, but will be going to Tokyo for talks with the Japanese. (Vam noted separately that private Japanese organizations have agreed to provide the KPNLF with a radio transmitter so that they can announce their own programs and successes, which heretofore, the DK with its good radio system has been able to claim.) Vam, who has been in France since early May, then London, is going to Canada then return to France and Western Germany and possibly other Western European capitals before returning to Kampuchea.

10. Vam said that the KPNLF had not recently been in touch with Prince Sihanouk or his entourage. Sihanouk has rejected their offers to become head of the KPNLF. Despite the Prince's attitude, the door will remain open for joining forces, should he change his mind, Vam said.

11. DAS Negroponte thanked Vam for the visit. We welcomed the exchange. He told Vam that we would continue to provide humanitarian support. We are sympathetic with many of their ideals, but we cannot provide any military support. Many of us share personally the agony of Cambodia's tragedy. We do not now see clearly a path for resolving the issues other than to provide humanitarian relief while awaiting a break in the political situation.

12. Comment: Vam was clearly pleased with the visit, even though we were able to respond to his requests only in a very limited way. Following the meeting Vam or his lieutenants talked with the press and told them of the meeting. We are prepared to confirm the fact that meeting took place on an if-asked basis. We intend, however, to downplay any political significance which might be ascribed to the encounter, stressing the point that this was a meeting with representatives of group which shares our deep concern for the humanitarian situation in Cambodia.

**Muskie**

## 97. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Thailand<sup>1</sup>

Washington, September 12, 1980, 2244Z

243938. For the Ambassador. Subject: (S) US-SRV Dialogue. Ref: State 219884.<sup>2</sup>

1. (S—Entire text).

2. As discussed during your visit to Washington, Department wishes to respond in Bangkok to the Vietnamese on their presentation on Kampuchea in New York with Ambassador McHenry and John Negroponte.<sup>3</sup> You should call on SRV Ambassador Hoang Bao Son, or in his absence, the Charge, and make points in paragraph below. You should leave behind an aide memoire to assure that the nuances of this message will be accurately delivered to Hanoi.

3. Talking Points:

—As you are undoubtedly aware, UN Ambassador Donald McHenry and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State John Negroponte have met in New York twice recently with Vietnam's UN Ambassador Ha Van Lau to discuss the question of Kampuchea. In those meetings, which took place August 1 and 15, the U.S. side made a presentation of our views on how we might proceed to search for a solution which would reconcile the interests of all the parties involved and which would permit the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces and self-determination for the Khmer people. We also discussed at some length the four point proposal publicized in Vientiane July 18. Ambassador Lau provided your government's response August 15. My government would appreciate your conveying the following points to your government regarding your response made in New York.

—We have studied carefully your government's response and regret to find that you are willing only to treat the Kampuchean problem narrowly as regularization of the Thai-Kampuchea border. We regard the border problems as symptoms of the central issues of foreign invasion and occupation of Kampuchea and the denial to the Khmer people of their right to self-determination.

—In reviewing your government's response, we share your stated objective of peace and stability in Southeast Asia, but these principles

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 74, Thailand, 7/80-1/81. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Sent for information Priority to USUN and the White House. Printed from the copy that was received in the White House Situation Room.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 95.

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 94 and 95.

cannot be realized if the Khmer people are not allowed to choose their own course. Peace and stability cannot be built on the sacrifice of Kampuchea's sovereignty.

—Vietnam's views on historical solidarity and the unity of the Indochinese nations cannot obscure the fact that Kampuchea is not being allowed to exercise self-determination. Self-determination is impossible as long as 200,000 foreign troops occupy Kampuchea.

—Moreover, the presence of your troops in Kampuchea, particularly along the Thai-Khmer border, continues to constitute a threat to Thai security and territory and to regional stability.

—We are willing to work with Vietnam and all other interested parties to seek a comprehensive political settlement, one feature of which would ensure that the Pol Pot regime could not reestablish control in Phnom Penh. However, we find nowhere in your government's response any indication that Vietnam is willing to work with other concerned parties to deal with the entire range of related Kampuchean issues.

—We would also remind the Vietnamese Government that it is their actions within Kampuchea which are risking great power involvement in the region, and repelling those who could be your natural friends in Southeast Asia. Your unwillingness thus far to seek a negotiated solution in Kampuchea encourages the very trends over which you profess vehement concern. In fact, Vietnam's actions are provoking increased Chinese interest in the region, and greater dependence on Vietnam's part on the Soviet Union. In this connection, we recall the words of your late President Ho Chi Minh that "nothing is more precious than freedom and independence." Vietnam's actions are jeopardizing Vietnam's own freedom and independence and preventing the peaceful construction of all the countries of Indochina.

—We do not oppose a Vietnam which is strong at home and progressing. We do oppose those activities elsewhere in Indochina and the region which foster instability. We are ready to work with you as well as all other concerned parties to reverse this cycle of confrontation, war, famine and the squandering of precious human and material resources. Your response thus far does not encourage us to believe that your government is prepared to deal seriously with all the issues so that we can construct a settlement which does not infringe on the interests of any nation or people in the region.<sup>4</sup>

**Muskie**

---

<sup>4</sup> Telegram 41983 from Bangkok, September 16, reported that Abramowitz passed along the U.S. message to the Vietnamese Ambassador on September 16 and left him with the aide-mémoire. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P870143-0719)



## 98. Telegram From the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Posts<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 4, 1980, 1837Z

265533. Subject: (S) US-SRV Dialogue: October 2 Meeting. Ref: A. State 262659 (Notal); B. State 263652 (Notal).<sup>2</sup>

1. (S—Entire text).

2. Introduction: Following in paragraph below is a fairly full report on our two hour meeting October 2, at Vietnamese request, in New York with Vietnamese PermRep, Ambassador Ha Van Lau. Lau responded to our presentation September 16 in Bangkok<sup>3</sup> (Ref A). Action addressee posts may draw on this report to brief host governments. USUN is also briefing PermReps in New York. End Introduction.

3. At Vietnamese request, Ambassador McHenry, Ambassador Petree and Assistant Secretary Holbrooke met October 2 in New York with Vietnamese PermRep, Ambassador Ha Van Lau. Meeting was fourth in recent periodic exchanges with Vietnamese,<sup>4</sup> principally to determine if there is any flexibility in the Vietnamese position which could lead to resolution of the Kampuchean problem.

Under instructions from Hanoi, Ambassador Lau responded to presentation Amb Abramowitz made September 16 in Bangkok to SRV Ambassador Hoang Bao Son. Lau contended that the U.S. continued to collude with the Chinese to use Thai territory to interfere in the internal affairs of Kampuchea and Indochina. He advocated again the Indochinese FonMin July 18 proposal in Vientiane as best means to resolve the dangerous tensions along the Thai-Khmer border.

Lau elaborated on aspects of the proposal along the lines as did Vietnamese FonMin Nguyen Co Thach in his UNGA speech, and, as he said, Thach had with FonMin Sitthi. He said that agreement to create

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968–1991, Lot 94D430, US-SRV Meetings, New York, October 2, 1980. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Drafted by Anderson; cleared by J. Willett (USUN), Philip Wilcox (IO/UNP), Negroponte, and W. Scott Butcher (S/S-O); approved by Holbrooke. Sent to USUN, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta, Manila, Singapore, Paris, Tokyo, Beijing, Canberra, Wellington, London, and Ottawa. Sent for information Priority to Hong Kong, Vientiane, Moscow, and the White House.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 262659 to multiple posts, October 1, provided instructions on informing host governments of the October 2 U.S.-SRV meeting in New York. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P880026–0519) Telegram 263652 to multiple posts, October 2, provided further information about the October 2 U.S.-SRV meeting. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P880026–0507)

<sup>3</sup> See Document 97 and footnote 5 thereto.

<sup>4</sup> See Documents 94, 95, and 97.



a DMZ on both sides on the Thai-Khmer border would lead Hanoi to hold talks with Heng Samrin authorities in Phnom Penh on withdrawal within days or even hours of “a number” of Vietnamese troops. Pending creation of the DMZ, both sides should “undertake to respect each other’s sovereignty and territorial integrity within the existing borders, end all hostile acts of one side against the other, stop allowing the Pol Pot remnant troops and other reactionary forces to use sanctuaries in Thailand, halt the supply of arms and food to them, disarm and place them into separate camps and move the refugee camps out of the border areas.”

In later clarification, Ambassador Lau said that the Indochinese countries were prepared to conduct negotiations (concerning Kampuchea) on the basis of certain principles, including the Vientiane communique, ZOPFAN (KL Declaration 1971), and the Kuantan Principle.<sup>5</sup> This did not mean that Vietnam accepted all these principles, but they represent a basis for negotiations and discussion. He also noted that the PRK had rejected the proposal for an international conference as contained in the ASEAN peace proposal,<sup>6</sup> because it was interference in the internal affairs of Kampuchea. Draft also fails to deal with a major factor—the continued threat by China to the Indochinese countries.<sup>7</sup>

Lau reiterated familiar theme that Vietnamese troops were in Kampuchea for the third time historically and would all be withdrawn when the Chinese threat was removed and the Kampuchean Revolutionary Council and Kampuchean people asked them to leave.

Ambassador Lau said that the U.S. clings to the Thai effort “to impose a solution” on Kampuchea and to reject the Heng Samrin administration which has the support of the Kampuchean people. Kampuchean people were just emerging from the nightmare of Pol Pot and were preoccupied with their immediate needs. He agreed that the Kampuchean people must be allowed to choose their own future. We respect their right of self-determination, he said. In this context, Ambassador Lau said that elections were planned for early 1981 in Kampuchea and Phnom Penh is already working on a constitution.

Ambassador Lau called U.S. concern about Thai security a “smokescreen” for interference in Kampuchea. He reiterated, quoting

---

<sup>5</sup> ZOPFAN, Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality, was a declaration signed by ASEAN Foreign Ministers on November 27, 1971. The Kuantan Principle was signed by the Malaysian Prime Minister and Indonesian President in March 1980.

<sup>6</sup> Presumably a reference to UN General Assembly Resolution 34/22. See footnote 3, Document 70.

<sup>7</sup> Presumably this reference is to the draft resolution that was adopted as UN General Assembly Resolution 35/6 on October 22. See *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1980, pp. 332–335.

FonMin Thach, that Vietnam was no threat to Thailand. Lau said that the June 23 border incident resulted because the Thais were repatriating "Pol Pot remnant troops" in May and June. He stated that the Kampuchean Government does not deny, however, the legitimate right of Khmer to repatriate themselves and return to their native villages. He noted that there were currently under discussion proposals toward repatriation involving national Red Crosses and ICRC. Ambassador Lau said that Thai side had arbitrarily and unilaterally started repatriation without discussion with Heng Samrin authorities. The blame must not be put on Kampuchean authorities.

FonMin Thach's meeting with Thai FonMin Sitthi. Ambassador Lau described the atmosphere as friendly without acrimony. Thach had clarified the four point Vientiane proposal, as Lau did with us, and FonMin Sitthi explained the ASEAN peace proposal. They had agreed to meet again with date and place to be worked out subsequently.

In preliminary commentary on Ambassador Lau's presentation, Ambassador McHenry stressed that there was no American solution nor should there be a Vietnamese solution to the question of a government in Kampuchea. Kampuchean people should be allowed to determine freely both their own leadership and form of government without outside interference from Vietnam or any other power.

Ambassador McHenry also emphasized the dangerous situation on the Thai-Khmer border and our concern that the presence of Vietnamese military forces there could even unintentionally result in incidents. We should work to defuse that situation, but not in such a way as to prejudice the overall outcome. It was for this reason that we and others found the Vientiane proposal unacceptable, since it attempted to force recognition of the Heng Samrin authorities.

Mr. Holbrooke expressed pleasure that two U.S. officials, representatives of the U.S. Joint Casualty Resolution Center, were currently in Hanoi. He stressed the importance to the American people and government of resolution of the POW/MIA issues.

Mr. Holbrooke noted the recent announcement that the U.S. would support the ASEAN position on the Khmer credentials issue, and emphasized that this decision did not change our total opposition to the return of the Pol Pot group to power in Phnom Penh. In this context, he said that Vietnamese charges of U.S.-Chinese collusion were obviously, patently untrue. He also commented that the fact that approximately the same large number of nations in the UN still hold the same view on Khmer credentials as last year suggests strongly that the majority of the world's countries are very concerned over the principles involved (opposing invasion and takeover of one country by another) and are not in fact voting for Pol Pot. He also recalled that the U.S. had opposed Pol Pot for many years at the time it appeared

that Pol Pot and the Vietnamese were working closely together against the U.S.

Mr. Holbrooke noted that we had been unable to bring to fruition the US-SRV normalization talks of 1978 because of the circumstances surrounding the Kampuchean situation, and because of the boat people. In this regard, he stressed that there was no "China card". Our relations with China and our relations with Vietnam followed independent tracks and were separate issues.

Holbrooke told Lau that our objective remains as we have often stated, to work for the development of a stable system of independent states in Southeast Asia. This is why we build much of our policy toward Southeast Asia around support for ASEAN, a constructive, economically oriented organization. It would behoove Vietnam to improve relations with ASEAN. He also reiterated that our commitments to Thailand and the Philippines remain very important to us.

Finally, Mr. Holbrooke raised the question of Vietnam's relations with the Soviet Union, an issue which he described as "extremely difficult" for the Vietnamese. He noted frankly that we are well aware that the Soviets enjoy increasing military access to Vietnam and are using Vietnamese territory for naval and intelligence purposes, as well as to provide massive support for Vietnamese forces in Kampuchea. He recalled that Ambassador Lau, in the twelve years we have been dealing with him, has always stressed the independence and freedom of Vietnam, yet a significant change has taken place in the nature of Vietnam's relations with the Soviet Union. No wonder that ASEAN is skeptical of Vietnam's intentions, he commented.

Regarding the U.S. side's comments, Ambassador Lau said that Vietnamese-Soviet relations were a matter only for the two nations to determine, but their relations were of "militant solidarity of two socialist countries". Since the incidents in Kampuchea, the U.S. and its friends have been trying to strangle Vietnam economically. The Soviet Union had been the power which helped Vietnam over the difficulties caused by the war. He asserted that there were no Soviet bases in Vietnam, but Vietnam would use its territory as it saw fit to defend its independence and sovereignty when they were threatened.

Comment: Substantively, the Vietnamese still continue to be willing to enter into negotiations only within the framework of their Vientiane proposal concerning border issues. We, thus, found nothing new of substance. Their reference to withdrawal of "a number" of Vietnamese troops is not new, was originally raised, we believe, in Kuala Lumpur in May and with Waldheim in Hanoi. FonMin Thach alluded to this possibility in his talk with Washington Post's Don Oberdorfer which

formed the basis of Oberdorfer's story in the Post September 25.<sup>8</sup> The idea, nonetheless, remains unilateral, reserves right for Vietnamese troops to remain semi-permanently in Kampuchea, and is not linked to Khmer self-determination. Idea remains in an unacceptable framework, although this is the first time the Vietnamese have confirmed this notion directly with us. The only binding agreements into which the Vietnamese appear prepared to enter concern border issues, and not the central issues of troop withdrawal and Khmer self-determination.

Ambassador Lau was firm in his faithfulness to the Vientiane communique as the basic Vietnamese position. He was slightly more conciliatory generally and perhaps slightly defensive on the issues of Khmer self-determination and troop withdrawal. He was defensive and almost emotional in responding to the question of Vietnamese independence and freedom and Viet-Soviet relations.

**Muskie**

---

<sup>8</sup> See Don Oberdorfer, "Hanoi Proposes Plan for Limited Pullout from Cambodia," *Washington Post*, September 25, 1980, p. A16.

---

**99. Briefing Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs (Holbrooke) to Secretary of State Muskie<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 5, 1980

SUBJECT

Indochina: The Endless Dilemma

Returning from my fifth trip to Thailand in the last two years, I have the following impressions and conclusions to report. They are personal views, not necessarily shared by all of my colleagues. I shall be incorporating my own views into a more formal policy paper within the next few days.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Sullivan Subject File, Box 70, Chron, 9-12/80. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Holbrooke.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

1. The relief and refugee efforts—spearheaded, pushed, pulled and cajoled by the U.S. Government—have been an astounding success. Despite many obvious problems with the international organizations, within our own bureaucracy, and with the Thai government, the efforts have saved at a minimum the population of Western Cambodia. Even today, as the danger of imminent starvation recedes and the Cambodian peasantry awaits its first significant rice crop in years—while fearing too much rain, and confiscation by the Vietnamese—the cross-border feeding operations remain vital to our effort to save part of a civilization.

I saw the November 1 feeding operation at Nong Chan. It was one of the most dramatic sights I have ever witnessed. About 3,000 ox-carts had made the trek from Cambodia to the border to get rice from the feeding station. The oxen and caribaos who had made the trip, through the mud and the Vietnamese front lines, lay exhausted on the ground and in mud-holes. The men and women who had made the trek (about half of them for at least the second time) had spent up to a week getting to Nong Chan; they knew, through the peasant grapevine, of the exact date of the bi-weekly feeding program. They squatted patiently in the sun for hours in neat rows, waiting for their turn to cross the dirt road, pick up a sack of rice, and return, staggering under the 100-kilogram weight, to their ox-carts, which lay scattered across a wide area. By nightfall they would begin to slip back into Cambodia, taking back trails if possible to avoid being stopped by the Vietnamese and forced to give up some of their rice. They would leave behind a small refugee concentration, and the inspiring group of international relief workers who run this remarkable effort.

That day, enough food went back into Cambodia to feed at least 30,000 people for the next two weeks. Other feedings have been much larger; four weeks ago 13,000 ox-carts came out for one distribution—perhaps the largest such assemblage of ox-carts the world ever will see.

The agencies behind this program intend to “suspend” it when the harvest comes in. I discussed it with Sir Robert Jackson, Waldheim’s representative in Bangkok, making clear my concern at this action. Jackson was adamant, but somewhat reduced my (and Mort Abramowitz’s) concerns by assuring us that if and when the need arises again (as I am convinced it will within a few weeks because the coming rice harvest will not be adequate) they will resume the feeding. Jackson also said that to assure symmetrical treatment of both the Heng Samrin/Vietnamese-controlled interior and western Cambodia, which Hanoi and Phnom Penh would just as soon let starve, they will also “suspend” the food shipments into Phnom Penh and Kompong Som.

We will monitor this suspension carefully, and if necessary push hard for its rapid resumption.

2. The resettlement program continues to be a vital part of the effort, and of our policy in Southeast Asia. The region expects us to keep our word and take 168,000 refugees in FY 81; we should do so. I believe, however, that the time has come to end the explicit discrimination that now exists against Cambodians in the lower categories. While hill people from Laos can move quickly through our processing system, I met well-educated, English speaking Cambodians with brothers in places like Austin and New York who do not qualify under the present guidelines. This is a bureaucratic and historical anomaly which I have discussed with Frank Loy and Victor Palmieri; and I hope it will soon be corrected. No increase in refugees coming to the U.S. is involved; merely a better distribution of them from the present camps.

3. Impressions of what is happening inside Cambodia and Vietnam have the quality of the shadows in Plato's famous cave; everyone sees something different. My very superficial assessment:

A. The Vietnamese are gradually gaining control of Cambodia. Their puppet regime is slowly getting stronger and more effective, although I doubt it will last in its present form indefinitely.

B. The guerrilla groups, including the Khmer Rouge (DK), operating against the Vietnamese pose no serious threat to Hanoi's military control. But they do require Hanoi to leave far greater numbers of troops in Cambodia than would otherwise be the case. I do not believe that much fighting is going on; casualties on both sides are probably quite low.

C. The Khmer Rouge (still referred to much of the time simply as "Pol Pot") have had no success in gaining support among the people, either in Cambodia or in the refugee camps, in the last year. They remain universally hated and feared. The day before I got to the border, they had once again opened fire in a refugee camp north of their own area, wounding about 40 refugees.

D. Because the Khmer Rouge is so hated, and the other resistance groups so fractious and weak, no united front strategy will succeed. This conclusion, shared fully by Mort Abramowitz, runs directly counter to the continuing Chinese hope, shared by some ASEAN countries, that a viable united front resistance can be created.

E. Yet the Vietnamese cannot eliminate that resistance, and they probably know it. I believe their present strategy is to keep their opponents isolated and bottled up along the border and in small interior pockets, and gradually consolidate control of the villages. Cambodia could well become a kind of Burma, or Laos, with long-running but relatively ineffectual guerrilla movements that can neither win nor be destroyed. It has been said that when guerrillas do not lose, they win. But this Vietnam-era cliché was never true of Burma, and may not be true of Cambodia either.

F. Hanoi may have already almost won the war in Cambodia, if my gloomy assessment above is correct. But I believe that the internal situation in Vietnam itself is quite different.

Never in their 35-year quest for domination of all of Indochina has Hanoi's leadership faced such massive difficulties. Whether, or when, these will lead Hanoi to change its policies I cannot predict. But we should recognize the pressures they now face:

—The implacable opposition and pressure of China, which has just moved another PLA Army south. Half-a-million Vietnamese troops are tied down north of Hanoi.

—The collapse of Hanoi's dreams of economic progress; huge rice shortfalls, little foreign investment, etc.

—The unprecedented international isolation Hanoi faces, after decades of international sympathy and support for their struggles against the French and us. Examples: Sweden and Yugoslavia.

—The resulting dependency on Moscow, which they do not like. Over time, as the Chinese keep predicting, they may find the cost of Russian help too high.

—The obvious difficulty Hanoi has had integrating the South into their society.

It is my view that our policies vis-a-vis Hanoi should concentrate on keeping these costs as high as possible as long as Hanoi refuses to discuss changes in its policies in Cambodia, in regard to boat people and other refugees, and in regard to the Soviet military presence along their coast. At the same time, we should be utterly realistic about the chimera of united fronts and other forms of resistance in Cambodia. They have no chance of success, and while we cannot stop nations with a higher stake in the region from pursuing their own policies, we should be very clear cut about disassociating ourselves from them. It is not in our national interest to associate ourselves with a hopeless, losing cause. Support ASEAN, yes. Encourage losing strategies, no. Pressure on Moscow and Hanoi, yes. Identification of the U.S. with the guerrillas on the border, no.

4. And what of the future? Can there be a negotiated settlement, or an international conference?

In 1981 there will be efforts to hold a conference on Indochina. ASEAN will again be strained, along the Moslem (Indonesia, Malaysia)-non-Moslem (Thailand, Singapore, Philippines) fault line which has always existed in that organization.

Hanoi is unlikely to agree to any conference in 1981, unless it believes such a conference will merely ratify their conquest. Moscow is unlikely to want to use its leverage on Hanoi, for it needs Vietnam badly to shore up its other weaknesses in the Far East. China will not



want to see a conference, but will not openly oppose an ASEAN initiative.

In this circumstance, our present posture can be maintained for a while longer. We should support any initiative for a dialogue between ASEAN and Hanoi, even though success is unlikely. We can live, after all, with any outcome in Phnom Penh; our interests lie much more in protecting our Thai ally, and in getting the Russians out of Vietnam. We have succeeded so far on the first objective, but more will need to be done. And we have been losing ground on the second. We should continue to put heavy pressure on Vietnam itself, but stay completely clear of the efforts in Cambodia.

Whatever tactical course we choose, we will still have to be mindful of the implications of our actions on both ASEAN and China. It is around that promising new regional grouping and that emerging giant, along with an unbreakable Japanese tie, that we have been rebuilding our post-Vietnam strategic position in Asia. We cannot afford to jeopardize it, and it is for that reason that the Indochina problem remains, in 1980, one of our toughest policy dilemmas.

---

**100. Note From Roger W. Sullivan of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 14, 1980

SUBJECT

Reactions to Holbrooke's Memo<sup>2</sup>

This memo contains both inaccuracies and internal contradictions. For example, it was not the Pol Pot forces that opened fire on the refugee camp (page 3, paragraph C) but rather a bandit group suspected of being deserters from DK. I need not comment on his various assessments on page 3 which he himself terms "superficial", except to say that I do not agree with them nor does the intelligence community.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Sullivan Subject File, Box 70, Chron, 9-12/80. Secret. Brzezinski wrote at the top of the page, "Agree. ZB." An unknown hand added "11/17/80" next to Brzezinski's initials.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 99.



I frankly do not understand his conclusion, which is internally inconsistent. On the one hand, he argues that our policy should be to keep the costs as high as possible as long as Hanoi refuses to discuss changes in its policies. On the other hand, he argues that we should disassociate ourselves from any united front or resistance group on the grounds that these are “losing causes”.

In following a policy of applying maximum pressure, it makes no sense to disassociate ourselves from military pressure. This is not to say we should encourage, support or supply guerrilla groups, but certainly we should do nothing to reduce their chances of applying effective pressure themselves or with support from others. Our position should be that the Vietnamese are responsible for the continuing fighting in Kampuchea and that as long as Vietnamese forces continue to occupy Kampuchea, the Kampucheans will inevitably oppose them.

---

### 101. Paper Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>

SR81–10018CX

Washington, January 1, 1981

Strength and Prospects of Pol Pot’s Democratic Kampuchea Forces  
*[portion marking not declassified]*

#### *Key Judgments*

We estimate that Pol Pot’s Democratic Kampuchea (DK) forces currently consist of 13 “divisions” totaling from 30,000 to 35,000 troops. This is a reduction of at least 25,000 from our estimate of the DK main forces at the time of the Vietnamese invasion in December 1978 but a substantial increase over our estimates of their strength in late 1979, when desertions, casualties, malaria, and malnutrition had decimated their ranks. Our evidence for all such estimates is limited. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Recognizing Vietnam’s military superiority, the DK forces have chosen to operate as guerrillas in units as small as 10 to 12 men, although they have shown the ability to form into larger groups when operationally necessary. Some guerrillas operate in the Kampuchean

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI) Job 82T00670R: Production Case Files (1980–1981) Box 1, Folder 30: Strength and Prospects of Pol Pot. Top Secret; *[handling restrictions not declassified]*.

interior, but most DK forces are confined to areas along the Thai-Kampuchean border. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Because the DK upper ranks—both army and party—are dominated by a small clique intensely loyal to Pol Pot, the command and control system is highly effective. *[2 lines not declassified]* *[portion marking not declassified]*

For their food and military supplies, the DK are almost completely dependent on a tenuous lifeline through Thailand. This channel now provides over 2,500 tons of rice and other foodstuffs each month, and during the two years since the invasion the DK have received almost 6,000 tons of small arms and munitions from China via this route. No alternate route could keep the DK adequately supplied. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The DK currently have sufficient small arms to conduct effective guerrilla warfare in Kampuchea, but they lack the firepower needed for set-piece battles that might challenge the Vietnamese for territorial control. *[portion marking not declassified]*

We estimate the manpower base from which the DK might draw replacement combat troops to be between 30,000 and 70,000 men, but because of disease and injury not all of these would be fit for combat. A continuing revulsion against Pol Pot has thwarted the DK leaders' efforts to broaden their recruiting base within Kampuchea. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The DK forces are highly disciplined, well organized, amply supplied, and in relatively good physical condition. With continued external logistics support, *[less than 1 line not declassified]* the DK can maintain guerrilla activity in Kampuchea. They have, however, no prospects of defeating the Vietnamese militarily. *[portion marking not declassified]*

[Omitted here is the Discussion section of the paper.]

## Southeast Asia and the Pacific Region

**102. Memorandum From the Director of the Office of Regional Affairs, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (Martens) to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (Gleysteen)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, January 31, 1977

SUBJECT

The Probable Effects on Southeast Asia of Sending a High-Level US Delegation to Hanoi

If carried out with care and proper preparation, a shift in US policy toward more rapid normalization with Hanoi might be well-regarded by some if not all the ASEAN states and all could accommodate themselves to such a policy if properly prepared. However, any spectacular move toward Hanoi, particularly this early in the new Administration, could have a profound unsettling effect on the non-communist countries of Southeast Asia. Thailand is clearly the most sensitive to any major US change toward Vietnam but the other countries would also be affected in greater or lesser degree.

The potential destabilizing and unsettling effects of any US gesture toward Hanoi could be substantially reduced, however, by prior consultation with all of the ASEAN states to be carried out in a serious and considerate manner that would not appear perfunctory. At a minimum, our Ambassadors in all the ASEAN countries plus Burma should be authorized to inform the highest levels of those governments in advance and with appropriate stress on our continued interest and concern in their welfare. We would explain, in particular, that our initiatives to improve US-Vietnamese relations were designed to contribute to peace and stability in the region and were but one demonstration of the fact that the United States would continue to be active in the affairs of the area. Similar notification should also be given to a number of other governments but less urgently so. Ideally, however, it would be preferable to make some non-Vietnam related gesture toward the friendly states of the region *first*, even if only a reassuring statement in an early speech on foreign policy that would clearly dem-

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968–1991, Lot 94D430, Viet-Nam Normalization of Relations (SRV). Secret; Exdis. Concurred in in draft by Gregory Miller (EA), John Helble (EA/TB), Edward Ingraham (EA/IMS), Benjamin Fleck (EA/PHL), and James Rosenthal (EA/VLC).

onstrate that we are sincerely interested in the future of non-communist Southeast Asia, that we will continue to place greater emphasis on it than on communist Indo-China and that we fully intend to continue playing an active, positive role in the area.

The above recommendations are made against a backdrop of undisguised concern in the non-communist Southeast Asian states that the new US administration has shown little interest in them or their concerns and a fear that they will be brushed aside in favor of spectacular steps toward accommodation with Vietnam. The situation is reminiscent of the so-called "Nixon shocks" in Japan resulting from failure to "clue-in" important sensitive countries in advance of our China initiative<sup>2</sup>—an initiative that would have not only been acceptable but welcomed if properly prepared. The sensitivities in the ASEAN countries today can be likened to those in Japan in the earlier situation; but the institutions are weaker, the sense of vulnerability is greater and the capacity for [less than 1 line not declassified] over-reaction is also decidedly more palpable.

The above comments are not to suggest the nature of specific reactions in the ASEAN countries. These may not be immediately evident, in fact, since the shock effect could produce conflicting pressures for imprudently precipitous accommodation by some of the Southeast Asian states with Hanoi on the one hand and a flight into greater militarization and security consciousness on the other. Among other implications of the latter would be an additional encroachment of authoritarianism and further repression of dissidence. Both tendencies might co-exist in a country like Thailand with implications for greater internal polarization and bickering which would tend to destabilize the governing mechanisms, or even the society, further. Pressures from some quarters to shift ASEAN's emphasis toward security considerations would be a possibility too and this would predictably provoke a more hostile Hanoi attitude than now exists leading into a vicious circle of mutual suspicion. Another possible reaction in Thailand would be to seek US reassurances on a basis that might not only be embarrassing to us but which would be essentially unhealthy. Specifically, Thai pressure to "talk-up" the Manila Pact<sup>3</sup> and Rusk-Thanat agreement<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> A reference to Nixon's July 15, 1971, announcement that he would be visiting China and his description of the 2 days of meetings between Kissinger and Zhou Enlai in China that immediately preceded the announcement. See *Public Papers: Nixon, 1971*, pp. 819–820.

<sup>3</sup> The Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty, also known as the Manila Pact, signed September 8, 1954, established SEATO. (TIAS 3170; 6 UST 81) See *Foreign Relations, 1952–1954*, vol. XII, East Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, pp. 898–899.

<sup>4</sup> The Rusk-Thanat joint statement, signed March 6, 1962, pledged U.S. support for Thailand's defense. See Department of State *Bulletin*, March 26, 1962, pp. 498–499.

from the obscurity into which they had slipped after Vietnam and to seek our endorsement of their current validity, could occur.

The Philippines could be reinforced in its [*less than 1 line not declassified*] behavior and its doubts about US commitments under the bilateral security treaty<sup>5</sup> magnified—both with adverse effects on the future of the base negotiations. Indonesia would be notably shaken and vulnerable to the ever-present undercurrents of xenophobia, mysticism and escape from the current modernizing mood. Malaysia would welcome US normalization with Hanoi in any case but would be affected by Indonesia's attitude and, in any event, would be more reassured by prior consultations. Singapore, with its pragmatic and worldly leadership, would be less shaken than Thailand and Indonesia but would fear anything that could be interpreted as US weakness or naivete.

None of the above points should be taken as a bar to early normalization with Hanoi. All can be overcome by well-considered preparation involving consultation designed to demonstrate that our Vietnam policy is being carried out in the broader policy framework of constructing a more stable and healthy equilibrium for the long pull—a policy in which friendship and concern for our friends in non-communist Southeast Asia and a willingness to remain active ourselves in promoting regional peace and stability would remain fundamental ingredients.

---

<sup>5</sup> The Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Philippines was signed on August 30, 1951. (3 UST 3947; TIAS 2529)

---

### 103. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassies in Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Burma, Indonesia, Philippines, and Laos<sup>1</sup>

Washington, February 4, 1977, 0114Z

25347. From Holbrooke for Ambassadors and Corcoran. Subject: US Policy on Southeast Asia in Post-Vietnam Period.

1. I invite your detailed comments and recommendations regarding U.S. policy towards Southeast Asia in the post-Vietnam period. Your

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770040–0229. Secret; Stadis; Limdis. Drafted by Kenneth Quinn (EA); approved by Holbrooke. Sent for information to Tokyo, Beijing, and Hong Kong.

inputs will be a valuable contribution to a larger assessment of this question which we plan to undertake in Washington.

2. While I understand that some of you have addressed certain aspects of this issue in previous messages, I would appreciate your restating any previous points so that I might have the totality of your views in one handy reference. Also, bear in mind that with a new administration it may now be possible to examine a broader range of policy choices. I hope that you would feel free to comment on U.S. policy towards countries to which you are not accredited. Indeed, I urge you to incorporate in your remarks specific recommendations regarding what stance we should take towards any and all countries in the region. It would also be most useful if you could evaluate the significance of a continued U.S. military presence in the region and the possible impact on your host government of any reductions.

3. To promote and expand discourse on this subject I recommend that you make all other concerned posts including Tokyo, Peking and Hong Kong info addressees for the assessments that you send back to Washington, and, if you wish, comment later on each other's views.<sup>2</sup>

4. Please respond using EA Only slug.

Vance

---

<sup>2</sup> Numerous responses to this request are in the Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968–1991, Lot 94D430, POL—US Policy on SEA in Post-Vietnam Period 1977: telegrams 610 and 981 from Singapore, February 4 and March 10; telegram 1865 from Manila, February 7; telegram 278 from Beijing, February 9; telegrams 268 and 322 from Vientiane, February 9 and 15; telegrams 1851 and 2858 from Jakarta, February 9 and March 7; telegram 437 from Rangoon, February 11; telegram 3459 from Bangkok, February 14; and telegram 1215 from Kuala Lumpur, February 25. For the response from Hong Kong, see Document 104.

**104. Telegram From the Consulate in Hong Kong to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Hong Kong, February 7, 1977, 0549Z

1505. EA Only. For Asst. Secretary Holbrooke from Sullivan. Subject: A Policy Toward Southeast Asia.

1. Following the collapse of South Vietnam in 1975, the United States took the public position that nothing had really changed and that no policy reassessment was contemplated or needed. Rather than being reassured, the ASEAN countries and Japan interpreted our apparent unwillingness to come to grips with the “new realities” as another indication that the United States, after twenty years of exaggerating the extent of its interests in Southeast Asia, might now decide it had no interest there at all.

2. This is not the conclusion we want them to draw and the change of administration offers an opportunity to make clear that the end of Vietnam era does not mean we are washing our hands of Southeast Asia. Long delay in redefining our interests and role would carry a high risk of further destabilizing the region and unnecessarily complicating our relations with Japan.

3. At the heart of Asian concern over the American inability to frame a new, relevant policy is that they are as aware as we that the United States has no major interests intrinsic to the region. We became involved initially through the policy of containment and continued our preoccupation with the area in the 1960s because we had concluded that the competition with China and the Soviet Union had shifted from the developed to the underdeveloped world. Detente, normalization of US-PRC relations and increased attention to relations among the industrialized nations make our Southeast Asia policy an anachronism.

4. Looked at in isolation from other policy interests, Southeast Asia is not of major importance to the United States. We want continued access to the region for trade and investment as well as transit and overflight rights for our ships and aircraft. And so our now traditional policy objective of preventing the domination of Southeast Asia by any power or combination of powers hostile to the United States remains relevant. But the prospect of that happening seems remote given the economic dependence of the area on the United States and Japan and the likelihood the Sino-Soviet dispute will continue.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770042–1117. Confidential; Stadis.

5. However, Southeast Asia is not separate from other policy concerns. We want to demonstrate in a practical way that we take the North-South issue seriously, and Southeast Asia is one of the more promising areas in which to do so. We also need limited military facilities, not for Southeast Asian contingencies but in order to maintain our Naval deployments in support of our Pacific and Indian Ocean policies. But our overriding interest is that the metaphor of our Asian policy as a wheel of spokes without a rim is no longer apt. The rim is the US-Japan relationship. Our interests, as well as those of Japan and the countries of the area, would be served by the policy of working in partnership with Japan to encourage confidence and a lessening of intraregional tension and to contribute to the political and economic development of the region.

6. That Japan places a high priority on its relations with Southeast Asia needs no elaboration. What is new is that Japan which has long wanted to work with us in the area, now seeks an opportunity for the kind of close US-Japan coordination that our military involvement in Indochina made politically impossible for Japan.

7. The ASEAN members, which are the countries we [should] be most concerned with, would also welcome this policy. They want Japanese trade and investment, but they would prefer to see Japanese influence diluted with a good admixture of some non-threatening third country influence. The Japanese understand the problem; they are aware of the correlation between the high level of trade dependence in the area on Japan and rising anti-Japanese sentiment. Unwillingness on our part to share the political and economic burden would create political problems for Japan in Southeast Asia, reduce the effectiveness of their efforts there and inject an unnecessary irritant in US-Japan relations. Over the long term, leaving the Japanese to go it alone could result in the establishment of Japanese hegemony in Southeast Asia with all the implications that might have for US-Japan and Japan-PRC relations.

8. Whether a US policy of demonstrating continued interest in Southeast Asia through partnership with Japan would be credible, effective and acceptable to the countries of the area will depend on what we do in four key areas: the economic issues; ASEAN; Vietnam and the Philippine base negotiations.

A. Economic issues—Saying we have important economic interests in Southeast Asia does not reassure when the data on investment suggest the same shift away from the area that the countries see in such other indicators of US interest as military presence and the frequency and content of high-level statements. We need a systematic study of the reasons for the falloff in investment and an examination of whether we are using or can improve on the policy tools we have



available to increase the transfer of real resources. Should we seek changes in GSP, OPIC guarantees and EXIM policies? To what extent should we use the Asian Development Bank as a funnel for assistance and a means of demonstrating our interest in the area? Are American firms holding back because they too are concerned about the lack of consistent and credible US policy? Would they respond to a combination of US Government encouragement, expressions of confidence and specific policy decisions? How do we work with Japan so that our policies and actions in trade, aid and investment will complement each other? Would coordinated US-Japanese approaches to the problems of corruption and human rights be effective?

B. Vietnam—Our policy toward Vietnam should convey that we have put the war behind us without at the same time arousing fear that we may follow our usual postwar pattern of aiding our former enemy thereby strengthening a Vietnam that the countries in the region still do not trust. Our long-term objective may be to integrate Vietnam into the area, but for the time being we should concentrate on building strength, cohesion and confidence in the ASEAN countries. At the same time we should move to take the heat out of the US-Vietnam relationship. Failure to do so would not only cast doubt on our statements that the Vietnam war is over but would also complicate our relations with the ASEAN countries by putting them in the position of feeling they had to choose between cooperation with us and improved relations with Vietnam. Pending resolution of the MIA and “reparations” issues, we should consider such unilateral gestures as removing trade restrictions and permitting Vietnam’s admission to the United Nations. We should balance these gestures with firm and credible assurances to the ASEAN nations that we have no intention of making Vietnam the focus of our attention in Southeast Asia or of engaging in any massive aid program there. Until we can normalize relations with Vietnam, Japan can usefully take the lead.

C. ASEAN—Our policy toward ASEAN as an organization requires a lot more study than we’ve given it. This is also a subject tailor-made for US-Japan consultation. We have to be in favor of ASEAN because it exists and the member countries think it is a good idea. It probably also has some value as a means of reducing intraregional tension. But we should not accept without analysis the assumption that regional integration is a means of bringing about economic development. The evidence from other experiments in the underdeveloped world suggests it is the other way around. Nor should we assume that it is desirable for the organization to concentrate on economic integration through the reduction of tariff barriers. Again the history of other efforts at regional integration among underdeveloped countries suggests that trying to integrate the economies of countries with widely different

levels of development causes serious problems by benefitting the more developed at the expense of the less. This “backwash effect” of drawing investment from the poorer to the more highly developed areas causes not only economic problems but increased intraregional tension as well.

We and the Japanese will have to tread a careful line, supporting ASEAN in principle and showing willingness to consult with it on matters relevant to the region’s relationship with us. At the same time, we should avoid making any judgments on relations among the member countries or giving the impression that we would favor a more rapid pace toward institutionalization of the organization. Rather our emphasis should be on promoting the economic development of the member countries and particularly in reducing the differences in levels of development which will provide the foundation for later, effective efforts at achieving integration.

D. Philippine base negotiations—A prompt and satisfactory agreement on base rights in the Philippines is necessary for our political-military purposes in the Pacific and Indian Oceans and is an essential element of a credible new policy in Southeast Asia.<sup>2</sup>

—The financial benefits to the Philippines aside, our bargaining advantage lies in the fact that the Philippines along with Japan and the ASEAN countries, want a continued US military presence in the region. Even though they know we have no intention of employing military force in any foreseeable contingency, our presence (particularly Naval presence) is reassuring and provides visible evidence of continued US interest in the area. At the same time the bases present a problem for the region. In Southeast Asia, unlike Northeast Asia, there is no realistic conventional military threat. Against threats countries like the Philippines see as real: Communist insurgency; Muslim insurgency; the dispute with Malaysia over Sabah and possible conflict with Vietnam over the Spratlies, the bases contributed nothing. Indeed they may increase the danger by making it impossible for the Philippines to take on the protective coloration of non-alignment.

—In the new situation where the security benefits to them are minimal, the Philippines need an agreement which increases the other benefits and reduces the political costs. Reducing costs means more than cosmetic changes. The agreement must be such that they will be able to say there are no US bases in the Philippines and that they have agreed only to allow the Americans to use Philippines facilities just as Singapore and Malaysia permit the Australians and British to use facilities in their countries.

---

<sup>2</sup> For documentation on the Philippine base negotiations, see Document 291.

—Assuming we can reach an acceptable understanding on money, is the kind of agreement the Philippines want negotiable? If we want to keep Clark Airbase the answer is probably no. The Air Force would not be willing to accept Philippines operational control, and the price tag would be higher than the base is worth. The Naval facility at Subic is another matter. We could accept a Philippine base commander there and a Philippine requirement to approve any use of the facility beyond repair, maintenance and support (including P-3 flights) of our normal Indian Ocean and Pacific deployments. An agreement which included Subic and nothing more than transit rights at Clark could be reached at reasonable cost. Such an agreement would also be likely to win congressional support since we could quantify the economic advantages of continued use of Subic over any alternative.

—Clark Airbase, aside from providing transit facilities for cargo aircraft has no purpose other than to satisfy the requirements of obsolete JCS contingency plans. Whether giving it up in an agreement that secured use of Subic would be adequate to reassure Japan and the ASEAN countries would depend on the face we put on it. If we made it clear we were satisfied with the agreement and believed it both met our needs and respected the sovereignty and neutrality of the countries of the region, there is every reason to believe the reaction would be favorable. Even Lee Kuan Yew might be impressed. Again consultation with Japan will be essential.

9. Finally there remains the question of the reaction of the Congress and the public toward this policy. Provided it was clear that we were not undertaking another open-ended commitment toward the area, it is likely that Americans would applaud a policy which involved the Japanese in a form of burden sharing which did not require or presage rearmament or the assumption by Japan of a regional security role.

10. The March summit meeting with Japanese<sup>3</sup> would be an appropriate occasion to open consultation with the Japanese on Southeast Asia. There is obviously not time before that meeting to complete a thorough reassessment and to prepare detailed policies but we could at least begin the process by letting the Japanese know that we put a high priority on working together toward our shared objectives in Southeast Asia.<sup>4</sup>

**Cross**

---

<sup>3</sup> Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda visited the United States March 20–23.

<sup>4</sup> Telegram 2207 from Tokyo, February 16, further addressed Japan's role in the region. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 3, Asia, 1977)

**105. Memorandum From Michael Armacost and Michel Oksenberg of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) and the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Aaron)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, February 18, 1977

SUBJECT

East and Southeast Asian Policy

The key strategic issue confronting the United States concerns our relationship with the Soviet Union. We must search for a proper blend of constraints upon disruptive acts (i.e., classical methods of power balancing plus arms control agreements) and inducements for cooperative policies (e.g., facilitating the flow of technology). The development of those instrumentalities requires globally coordinated, joint efforts with Japan and Western Europe and the enticement of other states to assist in our effort. We also must maintain and acquire the leverage and incentive to propel the Soviets in desired directions. No policy in any region of the world makes sense unless it is related to this broad strategic aim. This is not to suggest that we do not have other concerns, such as human rights. Nor is our relationship with the Soviets exclusively military in character. Rather, our policy in any region must be related to an overarching, coherent strategy for gradually transforming the nature of the Soviet challenge.

We are frankly alarmed—nearly a month into the Administration—that this approach is sorely lacking in Asia. We have embarked on major initiatives in Korea and Vietnam. We are beginning a major evaluation of the Philippine base issue.<sup>2</sup> The first two issues we fasten upon in our dialogue with the PRC involve settlement of financial claims and nuclear proliferation. All of these moves have been considered in a disjointed fashion, with domestic political considerations primarily determining the approach.

We remind you of an obvious fact: despite the region's obvious economic and strategic importance, the American record in East and Southeast Asia over the past forty years has been a tragic and misguided one. There are two root causes. First, our East Asian policies typically have been an outgrowth of domestic political concerns, have not been

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Armacost Chron File, Box 2, 2/18–28/77. Secret. Sent for action.

<sup>2</sup> A reference to PRM 14. See Document 291.

well integrated with a global approach to our national security concerns, and have frequently received priority considerations only after it was too late, and events in the area forced themselves upon us in a consuming fashion. Second, we have never closely calibrated our military will and capacity on the one hand with our objectives on the other. We have either over-committed our strength in pursuit of minor objectives, thereby arousing enormous hostility and leaving a legacy of enmity; or we have allowed strategy to overwhelm policy—as in Vietnam—increasing our commitment even as we lost sight of our aims; or we have maintained insufficient force to support our goals—thereby projecting an image of innocence and naivete.

From throughout the region—from Tokyo to Peking, Taipei, Singapore, Canberra, and Jakarta—come signs that the leaders in the region fear we are repeating the latter pattern: While we have reaffirmed verbal commitments to the area, in fact Asia enjoys a low priority. This is perceived in our eagerness to reduce our military presence, compared to a beefing up of our European forces; by the possible limitations upon arms sales to such countries as Indonesia and Pakistan; and by the public advocacy of human rights issues in an area where the concept of individualism is an alien one.

We cannot respond to these concerns simply with a renewed burst of interest and activity in the area. We need rather a coherent policy to replace that sense of drift which currently prevails. Nor would we underestimate the difficulties of defining a comprehensive set of regional policy guidelines.

—Today Asia remains an area of baffling complexity and potential turbulence. Regional policies are understandably elusive. Asia is not a unitary cultural zone. Pan-regional sentiments do not have deep roots. There are a few regional institutions.

—Two of the world's major powers, Japan and China, are Asian; a third, the Soviet Union, has a vast Asian domain and a rising Asian population. And yet the center of gravity in our own relationship with the USSR and, to some extent, Japan, lies outside Asia, though our approach to each has its Asian dimension. Even with Peking, the effectiveness of our global efforts to counter the USSR provides the strategic basis for constructive bilateral relations.

—Consequently, our policies in Asia cannot be isolated from our performance in other regions. But they cannot be derived by analogy from our experiences elsewhere, or deduced from the simple homilies about containment. Rather, in Asia, we must adjust our global policy to the unique features of the regional environment.

One such feature is the emergence of a rudimentary equilibrium among the major powers. None is currently in a position to achieve a dominant position through decisive action. The Soviet Union's military

power in Asia is growing slowly and its ultimate ambitions are unclear. But its political relations with virtually every country in the region (save Vietnam) are in disrepair; its economic leverage in the region is negligible; its ideological influence has atrophied; its strategic concept (the Asian collective security system) has found few adherents; its representatives display little cultural empathy for Asians; its diplomacy is generally heavy-handed.

The fact that the Soviets are playing a relatively weak hand in the area is advantageous to us. But it offers little grounds for complacency, given its improving position in other areas. From a global standpoint, we have a stake in preserving limits on Soviet access to Asian political and security arrangements. Yet we have not yet addressed the question: What practical guidelines flow from this general concept? What limits should we seek to impose on U.S. (and Japanese?) involvement in the development of Siberian resources? On Soviet entrée to naval facilities in Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific? Should we continue to "tilt" toward China when it comes to dealing with Asian regional issues of concern to both the USSR and PRC?

Another concern is China policy. When we provided the enabling conditions in 1969–1971 for a better relationship with China (the Guam Doctrine<sup>3</sup> and the principles of the Shanghai Communiqué<sup>4</sup> dealing with Taiwan), the Chinese looked upon us as an effective counterweight against the Soviets and we could secure leverage through them vis-à-vis the Soviets. Now there are risks that as our initial policy moves toward Korea, the Philippines, and possibly Vietnam may depreciate the currency of our strategic value to the Chinese, thereby complicating the process of generating new momentum in our relations with Peking. It is scarcely encouraging to discover that as the Carter Administration's policy toward Korea begins to take shape, the Chinese have sent 24 MIG-19s to North Korea. If we are a determined adversary, committed to maintain stability, Peking will help maintain stability on the Peninsula. If our commitment seems shaky, the Chinese will position themselves to help pick up the pieces.

So here is the problem: You have asked us to move ahead with individual country PRMs: Korea,<sup>5</sup> the Philippines, China,<sup>6</sup> and Micro-

---

<sup>3</sup> Also known as the Nixon Doctrine. Nixon, in remarks to reporter on July 25, 1969, in Guam, articulated his belief that while the United States would honor its commitments in Asia, nations in the region would need to assume greater responsibility for their military defense. For the text of the news conference, see *Public Papers: Nixon, 1969*, pp. 544–556.

<sup>4</sup> The Shanghai Communiqué, signed by Nixon and Mao Zedong on February 27, 1972, laid the groundwork for normalization on relations with the People's Republic of China. For the text, see *Public Papers: Nixon, 1972*, pp. 376–379.

<sup>5</sup> Reference is to PRM 13, which is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XIV, Korea; Japan.

<sup>6</sup> Reference is to PRM 24. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XIII, China, Document 24.

nesia,<sup>7</sup> and to prepare for Fukuda's visit.<sup>8</sup> But we believe these individual efforts must be related to a larger regional and global design. For East Asia, our regional approach must depend fundamentally upon our relations with Japan and China. An effective relationship with both Japan and China presupposes an active U.S. involvement elsewhere in the region. Unfortunately, our Asian policy is taking shape not as a result of conscious decisions but as a by-product of unintegrated actions. We do not propose another larger Asian PRM; we are overloaded with the country studies now underway. We do, however, feel the need for some extended conversation with you to ascertain your sense of the larger mosaic and global strategic design, so that we may be better equipped to respond to the regional and country problems we are now addressing:

—Should we attempt to draw closely to China as a means of enhancing our leverage over the Soviet Union or, do we feel our leverage vis-a-vis the USSR is sufficient and that improvement of our ties with Peking would jeopardize efforts with the Soviets on SALT, MBFR, etc? Are we willing to risk a possible loss of leverage on both the Soviets and Chinese should Moscow and Peking improve their relations *prior* to our normalizing relations with Peking?

—What are the implications of alternative ways of drawing down our ground force presence in Korea and handling base negotiations with the Philippines on our relations with Japan, China, and the Soviet Union?

—What possible changes in Japan's security policy may be called for should the Soviets continue to extend the "reach" of their military power in the Pacific?

—Should we continue to attempt to limit Soviet access to Asian security and political arrangements? Or should we adopt a more even-handed approach toward the USSR and China on regional Asian political issues?

—Does the U.S. retain significant strategic and economic interests in Southeast Asia? Or can our relationship with that part of the world benefit from a more prolonged period of benign neglect?

Not only we, but Holbrooke and Gleysteen at State and Abramowitz and DOD also feel that an informal conversation with you, based on this paper and the questions we raise, would be most helpful to this work. In short, Zbig and David, the PRM process demands more

---

<sup>7</sup> Reference is to PRM 19, Micronesian Status Negotiations, February 15, which is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XXV, United Nations; Law of the Sea.

<sup>8</sup> Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda visited the United States March 20–23.



initial intellectual conceptualization than is now occurring, and the key Asian types in government wish more insight into your own thinking as we proceed in our work. We therefore request a 30-minute session with you at your earliest convenience.

---

**106. Briefing Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs (Holbrooke) to Secretary of State Vance<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 21, 1977

*My Trip to East Asia*

I have just returned from a trip to Korea, Indonesia, Singapore, the Philippines, and Taiwan.<sup>2</sup> The following are some of the highlights and conclusions:

*Overall:*

1. There are no crisis-level issues in the region that require the *immediate* attention of you or the President. However, there are a number of issues on which corrective action must be taken soon, if we are to avoid extremely serious problems later.

2. The foremost need at this time is for us to explain to our friends in Asia what this first post-Vietnam Administration plans to do in their region. The region positively thirsts for more information and contact. If they don't get it from us, they listen to and believe wild distortions from other sources. Our Ambassadors are unable to provide everything that is needed, through no fault of their own. These Ambassadors, still holdovers, cannot speak with the authority of the President when they attempt to explain the President's personal commitments, our new positions, or our human rights stand. So great was the Asians' desire for information that although I played my own visits in low key, at every stop there was immediate and prolonged access to the head of government. I spent four hours with Lee Kwan Yew, ninety minutes with Suharto, an hour and one-half with Chiang Ching Kuo, and a full

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Oksenberg Subject File, Box 39, East Asia: 3/77-10/78. Secret; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> Holbrooke traveled to East Asia April 10-20 with a congressional delegation headed by Representative Lester Wolff.



day with President and Mrs. Marcos and half their Cabinet.<sup>3</sup> In every case the response was good simply because they thought they were finally hearing something direct from Washington.

3. Travelling with a Congressional Delegation gave two added benefits: first, I think that relations with the House Subcommittee for Asia were solidified in a useful way; second, the joint travel (but separate in-country schedules) conveyed to the countries we visited that the eight years of bitter Congressional-Executive battles over foreign policy, which had so worried countries like Indonesia, were coming to an end. There were repeated comments to this effect in every country we visited together. (Congressman Wolff went to Bangkok and Tokyo without me, while I visited Singapore without him.)

4. In every country, without exception, human rights was the subject which we talked about the most. It will pose a major problem for us throughout the region. Asian leaders have not yet understood what we want, or what would “satisfy” us. After its eight-year absence, we must re-introduce human rights into the foreign policy equation in Asia with skill and care, or else we could create major problems for ourselves without improving the human rights situation. I believe the policy we have followed so far—of not yet criticizing Asian governments by name or with specifics, but first pressing them quietly—is the right one for the first phase, after which we may need to speak out more publicly. But we cannot explain what we want solely through our Ambassadors. Some skilled special representatives, including Washington-based officials, should be used to talk privately to key figures in Asia. I would rate our chances of getting some movement, perhaps cosmetic, on human rights as fair in the Philippines and Indonesia, and poor in Korea. Without question, Korea will pose us with the most difficult and critical decisions.

In regard to human rights, we must be prepared to applaud nations when and if they take some steps, even partial steps, in the right direction. The failure to do so during Thailand’s three-year experiment in a feeble democracy certainly contributed to the collapse of the government and its replacement by a military junta in October 1976.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> No memoranda of conversation of these meetings have been found. A summary of the meetings with Lee Kwan Yew is in telegram 1636 from Singapore, April 17 (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770251–0181, D770133–0584); with Suharto in telegram 4890 from Jakarta, April 18 (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770133–0730); with Chiang Ching Kuo in telegram 2294 from Taipei, April 22 (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770133–0730), and with Marcos in telegram 5898, April 20. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770137–0153)

<sup>4</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. E–12, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973–1976, Document 425.

Human rights means different things to different nations. We cannot and will not be able to duplicate our level of freedom in Asia. We should not even try. We must be ready to work for much but to accept less than we seek. Still we must also strive to reverse the sad record of retreat from democracy and freedom of the press that has occurred in Asia in the last eight years.

5. Two other major issues in the region—narcotics and regional economic development—will not be dealt with in this report. On the former, Peter Bourne, who was also traveling with CODEL Wolff, will be reporting directly to the President; we will be working very closely with him to develop new plans to cut down the flow of heroin out of the Golden Triangle. As for economic development, Deputy Assistant Secretary Erland Heginbotham is still in Asia, representing us at the Asian Development Bank meetings, and I would like to await his return before discussing this vital issue with you.

*The Message:*

In response to their concerns and questions, the message I brought to the countries visited was relatively simple, as follows:

1. The U.S. has just emerged from the most difficult decade in its history. But Vietnam and Watergate are finally behind us, and we have a new President who is building up strong public and Congressional support for his foreign policy.

2. The U.S. will remain an Asian-Pacific power. We will not turn our backs on Southeast Asia. We are ready to work with ASEAN, and with the individual countries of the region.

3. The question of human rights is of great concern to the President and the American people. We want to see progress made in this difficult area among the non-communist nations of Asia.

4. We will maintain the strongest possible ties with Japan. But we will not talk to the rest of Asia through Tokyo.

5. We will withdraw our ground troops from Korea over a four to five year period (plus the rest of the standard line).

6. We will try to move towards normalization of relations with the PRC within the framework of the Shanghai Communique, with due regard for the future status of Taiwan.

7. We are about to begin negotiations with the Vietnamese, and if the MIA issue can be satisfactorily resolved, we hope to move towards normal relations with them.<sup>5</sup> But this will not be done at the expense of our old friends in Southeast Asia. The U.S. will not pay war reparations.

---

<sup>5</sup> See Documents 9–11.

Limited amounts of humanitarian assistance may be possible at some later date, but even that is not possible now. Congress prohibits any direct aid to Hanoi.

We would hope, by our presence in Hanoi, to dilute Soviet influence there.

8. No decisions have been made yet on the base negotiations with the Philippines.

*The Response:*

The following is country by country response, and my observations:  
[Omitted here is the discussion of Korea.]

*Indonesia:* The Indonesians are less worried about us now than they were a few months ago. My visit helped, as has David Newsom's skillful handling of the situation since his return to Washington. Suharto is still worried we will lean towards Hanoi. He welcomed my statement that we will not speak to Southeast Asia through the Japanese, which he says would be unacceptable. He does recognize, of course, the special role and importance of Japan. Suharto hopes to establish full diplomatic relations with Peking this year, despite lingering Indonesian fears of the Chinese, and I encouraged this.

On human rights, Suharto, *for the first time*, indicated a willingness to open a dialogue with the U.S. I praised him for letting the CODEL go to East Timor, which was a difficult decision for him, and urged him to speed up the release of the 30,000 Class B political prisoners. He made no commitment on the latter point. I pushed everyone in the government very hard on the question of letting Newsweek back into the country, and had a stormy and difficult session with the Ministry of Information over restrictions they intend to impose on journalists covering the upcoming elections. On all these points, the Indonesians must be pushed. The upcoming elections, only the third in Indonesia's history, have the government worried. They were concerned about recent events in Pakistan. Human rights considerations will take a back seat until they get through the voting in late May.

Dave Newsom, an old hand and an outstanding American, found all this encouraging. He will be following up.

Suharto also expressed great interest in getting to know Jimmy Carter. He feels that he had a personal relationship with Nixon and Ford, and puts great store by this. I did not hold out any hope of any early meeting, nor did I link a meeting to human rights or any other issue. But here (as well as in Korea and the Philippines) we have the option of letting him know that the possibility of a visit would be influenced by action on the human rights front.

Finally, I must express my own dismay at the tragedy of the money lost in Indonesia. No one will ever know the full extent of the scandals,

but the amount of oil revenue lost was in the billions. The man most directly responsible is now under house arrest, but the money is gone forever, and with it an irretrievable chance to improve the Indonesian economic situation. As it is, this poorest of the OPEC nations will see a doubling of its already huge population by the end of the century, and oil reserves seem to be running out.

*Singapore:* Prime Minister Lee Kwan Yew invited me to stay in the government guest house, and to a long, eight course dinner. Each course included a lesson in America's loss of will, or Communism's relentless quest. Lee, who is undeniably brilliant, has enjoyed the company of Henry Kissinger, Bob McNamara, Bill Bundy, and many other senior Americans for years. He encouraged us in Vietnam, but now tells me that it was a dreadful mistake which he recognized "immediately" when he heard we had sent the Marines into Da Nang in 1965.

Lee is the absolute ruler of his tidy and prosperous little city-state. His sermonizing, his predictions of American decline, his call for us to take up the fight as he sees it—all this seems to me to be very much out of tune with the times, and very unhelpful to the objectives that both he and the U.S. seek. [3 lines not declassified]

On human rights, Lee made it clear that he believed in a double standard, to be determined solely by him—no human rights for leftists and communists under any circumstances. He will personally define who the communists are. [2 lines not declassified] He was, however, very interested in our thoughts and plans about China, the Soviet Union, the Indian Ocean, and Vietnam. On all these issues he supported the policies that I outlined, and paid careful attention.

Lee's open questioning of our resolve and leadership is listened to in other capitals, and among journalists. We need to find ways to show him that the United States has regained its voice and its leadership.

*The Philippines:* Here I had the longest and most personal talks, not only with President Marcos but also with Imelda Marcos, with Foreign Minister Romulo, and Defense Minister Enrile. Marcos demonstrated what kind of a country he runs by suddenly assembling all these people, plus several other top Ministers, and taking all of us off on a combination work-pleasure cruise for a day and a night (in the middle of the week) on his huge boat. It was what Ambassador Sullivan calls the "His and Hers treatment."

Since the conversation was clearly designed to reach you and the President directly, I am attaching the cable summarizing it.<sup>6</sup> Some additional comments:

---

<sup>6</sup> Attached but not printed is telegram 5898 from Manila; see footnote 3 above.

—The war in the south is far more serious than is realized in Washington. Three quarters of the Philippine Army is now there. It is probably unwinnable. Marcos has placed all his hopes on Qaddafi's willingness to make and enforce a deal. No one took the referendum very seriously. If Qaddafi does not come through as the Marcos' hope, the war could ultimately play the same dramatic role in the Philippines that other distant wars have played for other countries, including Portugal. We have no real knowledge of what is going on in the minds of the junior officers who are fighting in the south.

—I got the impression that while they won't admit it, the Marcos' are scared. Thus, they are turning back towards the Americans, and have stopped the attacks on us. If the situation doesn't improve in the south, they will need us all the more. The fact that there is a new Administration in Washington attracts them all the more.

—On the negotiations on the bases, we inherited a rushed and botched negotiation which I think should be best left in the historical archives. I told Marcos that we should start again, and he agreed. I think we should not resume where Kissinger left off, but let a few more months pass. We are not in any rush. We need to look for ways to break out of the sterile impasse we inherited. Marcos wants us to pay rent, and although the Pentagon is opposed, I agree with Ambassador Sullivan that we should consider the idea seriously. I further think that the negotiation should not be conducted by the new Ambassador, whose main job should be to restore good US-Philippine relations, but by a separate negotiator. Prior to that, we should have another high-level discussion with Marcos.

—I think that at this time we need both bases, although they are both vastly swollen with waste and inefficiency. They are needed for our strategy of preventing Soviet expansion into the Pacific, for maintaining our position in the Indian Ocean, and they are important in regard to our policies vis-a-vis the PRC, Australia, and Japan. The waste at Clark and Subic could be reduced at Presidential direction, in keeping with Jimmy Carter's campaign pledge.

—We talked endlessly about human rights. Both Mr. and Mrs. Marcos asked me to tell the President that they would do something about the issue, particularly in reference to Aquino, Lopez, and Osmena<sup>7</sup> (the first of whom is Marcos's leading democratic opponent). Marcos wanted assurances that "official Washington would not lionize these people." I told Marcos that if he was truly strong and had popular support, he should not be afraid of what other people said about him.

---

<sup>7</sup> Benigno Aquino, Jr.; Sergio Osmena, a former Philippine Senator; and former Foreign Minister Salvador P. Lopez, all opponents of Marcos.

—I particularly stressed the fact that the Philippines should take the lead among Asian nations in responding to President Carter's call for human rights action. I told him and his wife that only one thing stood between a return to very close relations between our two countries. "Yes," said Imelda, "I know. Human rights."

—Only time will tell if they will do anything. Sullivan thinks not, except maybe a few cosmetic gestures. But at this point, any movement, even a small one, in response to our calls would be welcome, and might start a larger process. We are not going to immediately build democracy in Manila or elsewhere in Asia right now, but, as the saying goes, a journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step.

[Omitted here is the discussion of Taiwan.]

*Final Comments:* We should pay more attention to the "hand-holding" side of our relationship with the non-Communist countries of Asia. We know that we are not going to forget them, but they don't know it, and they need to be told it, not once but repeatedly. They fear we are moving into an era of concentration solely on the communist adversary nations, including China and Vietnam, and the trilateral nations. New Zealand and Australia, for example, remain in need of reassurance; Warren Christopher can do useful work here when he goes to the ANZUS meeting in late July.<sup>8</sup>

As for a policy for Asia, I think that the first outlines of one are beginning to emerge. Human rights will be the most difficult variable in the first phase, but we can deal with it if we are both skillful and patient, and Congress understands what we are doing. By the time you speak before the Asia Society in New York in June,<sup>9</sup> we should be ready to lay out a fairly comprehensive policy, which I hope will include the placement of China and Vietnam within an overall Asian setting for the first time in the last 25 years.

---

<sup>8</sup> The ANZUS Council met in Wellington July 27–28. Christopher's report to Vance is in telegram 3151 from Wellington, July 28. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770270–0240)

<sup>9</sup> Vance spoke at the June 29 Asia Society meeting. For the text of his address, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. I, Foundations of Foreign Policy, Document 48.

**107. Memorandum From Michael Armacost of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 8, 1977

SUBJECT

My Trip to Asia

Two weeks in Asia offered me a timely opportunity to explore many issues with prominent Southeast Asian leaders. Among those I saw during my sojourn were President Marcos and Secretary Paterno (Minister of Industry) in the Philippines; Minister of Mines Sadli,<sup>2</sup> Ali Moertopo (Bakin), and General Benny Moerdani (Intelligence) in Indonesia; Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs K.C. Lee, and S.R. Nathan (Head of Intelligence) in Singapore; General Kriangsak, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army, and General Lek, Deputy Minister of Defense in Thailand; Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie, Minister of Home Affairs, of Malaysia; plus Owada, Arima, and a host of foreign ministry people in Tokyo.<sup>3</sup> I will not try to summarize all of my impressions from this trip, but did wish to pass on a few observations bearing directly on our current and future policy problems.

(1) *U.S. Troop Withdrawals from Korea*. I was frankly surprised at how much attention and concern our troop withdrawals from Korea evoked from Southeast Asians.<sup>4</sup> Virtually everyone with whom I spoke raised this issue with me. This was attributable in part to the fact that General Singlaub was in the news,<sup>5</sup> and Habib and Brown were consulting in Seoul and Tokyo at the time.<sup>6</sup> Concerns appeared greatest in Thailand and Singapore. Japanese Foreign Ministry people told me that both Marcos and Lee Kuan Yew devoted much of their time in recent visits with Fukuda ruminating on U.S. intentions in Asia in the

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Official Correspondence of Under Secretary for Political Affairs, 1969–1988, Lot 89D265, [unfolded material], My Trip to Asia. Secret. Sent for information.

<sup>2</sup> Mohammad Sadli.

<sup>3</sup> No records of these meetings have been found.

<sup>4</sup> Carter first announced his intention of moving ground troops out of South Korea when he spoke to the Foreign Policy Association June 23, 1976. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980, Foundations of Foreign Policy*, Document 6.

<sup>5</sup> General John Singlaub, Chief of Staff of U.S. Forces in South Korea, was relieved of duty after he publicly challenged Carter's decision. See Bernard Weinraub, "Carter Disciplines Gen. Singlaub, Who Attacked His Policy on Korea," *New York Times*, May 22, 1977, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> May 24–28.



light of our Korean troop withdrawal decision. The intelligence chief in Singapore, S.R. Nathan, told me that many of his associates wondered whether they could expect a "Paris agreement" approach to Korea. When I inquired what he meant, he said, "Provide the ROKs a surge of aid, then walk away."

These concerns cannot be explained in terms of any real interest in Korea's fate *per se*. I think the explanation relates more to their fears about the wellsprings of U.S. foreign policy in general. Singlaub's public comments persuaded most that the troop withdrawals are not being undertaken for military reasons. Since no concessions are being sought from the North, most Asians conclude that diplomatic considerations got short shrift. That leaves only one explanation: domestic politics. They see domestic factors at the heart of our human rights campaign as well. But since Southeast Asians feel they have no particular constituency within the U.S., an American foreign policy determined heavily by domestic considerations, they fear, will attach scant priority to their interests. I would have expected some of these concerns to have dissipated by this time. I was wrong. We need to bear them in mind. The Vance speech on Asia (June 29) offers one opportunity to counter excessive fears of U.S. disengagement from Korea—and elsewhere in the area.

(2) *Human Rights*. Our stance on this issue has inspired widespread bewilderment in Southeast Asia, and no little paranoia. Most people I talked with realize that human rights is a thread running through our entire foreign policy. Most were inclined to concede purity of motive to us. Few understood exactly what we had in mind, and one Singaporean told me bluntly that "the arrogance of morality is as offensive as the arrogance of power". Criticisms fell into several categories:

—Many resent our pretentiousness in specifying the political standards others should strive to attain.

—Others feel that we attach excessive importance to political/civil rights and too little significance to the provision of basic economic necessities—a task in developing countries which frequently requires disciplined government.

—Still others felt that U.S. attacks on human rights practices of the ASEAN governments would hand their opponents an exploitable issue.

—Many feel that our approach has been directed almost exclusively at friends, since they see no evidence that human rights is a significant factor in our policy toward Vietnam or China.

—A number of ASEAN country officials contend that we forget that they have narrower margins of tolerance for dissent in view of ongoing insurgencies.



Clearly the Southeast Asians still perceive our human rights policy as a very blunt instrument. The nuances in the Vance speech<sup>7</sup> have not been picked up.

We have our work cut out for us on this issue. Recent evidence that President Marcos is moving toward cosmetic—and perhaps substantive—improvements in his human rights practices suggests that we can have an effect in this field. But given the volatile character of nationalism in Asia and the excess zeal which we occasionally apply to moral crusades, we need to proceed with restraint, keeping in mind the local conditions and traditions, balancing our concern with political and civil rights against local security problems and economic development imperatives, and concentrating on general trends rather than acting as ombudsman for every particular incident.

(3) *Philippine Base Negotiations.* I returned with greater optimism about the prospects for successful base negotiations. Marcos is not pressing for an early resumption of formal talks, but he obviously is eager to explore informally some of the key issues with us. It is evident that the GOP is worried about its relationship with the United States. Marcos is not yet clear as to how much importance we attach to the bases, and realizes that Congress may now be less generous with quid pro quos; he is genuinely worried about the way in which the human rights issue could adversely affect our relationship; the Mindanao situation is still precarious,<sup>8</sup> and Marcos is increasingly aware that he cannot expect the Libyans to help in resolving that problem. Under these circumstances he is not sure how hard he can afford to press us. For the time being he is content to take the measure of the new Administration's attitudes through direct, informal talks. And he is trying to improve his image and restore some civility to the relationship with the U.S. Embassy—which suffered greatly as a result of the mutual distaste Imelda and Bill Sullivan had for each other. Hopefully, Marcos can be persuaded to scale down his objectives, even as he moderates his negotiating tactics.

I am persuaded that the “mutuality” underlying our defense relationship has more rhetoric than substance to it. There are, to be sure, common interests. Our naval presence helps secure the sea lanes in Southeast Asia, and our air wing provides air defense for the Philippines. In return the GOP extends to us access to key facilities. But beyond this, our treaty obligations do not cover those threats which concern the Filipinos, i.e. the insurgency in the South, and the territorial

---

<sup>7</sup> Reference is to Vance's April 30 speech on human rights, which he delivered at the University of Georgia Law School. For the text of the speech, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. I, Foundations of Foreign Policy, Document 37.

<sup>8</sup> Reference is to the Islamic insurgency in Mindanao.

dispute over the Reed Bank area. Meanwhile, we desire bases essentially to give us flexibility in meeting third country contingencies; yet it is by no means clear that Philippine interests would converge with our own in those contingencies, and that they would consequently allow us to use the bases when we need them most.

While these considerations impose some limits on what we can expect from a security relationship with the Filipinos, we have an obvious stake in avoiding major adjustments now. So, too, does Marcos. We do not wish to reinforce uncertainties about our Asian policy or diminish our military flexibility further. Marcos cannot afford at this juncture a split with us or the loss of revenues associated with our presence.

The key issue may be whether we can provide at least *quid pro quo* in the form of "rent". Marcos went through the case for rent for me, and it has a certain plausibility. In return for the bases, he gets treaty commitment and MAP. But our commitments are now interpreted restrictively, and Congress can unilaterally cut MAP. Thus he is left without any control over the degree of reciprocity in the arrangement. We need to look at possibilities for a "rental" payment of some kind more carefully. General Poston, Commander of 13th Air Force at Clark Air Base, agrees.

(4) *ASEAN*. It is impossible to travel in the ASEAN countries without being enormously impressed with the economic vitality of the area, the relative openness of the societies, and the friendly orientation toward the U.S. Regrettably this is rarely publicized in the world press in which Southeast Asia cannot shed an image of violence, political instability, communal unrest, endemic corruption, intraregional disputes, authoritarian governments, and coups and countercoups. To the extent the newspapers don't write about this, they don't report anything.

This is a bum rap. The ASEAN countries have currencies of remarkable stability—a fair measure of investor confidence and administrative competence. Growth rates have been consistently high. Leadership has been changed infrequently. Recent strides taken toward improving the cohesion of ASEAN are impressive. ASEAN Governments have developed habits of consultation and informal policy coordination on a wide range of issues. This is a more important measuring rod of success than the elaborate institutional superstructure that accompanied supranational integration in Western Europe.

While conditions in ASEAN are promising and warrant our support, virtually all participants at the Bali Conference<sup>9</sup> expressed con-

---

<sup>9</sup> The Indonesian Center for Strategic and International Studies sponsored a seminar on Southeast Asia-U.S. relations in Bali May 30-June 1. The Embassy in Jakarta reported on the seminar in telegram 7395 from Jakarta, June 7. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770203-1209)

cerns about U.S. diffidence toward their regional enterprise. All are looking for symbols of reassurance. I believe the following actions might help assuage these concerns.

—We need systematically to consult with ASEAN as a group on U.S. policy issues that affect them. We should brief the ASEAN Ambassadors in Washington on the Korean troop withdrawals decisions and keep them posted on our talks with the Vietnamese.

—We need to increase the tempo of official visits to the region. Prominent American faces in ASEAN capitals are worth much more than assertions from Washington that “we remain an Asian/Pacific power”. A visit by the Vice President to the area later in the year would have an especially salutary effect.<sup>10</sup>

—Private investment will be the principal engine of economic growth in this area. New U.S. investments have been slow in the last two years. The ASEANs are waiting to see what our policy toward investment will be. A repeal of the tax deferral laws would convey a particularly negative signal. We need to find ways of encouraging investment, e.g. more effective use of OPIC, support of ADB technical assistance in support of feasibility studies of the ASEAN complementary industrial projects, etc.

(5) *Aid*. While in Indonesia, Ambassador Newsom told me that we are now proposing aid projects to Indonesia which would place Americans in substantial numbers at the local and provincial level of administration. The inspiration for this seems to be a Congressional desire to assure that U.S. aid money is channeled only to the poorest of the poor, and their suspicion that unless monitored closely by Americans, U.S. assistance will be diverted to line the pockets of Asian oligarchs. We have had some experience with Americans operating as district advisors. It is not a happy tale. Asian participants in the Bali seminar generally felt that U.S. aid officials working at the village level would create problems in the ASEAN countries. The risk of excess meddling is obvious; so is the danger of evoking nationalist reactions. I believe we should reconsider this approach. It would seem more appropriate to concentrate U.S. aid on the *training* of Asian specialists to implement projects at lower levels of their administrative structures.

---

<sup>10</sup> Mondale visited Southeast Asia April 29–May 10, 1978. See Document 129.

**108. Memorandum From Michael Armacost of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 8, 1977

SUBJECT

Henry Kamm's Article on Vietnamese Refugees

You asked for reactions to Kamm's article about Japanese treatment of Vietnamese refugees.<sup>2</sup> Their conduct is disturbing, though scarcely surprising. It is consistent with their tribal and insular character, and their historic resistance to outsiders. I believe our Embassy in Tokyo ought to deliver a demarche on this matter,<sup>3</sup> though I would have few illusions about achieving any swift breakthrough with the GOJ on this subject.

Following the collapse of Saigon, we did seek to enlist Japan's support for the resettlement of refugees through the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. The Japanese offered some modest financial support to their programs, but refused to accept refugees. If we make a demarche to them, we could seek one or several of the following objectives:

(1) A larger financial commitment to the international refugee program. This is a worthy aim, but the Kamm article may not be the best peg for approaching them. I understand that the Thai Government will shortly unveil a new program for settling Vietnamese refugees in Thailand. This will be an expensive program, and the Thai Government quite understandably hopes that other nations will share the financial burden. Japan is a logical candidate. Thus, if our aim is to increase their financial contribution, we might better concentrate our effort on enlisting support for the Thai program.

(2) Encourage the Japanese to allow refugees to settle in Japan. Given Japan's history and the rigid character of their current immigration laws, I believe that they will reject representations along this line

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 85, Vietnam, 1/77-12/78. Confidential. Sent for information. Written in the upper right-hand corner are three separate notations: Brzezinski wrote to Armacost, "MA, Memo to State plse;" Inderfurth responded, "Done. RI (attached);" and an unknown hand wrote, "Memo sent to State 6/11 AM." See Document 109.

<sup>2</sup> Inderfurth underlined this sentence. At the end of the sentence, Inderfurth drew a line between the sentence and inserted "(attached)." The article referred to is Henry Kamm, "Vietnam Escapees Wait in Limbo As the World Turns a Deaf Ear," *New York Times*, June 8, 1977, p. 73. The article is not attached.

<sup>3</sup> Inderfurth underlined this portion of the sentence.

out of hand. Nor is it self-evident to me that this solution would be particularly humane, since the cultural tolerance of Japanese for other nationals living in their midst and seeking to assimilate themselves is extremely low. A demarche for this purpose would be wasted motion.

(3) Relax existing constraints on temporary asylum in Japan. I understand that the Japanese now permit refugees to reside temporarily in Japan provided they are onward-bound within 30 days. If after 30 days they have not moved on, the GOJ requires the country whose flag ship brought them to Japan to assume responsibility for them.<sup>4</sup> We could press the Japanese to permit a longer period of temporary asylum. And we could encourage the Japanese Government to play some role in assisting refugees during their temporary sojourn in Japan.

Given the nature of Japanese society, I believe that their primary role in this field will be financial. I definitely believe we ought to hit them hard to support the Thai program. I would see no minuses and some pluses in approaching them with regard to the third option above.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Following this sentence, Inderfurth drew a line to the bottom of the page and wrote, "maybe this is why the two freighters (see attached in red) wouldn't take them aboard. RI."

<sup>5</sup> Beneath this paragraph, Inderfurth wrote, "Jessica [Tuchman] also was asked to comment. Her memo follows the article." Tuchman's memorandum, not found attached, is in Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Armacost Chron File, Box 3, 6/1–10/77.

---

## 109. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to Secretary of State Vance<sup>1</sup>

Washington, June 10, 1977

Attached is an article that appeared in *The New York Times* on June 8, 1977, concerning Vietnamese refugees.<sup>2</sup> The article speaks for itself.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 85, Vietnam, 1/77–12/78. Confidential.

<sup>2</sup> Attached but not printed. See Document 108.

I would like to suggest that State make a demarche to the Japanese in which we would seek the following two objectives:

(1) Encourage the Japanese to allow a greater number of Indo-chinese refugees to settle in Japan.

(2) Solicit a larger financial commitment to the International Refugee Program. I understand that the Thai Government will shortly unveil a new program for settling Vietnamese refugees in Thailand. This will be an expensive program and the Thai Government, quite understandably, hopes that other nations will share the financial burden. Japan is a logical candidate.

In addition to the above, we should also suggest to the Japanese that they permit refugees to reside temporarily in Japan longer than the current thirty-day period and to provide greater assistance to the refugees during their temporary stay there.<sup>3</sup>

**Zbigniew Brzezinski**

---

<sup>3</sup> In a June 14 memorandum to Vance, Brzezinski informed him that he had raised the Vietnamese refugee issue with Carter, who wanted pressure applied to Japan with regard to the refugees. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Agency File, Box 17, State Department (State), 6/77) Telegram 190642 to Tokyo, August 12, transmitted the demarche, which was not sent until after the August 11 Justice Department announcement (see footnote 2, Document 113). (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770290-0843)

---

## **110. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 23, 1977

SUBJECT

Indochinese Refugees

*ISSUE FOR DECISION*

Many Indochinese refugees who are escaping by sea are drowning because, with no guarantee that they will be accepted by any country,

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 19, Indochina. Limited Official Use.

masters of passing ships refuse to pick them up. The crux of the problem is to break the logjam on resettlement of refugees so that Asian countries will grant temporary asylum to those who reach their shores. There is a related problem of additional refugees flowing into Thailand by land.

I believe the United States bears a special responsibility for both groups of refugees—a matter of basic human rights. I am therefore asking for your concurrence in a request to the Attorney General that he use his parole power on an urgent basis to admit 15,000 refugees into the U.S. to stop this tragic loss of life and suffering. Parole is utilized to admit aliens without respect to the numerical limitations for country or hemisphere or other grounds of inadmissibility, for humane considerations or for reasons rooted in the public interest. A discussion of funding implications begins on page 5.

## DISCUSSION

### *Boat Cases*

The Indochinese refugee problem is in every respect serious, but it is especially critical for the boat case refugees. Because resettlement offers for these refugees are not keeping pace with new arrivals—now estimated at more than 500 per month—the countries first reached by the boats are increasingly unwilling to allow the refugees to disembark for fear that they will be saddled with them for the indefinite future. Consequently, some refugees, after risking arrest or death to escape and then hazarding a voyage in small craft to a nearby country, are being forced back to the high seas. Frequently, large ships bypass boats in obvious distress because their masters doubt that rescued refugees could be disembarked and they cannot afford the economic burden of having refugees on board for weeks or even months.

### *Thai Camp Refugees*

There are presently over 80,000 refugees languishing in camps in Thailand, receiving bare sustenance from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Of these approximately 8,000 have a special claim to our help because they worked directly for us or were closely associated with our efforts during the war, or who are immediate relatives of persons in the U.S. None of these people is currently eligible to enter the U.S. under existing immigration law.

### *Third Country Actions*

We will continue efforts both bilaterally and through the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to get nearby countries to accord the boat case refugees temporary safehaven and to get other countries to participate more fully in the resettlement program of all categories of refugees. But many of the countries in the area are both overburdened by the

refugees already within their borders and fearful of the social, economic and political consequences of harboring them for extended periods of time. Some other countries, France in particular, but also Australia, Canada and West Germany, have been generous in accepting permanent resettlement, but this has not been adequate to meet the problem. Meanwhile, the flow of refugees from Indochina continues.

*U.S. Response*

In light of the above it is clear that the U.S. must accept a substantial number of these refugees if this serious problem is to be alleviated. The most practical way to do this is by parole. The parole authority is vested in the Attorney General, under section 212 (d) (5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA).<sup>2</sup>

Consultations with Congress are commonly undertaken prior to the exercise of the parole authority, though not statutorily necessary. In the past, the United States has made special provision through parole programs for about 20,000 refugees stranded in Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries, in addition to 125,000 who fled as Indochina was falling. In 1976, when approaching Congress on the intent to parole an additional 11,000 Indochinese (bringing the total to 145,000) the previous Administration indicated to Congress that it would not use parole authority to admit further large numbers of Indochinese. That statement was based on calculations which subsequently have proven to be serious underestimations of the continuing outflow of refugees. The situation is once again urgent.

In my view, both the past American role in Indochina and this Administration's deep commitment to human rights require that we take immediate action.

I therefore urge that you authorize me to request the Attorney General to exercise his parole authority to admit up to 7,000 refugees who have escaped their homeland by boat, and another 8,000 who escaped by other means and are now in camps in Thailand, and who have a legitimate claim to our protection. By taking this action—making the United States a haven of last resort if other resettlement arrangements cannot be made within a reasonable period of time—we should be able to convince nearby countries to open again their gates and provide temporary asylum. This, in turn, would once again allow ships' masters to pick up refugees in distress without fear of economic penalty. It would also enable us to take early action to assist those refugees in Thai camps who have a special claim on us. Combining these two

---

<sup>2</sup> P.L. 89-236, also known as the Hart-Celler Act.



categories reduces the likelihood that we will have to go through the difficult process of approaching the Congress again.

#### *OTHER FACTORS*

As soon as approval is given for a request to the Attorney General, I will launch a series of consultations with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and other key governments to reinvigorate their programs of temporary asylum and permanent resettlement. Japan would be approached both to make additional financial contributions to the UN High Commissioner's program for Indochinese refugees and to accept additional refugees on a temporary basis.

At the same time, I will work with the Attorney General and HEW to develop a strategy for consultation with the Congress. In the past there has been some Congressional reluctance to class parole of Indochinese refugees based on high domestic unemployment levels. Based on this country's special obligations to the victims of the Indochina war, however, I am convinced that a continuance of the earlier parole efforts will be seen as a particularly special situation.

Moreover, I believe resettlement of these additional refugees in the U.S. at this time would not create any serious domestic problems. Since they would arrive here in small groups at widely spaced intervals—as opposed to the massive, sudden influx of 1975—the refugees would go relatively unnoticed. There would be no need for any type of refugee camp as existed in 1975. Voluntary agencies would handle the entire resettlement of the refugees once they reach the U.S. For example, when the previous Administration in 1976 paroled 11,000 additional refugees into the country, the entire number was resettled quietly—and efficiently—by the voluntary agencies with only a very modest official role. Nor would there probably be significant additional welfare costs. Over 86% of all Indochinese refugee households in the U.S. now receive income from employment and only 13.6% are solely dependent on cash assistance (36% receive some form of assistance). Finally, the employment situation is much improved over the past two years and prospects are for more improvement.

If serious objections should be raised by Congress because of the numbers involved, we believe priority should be given to solution of the boat case problem since lives are at stake. We should, however, avoid promising that further parole action will not be necessary. If rates of escape remain high, we may again have to resort to this approach (although as noted this will be difficult).

#### *FUNDING*

There are basically two funding costs involved in paroling refugees: transporting them to the U.S. (approximately \$400 per person); and

payment of initial resettlement expenses through grants to the voluntary agencies (\$250 per person). For FY 1977 we have enough funds for all refugees we could expect to process (up to 7,000). The Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration and the UNHCR have money available from U.S. contributions in 1977 to cover transportation expenses for up to 5,000 refugees. The U.S. Refugee Migration Assistance Emergency Fund has a current balance of \$5 million, a portion of which could be used for travel and related costs for an additional 2,000 refugees as well as the resettlement grants for all 7,000.

Congress will probably appropriate at least \$10 million to replenish the Emergency Fund for FY 1978. Depending on other requirements for the fund, this could be enough to resettle some or all of the other 8,000 refugees during FY 1978. If the fund is not sufficient, we could request a supplemental appropriation, since the Emergency Fund has a standing authorization of \$25 million.

#### *RECOMMENDATION*

That you authorize me to request the Attorney General to exercise his parole authority under Section 212(d) (5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act to admit up to 15,000 Indochinese refugees, giving priority to boat cases but also including others who have a legitimate claim to our protection.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> There is no indication that Carter approved or disapproved the recommendation.

**111. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for Domestic Affairs and Policy (Eizenstat) and Frank Raines of the Domestic Policy Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) and Michel Oksenberg of the National Security Council Staff<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, July 12, 1977

SUBJECT

State Department Proposal on Indochinese Refugees

We have reviewed, as you requested, your draft memorandum concerning the State Department proposal to admit 15,000 Indochinese refugees.<sup>2</sup> Our concerns on this matter relate to (1) the need for a long-term plan for dealing with the refugee problem in that area, (2) the specific refugees proposed to be admitted, and (3) the relationship to the current HEW assistance program for Indochina refugees.

I.

We appreciate the urgency of the situation and agree that the United States has a responsibility to take a leadership role in coping with the refugee problem in Southeast Asia. Our concern is that the State proposal does not address itself at all to what our policy should be. It is not clear that admission of refugees to the United States is the only way to find a new home for new refugees.

We understand that many of the countries in Southeast Asia are reluctant to admit additional refugees until they have assurances that other permanent arrangements will be made for them. It would appear, though, that such assurances need not necessarily take the form of admitting refugees to the United States. We do not know whether State has taken steps to encourage efforts by other countries, or to augment the efforts of the UN High Commissioner. We also do not know whether the receiving countries in Southeast Asia, including Thailand, could be induced to retain the refugees if sufficient economic assistance were provided.

*It seems clear that should the U.S. admit additional refugees there will be an incentive for additional refugees to escape and pressures later for more admissions to this country. Given the inevitability of these events it would*

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Subject File, Box 51, Refugees, 7–12/77. No classification marking. Raines did not initial the memorandum.

<sup>2</sup> No draft memorandum has been found. For the final version, see Document 112. For the State Department proposal, see Document 110.

*seem to be incumbent on State to indicate how it proposes to deal with this problem in the long run.*

It is our understanding that the use of the parole authority to admit the refugees would not be very popular on the Hill. You may want to check with Frank Moore to determine the likely reaction. One concern is that the Congress might seek to curtail future admissions by some limitation of the parole power. This could make the development and implementation of a long-term policy even more difficult. Perhaps we need to take the lead by proposing future legislative authority to admit Indochinese refugees at the same time that the Attorney General exercises his parole authority in this instance.

If we are really concerned about the fate of these refugees, it may be prudent not to jeopardize the future of tens of thousands of them in our haste to deal with the present emergency.

## II.

It is our understanding that there are actually four classes of refugees involved. First, there are the 6000 boat refugees who are currently being provided only temporary resettlement, if any at all. Second, are some 6,500 refugees in Thailand who fled Vietnam because of previous involvement with the American presence. Third, is a group of 1,500 close relatives of refugees already in the United States. The fourth group is composed of the remaining 72,000 refugees in Thailand supported through the UN High Commissioner.

If the problem is to induce the countries receiving the boat cases to continue to admit refugees, on at least a temporary basis, the focus should probably be on moving the current boat refugees from those countries to a place of more permanent settlement. That more permanent settlement could be in the United States or in some other country. It could even be in Thailand if the current refugee population there were reduced.

This raises the question of which refugees to admit. The immediate crisis could be abated simply by admitting to the U.S. the boat refugees. However, these people, it would seem, have less claim for admission to this country than the relatives of current residents, the former associates or even many of the other refugees already in Thailand. There is no emergency need to admit the relatives or former associates, which may make use of the parole authority inappropriate. This leaves us with a situation where we may end up admitting lower priority people simply because we have the executive power to do so.

We would suggest that some thought be given to a trade with Thailand, *permitting the permanent resettlement of the boat refugees in exchange for the admission of an equivalent number of refugees already in Thailand.* This could reduce the admissions from 15,000 to 8,000. Justice

will have to decide if this would be an appropriate use of the parole authority.

### III.

We will need to closely coordinate the President's consideration of this issue and the proposed extension of the Indo-Chinese Refugee Program. OMB is apparently still considering the request from Secretary Califano.<sup>3</sup>

*The major policy concern is that the admission of more refugees will require continuation of the special welfare program.* That would conflict with an expressed Administration desire to terminate the program, either immediately or on a phased basis. Given the experience of the states with the current refugee population it would probably be unwise to assume that no income maintenance or services will be required. On the other hand, if the new admissions should prove unpopular, an extension along the lines proposed by Secretary Califano might be difficult to obtain from Congress.

The political realities of the situation are that the admission of these additional refugees will make it impossible to terminate the HEW program on September 30 as currently planned or within the three year time frame suggested by Secretary Califano. This is a matter of considerable consequence on which the views of OMB will need to be reflected.

*Conclusion:* I would support allowing the Attorney General to use his parole authority, particularly if it can be done along the lines of the trade suggested above. However, a clearly defined plan with carefully prescribed limits on future entry should be immediately developed. The strategy you suggest of treating the new refugees in the same way as the old refugees for funding of welfare services is probably the best we can hope for.

---

<sup>3</sup> Not further identified.

**112. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, undated

## SUBJECT

State Proposal to Admit 15,000 Indochinese Refugees in the U.S.<sup>2</sup>

Secretary Vance wishes authorization to request the Attorney General to exercise his parole power to admit 15,000 Indochinese refugees in the U.S. during 1977–1978 (Tab A).<sup>3</sup> Initial transportation and resettlement costs will be borne by State at an estimated cost of \$13.5 million. Much of this money would come from State's refugee emergency fund, most of which would have to be restored to the fund by a supplemental appropriation by FY 78.

You face decisions concerning:

- The basis upon which the refugees should be admitted.
- The level of post-resettlement welfare to be provided to the refugees.
- The advisability of developing a longer-term program for dealing with the problem.

This memorandum has been coordinated by my staff, with the staffs at OMB, HEW, Justice, Labor, Domestic Council, and State.

*I. Options for Securing Entry*

*Option 1.* Do not admit any more Indochinese refugees.

*Discussion:* This option rejects the State proposal and would rely on a special U.N. effort to resettle refugees elsewhere. It is not cost-free, since the U.S. would bear some burden—between \$5–10 million per year—to help resettle refugees elsewhere.

*Option 2:* Seek Congressional legislation to admit the 15,000 (or more). This route would incur much delay and passage of the necessary legislation is not assured.

*Option 3:* Accept State plan to request the Attorney General to authorize use of the parole authority to admit 15,000.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 19, Indochina. Secret. Sent for action. A stamped notation on the memorandum indicates the President saw it. Carter wrote "C" at the top of the page.

<sup>2</sup> Brzezinski wrote underneath the subject line, "(Includes reactions of domestic agencies)."

<sup>3</sup> Printed as Document 110.

*Arguments For:*

—This is the sure and swift remedy.

—We have a moral obligation to move swiftly; our human rights stand requires us to admit some of those who flee tyranny.

—It would be fruitless to request the assistance of third countries, other than France, in solving the refugee problem without offering it ourselves.

—While some Congressional (e.g., Eilberg, D. Pa.) displeasure might be aroused and Justice would take some heat, failure to go this route would result in strong media and Hill (Senator Kennedy) condemnation.

*Arguments Against:*

—It is costly. In addition to initial costs, it will increase Congressional pressures to continue the substantial federal assistance program for all Indochinese refugees now in the U.S.

—State's proposal is a band-aid solution to a long-term problem.

—We have not yet explored possibilities for major U.N. resettlement effort in Southeast Asia.

*RECOMMENDATION:*

That you authorize State to request the Attorney General to exercise his parole authority to admit 15,000 Indochinese refugees in 1977–1978. (NSC, State, Labor, HEW, Lipshutz, and Watson<sup>4</sup> recommend parole. Domestic Council recommends parole of 8000 boat refugees only. OMB and Justice make no recommendation.)<sup>5</sup>

*II. Options for Welfare Funding After the 15,000 Refugees Have Been Admitted**Background*

150,000 Indochinese refugees now receive federally-funded special welfare assistance that costs about \$100 million per year through authorization that terminates on September 30, 1977. HEW has sought OMB reaction to proposed legislation to extend the authorization on a *descending* scale for three years, to which OMB has not yet responded. OMB staff finds it difficult to make a recommendation on welfare funding for the 15,000 until OMB decides on the preferable welfare funding for the 150,000.

---

<sup>4</sup> Jack Watson, Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs and Cabinet Secretary.

<sup>5</sup> Carter checked the approve option and initialed "JC" in the adjacent right-hand margin.

### Options

You must decide how the welfare benefits for the 15,000 should be related to the benefits for the 150,000. There are four choices, each with a drawback:

—Provide full, special federal benefits to the 15,000, irrespective of the benefits provided the 150,000. *Federal cost:* \$11.2 million for FY 78 and \$36.0 million for FY 78–80. (This option would create pressure to continue the current, costly welfare program for the 150,000.)

—Provide the same benefits to the 15,000 that the 150,000 will receive. The benefits for the 15,000 could be full, descending, or nil, depending on what happens to the 150,000. *Federal cost for the 15,000:* \$9.7–\$11.2 million for FY 78 and \$23.7–\$36.0 million for FY 78–80. (This option would make it more difficult to allow the current authorization to lapse on September 30.)

—Provide no special federal benefits to the 15,000, regardless of the benefits provided the 150,000. *Federal cost:* \$1.3 million for FY 78 and \$5.3 million for FY 78–80. (This option would place a heavy burden on the states, induce Congressional opposition, and possibly create inequities.)

—To defer decision on the welfare provisions for the 15,000 until you receive the OMB proposal concerning welfare policy toward the existing 150,000. (This option would mean that when announcement of the parole is made, no announcement could be made about welfare provisions.)

### RECOMMENDATIONS: (*Justice has none.*)

That HEW seek to provide the same benefits to the 15,000 that the 150,000 will receive. (NSC, Domestic Council, Labor, State, and HEW concur.)

or

That you defer announcement until you receive the OMB proposal on welfare policy toward the existing 150,000 refugees. (OMB staff supports this option.)<sup>6</sup>

### III. *Interagency Study Under State Leadership for a Long-Term Policy on the Indochinese Refugees*

Clearly, this program is a stop gap measure. We need a longer-term program which would ensure that other countries (Japan, Australia, France, Canada, Thailand, etc.) will bear an appropriate financial and resettlement burden and which grapples with welfare funding for the

---

<sup>6</sup> Carter substituted the word “announcement” for “decision.” He checked the approve option and initialed “J” in the adjacent right-hand margin.



refugees once resettled in the U.S. or elsewhere. A capacity to admit 15,000 during the next 18 months will give us time to develop a more enduring solution.

*RECOMMENDATION:*

That you instruct State to chair an inter-agency task force with OMB, Labor, Justice, HEW, NSC, and the Domestic Council to develop a longer-term program for dealing with the Indochinese refugee problem. (NSC recommends approval.)<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Carter checked the approve option.

---

**113. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to Secretary of State Vance<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, July 15, 1977

SUBJECT

Indochinese Refugees

The President has authorized you to request the Attorney General to exercise his parole authority to admit 15,000 Indochinese refugees in 1977–1978.<sup>2</sup>

In addition, the President has instructed State to chair an inter-agency task force with OMB, Labor, Justice, HEW, NSC, and the Domestic Council to develop a longer-term program for dealing with the Indochinese refugee problem.

With respect to the provision of benefits to the 15,000, the President has decided to defer an announcement until he receives the OMB proposal on welfare policy toward the existing 150,000 refugees.

Given the Congressional interest in this matter, we should begin consultation, based on the President's decisions, immediately.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 19, Indochina. Secret.

<sup>2</sup> On August 11, the Justice Department announced that the Attorney General had authorized the entry into the United States of 15,000 additional Indochinese refugees. ("U.S. to Receive 15,000 Refugees," *Washington Post*, August 12, 1977, p. A22)

**114. Memorandum From Jessica Tuchman and Leslie Denend of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 2, 1977

SUBJECT

Indochinese Refugees

The Interagency Task Force which the President directed to develop a longer term solution to the Indochinese refugee program has submitted its report (Tab B).<sup>2</sup> The report asks the President to approve a three-year program involving: the acceptance of approximately 30,000 additional refugees; continued support for refugees now in camps; and encouragement and support for the Government of Thailand to resettle refugees who remain there. The estimated three-year cost to the U.S. is \$140 million. For the following reasons *we recommend the President not consider making any such commitments at this time.*

—The report was based on refugee escape rates that have doubled and possibly quadrupled since it was written. Thus, the costs to the U.S. of such a program are extremely uncertain and would probably be much higher.

—Since the report was written, authorization and appropriations legislation to fund the *current* refugee program encountered considerable opposition in Congress. Consultations with Members of Congress and their staffs have established two reasons: 1) we failed to show broad international support for refugee resettlement, and 2) we have not been able to establish any limits on future U.S. commitments.

—In a broader context, we have not assessed the future prospects of considering *Indochinese* refugees along with all *other* refugees accepted by the U.S. Also, we have not established the appropriate level of assistance to be extended to additional Indochinese refugees.

The memorandum at Tab A asks the Secretary of State to address the issues raised above before the U.S. undertakes commitments to additional Indochinese refugees and calls for recommendations to the President by the end of January.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 19, Indochina. Confidential. Sent for action. Concurred in by Oksenberg.

<sup>2</sup> For the Executive Summary of the report, see Document 115. The Interagency Task Force report is in Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Global Issues, Mathews Subject File, Box 13, Refugees: Indochina: 11/77.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

*RECOMMENDATION*

That you sign the memorandum at Tab A.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> There is no indication Brzezinski approved or disapproved the recommendation.

---

**115. Executive Summary of the Report of the Interagency Task Force on Indochinese Refugees<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, undated

*EXECUTIVE SUMMARY REPORT*

*PURPOSE*

When the President approved the Department of State's proposal to parole an additional 15,000 refugees from Indochina, he also directed the Department of State to chair an interagency task force to develop a longer term program to deal with this problem.<sup>2</sup>

The task force<sup>3</sup> has completed its work and makes recommendations for future United States policy in the following areas:

—continued acceptance of refugees from Indochina for resettlement in the U.S.;

—an intensified effort to achieve an international approach to assisting the large number of remaining refugees.

*CURRENT SITUATION*

There are currently 80–90,000 refugees in Thailand and approximately 6,000 more scattered among ten different countries throughout East Asia. The former are primarily refugees who fled by land from Laos and Cambodia; the latter escaped from Vietnam by boat. Currently, the exodus of people from Laos and Cambodia into Thailand is continuing at a rate of about 1,800 a month; and the Vietnamese are continuing

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Subject File, Box 51, Refugees, 1–12/78. Confidential.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 113.

<sup>3</sup> Membership of the Task Force is at page 10. [Footnote in the original.]

to flee by boat at a rate of about 400–500 a month. This is an annual rate of 26–28,000 new refugees from Indochina.

#### *ASSESSMENT OF THE FUTURE REFUGEE PROBLEM*

As a first step the task force requested an intelligence assessment of the future refugee problem. The assessment provided the following estimate:

—there will be as many as 53,000 to 68,000 new refugees from Indochina between July 1977 to the end of 1980 from Laos and Vietnam. Given a consistent historical pattern of underestimating the size of the refugee flow in the past, and the difficulty in making such estimates, the task force accepted the upper end of this range as the best estimate possible for planning purposes.

The task force then made its own estimate of the numbers that would either be boat cases or meet the U.S. criteria as follows:

- 16,000 will be boat cases;
- 13,000 of those escaping by land will meet current U.S. criteria for accepting refugees.

#### *CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS*

The task force concluded that the plight of the Indochinese refugees will continue to be a matter of concern to the U.S. on humanitarian grounds as well as the fact of the long U.S. involvement in Indochina. The task force makes the following recommendations:

##### *Overall*

The task force recommends that the U.S. continue active assistance to help alleviate the Indochinese refugee problem. The assistance should include both continued admittance to the U.S. of Indochinese refugees and a renewed effort to stimulate an international approach to the problem, including resettlement in Thailand of the refugees who will inevitably remain there.

##### *Refugee Acceptance Policy*

Assuming approval of the recommendation for continued acceptance of Indochinese refugees into the U.S., two policy questions remain: which refugees to admit; and under what authorities.

- With regard to which refugees to admit, the task force recommends that the U.S. continue to admit to the U.S. all boat case refugees not having resettlement opportunities elsewhere and all non-boat cases meeting the admittance criteria being applied to the 15,000 now being accepted. These criteria are the same as for the past programs with a tightening of the close relative criterion. Approval of this policy could result in the U.S. accepting as many as 25–30,000 refugees from Indo-

china between now and 1980, an average of 8,500 per year at a cost of \$7.7 million per year.

- With regard to the authorities to be used in implementing this policy, the task force considered two approaches, each with two options, as follows:

- (1) Continued use of the Attorney General's parole authority either by:

- following the past patterns of the 1976 and 1977 parole action, i.e., wait for a backlog of eligible refugees to develop before seeking parole; or

- seek a long-range parole authority for the projected number of eligible refugees between now and 1980 with an annual review to adjust the numbers; or

- (2) Seek special legislation either to:

- amend the Immigration and Naturalization Act (INA) to make more immigration numbers available to Indochina through a change in hemispheric allocations; or

- seek new legislation to provide special immigrant visas for the projected number of eligible Indochinese refugees between now and 1980.

The task force has concluded that any future approach to U.S. admittance of additional Indochinese refugees should recognize the situation as a continuing one and should demonstrate a desire to avoid the continued use of ad hoc parole. Any one of the legislative options or the long-term parole option would be satisfactory provided our estimates are not seriously low. The long-term parole option would provide for annual adjustments to the numbers. Otherwise, the choice between legislation and the long-term parole approach is largely a political one. Consultation with the Congress on parole involves essentially the leadership of two committees. Legislation would have to pass both Houses. The parole approach has come under severe criticism and could be seen as an attempt to legislate through the consultation process.<sup>4</sup> If legislation were introduced and defeated the future use of parole would be difficult and the U.S. could be left with no way to respond to an urgent humanitarian need. Lastly, Congressman Eilberg, Chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, has introduced his own bill that would, among other things, amend the

---

<sup>4</sup> Congressman Eilberg has repeatedly called for the Executive Branch to issue guidelines institutionalizing the process of consultation with the Congress on parole. The task force recommends that the Department of Justice and the Department of State collaborate on the issuance of such guidelines in the immediate future. [Footnote in the original.]

INA to eliminate the parole authority and substitute a new immigration category for refugees.<sup>5</sup> He would likely view any legislative approach as in conflict with his proposal. The Administration has testified in general support of Eilberg's bill but with major reservations which he rejected during hearings.

The task force recommends that, in view of these considerations, the Administration not take a firm position on any of these options but, instead, that it use them as a basis for consultations with Congress in an effort to find a joint solution.

### *Domestic Programs*

Approval of the recommendation for continued acceptance by the U.S. of Indochinese refugees will raise the question of domestic benefits programs to assist their resettlement. Under the Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1975,<sup>6</sup> federal reimbursement has been provided to states on a 100% basis for refugee maintenance (cash) assistance, medical assistance, social services, and related state/local administrative costs.

The Administration has legislation before Congress now that proposes a three-year extension and phasedown of this program as it applies to Indochinese refugees already paroled into the U.S. and an eighteen-month period of full federal funding for assistance to the 15,000 additional refugees followed by a three-year phasedown identical to that proposed for the earlier refugee group.<sup>7</sup>

The task force requested an assessment of the impact on employment in the U.S. of a program of continued admittance of Indochinese refugees. The Department of Labor estimates that admittance of 8,500 refugees per year, assuming all 8,500 would be seeking jobs, would have an impact of less than two-tenths of one percent on annual job openings in the U.S. The Department of Labor assessment pointed out that if a large portion of the 8,500 went into a single labor market with a high rate of unemployment, or if a majority of the refugees sought jobs in one occupation, there could be some impact. However, all of the 8,500 would not in fact be seeking jobs; only about 1,700 of the 8,500 would be heads of households.

### *Recommendation*

The task force recommends that, if continued acceptance of Indochinese refugees is approved, the matter of domestic assistance to those

---

<sup>5</sup> Reference is to H.R. 7175 (95th Congress), introduced by Eilberg on May 13, which sought to change the procedures by which refugees were admitted to the United States by amending the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (P.L. 89-236).

<sup>6</sup> P.L. 94-23.

<sup>7</sup> P.L. 95-145, Title II, approved on October 28.

arriving after the 15,000 be re-examined after the Congress acts on the current proposed program to determine whether recommendations for changes are necessary or desirable. If the current Administration proposals for domestic benefits passed the Congress and were applied to future refugees, the cost to the U.S. from FY–1979 to FY–1985 would be \$39 million.

*International Approach to the Indochinese Refugee Problem*

- A long-term U.S. commitment to continue accepting Indochinese refugees into the U.S. will not solve the Indochinese refugee problem. However, such a policy, along with a U.S. commitment to contribute to resettlement in Thailand as proposed further on, would provide a fresh opportunity for a renewed approach to the international community in concert with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

- There are four key objectives which need to be addressed if progress is to be made toward ameliorating the overall situation:

- Continue to provide international resettlement opportunities;

While the international record (with the exception of France) is poor, the task force recommends a renewed effort.

- Improve responsiveness of international maritime traffic to refugee vessels in distress and rationalize temporary safehaven procedures for boat refugees;

The task force recommends continued approaches to countries of first asylum, appeals to shipowner associations to honor international covenants concerning assistance to those in distress at sea, and explorations with the UNHCR of the possibility of establishing a transit camp (or camps) in East Asia for boat refugees.

- As an interim measure, ensure continuing adequate relief support through the UNHCR to refugees in camps;

The task force recommends that U.S. contributions to UNHCR, now about 60% of the total cost, continue at that level and that the U.S. should support the UNHCR in its appeals to other donors. The annual cost to the U.S. would be approximately \$5 million.

- And provide international encouragement and support to the government of Thailand for the resettlement in Thailand of the Indochinese refugees who will remain there;

The task force found this aspect the most intractable of the Indochinese refugee problem. Even with a continued U.S. and international effort to resettle refugees outside of Southeast Asia, Thailand will be faced with a substantial residual refugee population. We have already indicated to the Royal Thai Government (RTG) our view that most of the refugees will have to be resettled in Thailand and that we will

consider sympathetically any request for assistance. The RTG has vacillated from an apparent willingness to consider resettlement to serious thoughts of repatriation as the solution. The task force recommends that the U.S. continue to work with the UNHCR to encourage the Thais in the direction of resettlement, but believes that, to make any further progress in our discussions on resettlement with the RTG and the UNHCR, a more specific commitment of possible U.S. financial support for resettlement will be required. The actual provision of such assistance would be made contingent upon positive movement on the part of the RTG and the UN and international funding for the balance. The task force believes that, to be effective, the U.S. contribution probably would have to be 40–60% of the total cost, resulting in a possible cost to the U.S. of as much as \$12–18 million a year for three years.

- The task force recommends that the Department of State be authorized to indicate to the RTG and the UNHCR, U.S. willingness to make, subject to congressional approval, a substantial contribution to the total cost of an internationally supported but Thai-conceived and managed resettlement program. The Department would make it clear that the U.S. views this as an international problem in which the UNHCR should take lead and that provision of this support would be contingent upon positive action by the UN, the Government of Thailand, and other donors.

#### *COST ESTIMATE OVERVIEW*

If the recommendations of this report were approved and the assumptions underlying the projections and estimates proved correct, the total cost to the U.S. would be as follows:

	<u>3½ Years Cost</u>
	(millions)
For resettlement in the U.S.	27.0
For relief support <sup>8</sup>	17.5
For resettlement in Thailand	36.0–54.0
For domestic programs	<u>39.4</u>
<i>Total</i>	119.9–137.9

The actual cost to the U.S. would depend upon the numbers of refugees ultimately admitted to the U.S., congressional action on current legislation providing domestic benefits (and, over time, on the outcome of welfare reform in general), and on the nature and extent of any resettlement program in Thailand. The estimate on resettlement

---

<sup>8</sup> Relief costs would, in fact, be less if resettlement in Thailand went forward. [Footnote in the original.]



in Thailand used in the report represents an order of magnitude only and would require extensive refinement.

### OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

#### *International Conference*

- Congressman Eilberg has proposed in a letter<sup>9</sup> to the President the convening of an international conference to discuss the Indochinese refugee problem. While the task force has reservations about the desirability of such a conference, it recommends the idea be discussed with the UNHCR.<sup>10</sup>

#### *Coordination with the UNHCR*

- Working level discussions with the UNHCR are already underway within the framework of existing U.S. policy on all of the above agenda. Approval of the recommendations in this report would make those discussions more fruitful. The forthcoming UN General Assembly and the meeting of the UNHCR's Executive Committee in early October of this year offer opportunities to pursue these discussions with the High Commissioner himself. Further, the task force recommends that the High Commissioner be invited to Washington for a high-level discussion.

#### *Approach to the Secretary General of the UN*

- The task force believes that, in addition to the discussions with the UNHCR, it would be useful to involve the Secretary General of the UN in addressing the refugee situation in Indochina.
- The task force recommends that, following or in coordination with the meetings with the UNHCR, the Secretary of State discuss the problem of Indochinese refugees with the Secretary General of the UN for the purpose of enlisting his personal support of the effort.<sup>11</sup>

#### *Implementation and Follow-up*

If the recommendations in the report are approved, close coordination among all the interested agencies will be required for their successful implementation. Given this fact, and the many large uncertainties concerning the size and nature of the future Indochinese refugee problem, the task force recommends that it be directed to reconvene quarterly for the purpose of assessing the situation as it unfolds and to make further recommendations for U.S. policy, as appropriate.

---

<sup>9</sup> Not found.

<sup>10</sup> A UN Conference on Indochinese refugees was eventually held in July 1979. See Document 138.

<sup>11</sup> No record of such a discussion has been found.

*MEMBERSHIP OF THE INTERAGENCY  
TASK FORCE ON INDOCHINESE REFUGEES*

Department of State  
Agency for International Development  
Department of Justice<sup>12</sup>  
Immigration and Naturalization Service  
Health, Education and Welfare  
Department of Labor  
Domestic Policy Staff  
National Security Council  
Office of Management and Budget

---

<sup>12</sup> Department of Justice participation in the Report and its Recommendations does not by implication or otherwise suggest a predetermination on the part of the Attorney General on future requests for the exercise of his discretionary parole authority. [Footnote in the original.]

---

**116. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to Secretary of State Vance<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 9, 1977

SUBJECT

Indochinese Refugees

In light of the opposition encountered in Congress to authorization and appropriations legislation to fund the current refugee program as well as the recent acceleration of escape rates in Indochina, it would not be appropriate for the United States to undertake commitments to additional Indochinese refugees at this time. However, we should proceed with an interim program the key elements of which include:

1. A vigorous effort to continue to develop an international approach to the Indochina refugee problem including:

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Global Issues, Mathews Subject File, Box 13, Refugees: Indochina: 11/77. Confidential.

—Consultations with and support for the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR) in efforts to: broaden the base of fiscal support; increase international settlement opportunities; solicit a more compassionate response to refugee vessels in distress by the maritime community and countries of first asylum; and encourage Thailand to provide resettlement for refugees who remain there.

—Bilateral discussions with other countries to encourage them to accept Indochinese refugees for resettlement.

2. Consultations with the Congress to try to resolve the question of what authority is to be used in admitting additional Indochinese refugees, and to demonstrate that the Administration's desire to help is part of a broader international effort.

3. An effort to establish more reliable estimates of escape rates for boat cases and others now and over the next several years.

4. An assessment of how soon Indochinese refugees can be considered along with and in the context of all other refugees accepted by the United States.

5. A review of the appropriate level of domestic support to be extended to additional Indochinese refugees.

Recommendations resulting from this further review and consultations should reach the President before January 31, 1978.<sup>2</sup>

**Zbigniew Brzezinski**

---

<sup>2</sup> See Document 120.

**117. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 6, 1977

**SUBJECT**

Emergency Parole for Indochinese Refugees

As indicated in my memorandum to you of November 18,<sup>2</sup> we are beginning consultations with the Congress on the long-term problem of Indochinese refugees and have briefed key figures on the immediate emergency. We have begun discussions with Congressman Eilberg and his staff. Eilberg remains interested in using his omnibus refugee bill<sup>3</sup> as the framework for long run acceptance of Indochinese refugees, and we now believe that a compromise with him may be workable when we resume more detailed discussions in January. Meanwhile, we are reviewing with OMB and other interested agencies a revised Administration position on the Eilberg bill which will be the basis for the next round of consultations. We have also begun discussions with Senator Kennedy and his staff who favor US action to accept Indochinese refugees.

In our consultations with Congress we have discussed the sharp increase in recent months of the flow of Indochinese boat refugees and how we can best deal with this situation.

The 7,000 parole numbers authorized in August for boat refugees have been exhausted. Despite continuing international efforts which have absorbed 1,200 refugees over the past four months, over 4,700 refugees now line various beaches in Southeast Asia and are without any offer of permanent resettlement. Boat refugees are continuing to flee Vietnam at the rate of over 1,500 monthly.

The shortfall in permanent resettlement offers for boat refugees has, despite our strong protests, recently led Thailand (which has already accepted nearly 100,000 Indochinese refugees) to push several Vietnamese refugee boats with over 250 persons back out to sea. Other countries of temporary safehaven in the area could follow suit.

I believe that the boat refugee situation has become so acute that we cannot await the formulation of a long-term policy with Congress which could take several months before implementation. If we do

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 19, Indochina. Limited Official Use.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 5, Document 116.

nothing in the interim, lives will be lost. We have discussed the emergency with key Congressional figures. Kennedy is supportive. Eastland has indicated he will go along and Eilberg should also agree, based on recent talks with him. We will also talk to Peter Rodino.

The voluntary agencies responsible for resettlement of Indochinese refugees have been urging further U.S. action—both to meet the present emergency and over the longer run. Indeed, they have requested a meeting with you to discuss the Indochinese refugee “crisis.” While I do not believe you need meet personally with the voluntary agencies at this time, their concern will mount, as will press interest, unless we move swiftly to deal with the situation.

*Recommendation:*

In consonance with the humanitarian goals of this Administration, I recommend that you authorize me to request the Attorney General to exercise his parole authority under Section 212(d) (5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act to admit up to 7,000 Indochinese boat refugees over the next 4–6 months pending implementation of the long-term policy. If you approve, I will proceed with my formal letter to the Attorney General with a view toward formally announcing the parole authority before the holidays.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Carter checked the approve option. He also wrote beneath the paragraph, “Cy—Expedite firm policy. JC.”

## 118. Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>

RP-M-77-10321

Washington, December 16, 1977

### REFUGEES AND HUMAN RIGHTS: AN ISSUE IN US-ASEAN RELATIONS

*Developing Third World nations—generally those most affected by large numbers of refugees—are concerned about attempts by developed Western nations, and the US in particular, to guarantee the legal and civil rights of refugees by tying international financial and resettlement assistance to a country's acceptance and treatment of refugees. Such a policy, the developing nations believe, would seriously impair their ability to resolve the difficult domestic problems that refugees pose. One region where Western emphasis on the human rights of refugees has become a major issue in US-developing world relations is Southeast Asia, where concern is mounting among the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) over the growing influx of Vietnamese refugees into their countries.*

*For domestic political, economic, and security reasons, and also out of concern over harming relations with Vietnam, all five states (Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines) are reluctant to accept Vietnamese refugees. In addition, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia have adopted hard-line tactics to discourage new refugees and put pressure on the US and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to take immediate and long-term steps to resettle them outside the region. Out of fear of being swamped by refugees turned away by their neighbors, Singapore and the Philippines will probably ultimately adopt similar anti-refugee policies—which in effect deny even temporary asylum. Thus far the individual ASEAN nations have dealt with the problem largely in the context of bilateral relations with the US and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Recent pronouncements, however, could indicate a growing inclination among the ASEAN nations to act in concert in order to strengthen their collective hand. This article examines the refugee policies of the ASEAN states, with particular regard to the Vietnamese “boat cases,” and the implications of these policies for the broader issues of human rights and ASEAN-US relations.*

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 85T00287R: Production Case Files, Box 3, Folder 149: Refugees and Human Rights: An Issue in US-ASEAN Relations. Confidential; [handling restriction not declassified]. Prepared in the National Foreign Assessment Center. A note on the first page indicates the memorandum was prepared by the International Issues Division of the Office of Regional and Political Analysis.

The five ASEAN nations have been affected in varying degrees—depending on their geographic proximity to Vietnam—by the growing number of “boat cases.” There are some 9,500 “boat cases”—Vietnamese who escaped by boat and are in temporary asylum—4400 in Malaysia, 3800 in Thailand, 1150 in the Philippines, 100 in Indonesia, and 50 in Singapore. During 1977, refugees have been arriving on Southeast Asian shores at the rate of 200–500 a month.<sup>2</sup>

Contrary to earlier indications that the number of fleeing Vietnamese would remain stable or decline toward the end of 1977, there has been a sharp increase in boat cases despite adverse seasonal weather conditions and increased Vietnamese security patrols. Poor economic conditions (including food shortages), conscription for the armed forces, and government economic and security policies (such as forced resettlement of urban dwellers in new economic zones) are cited among the most compelling reasons for taking the risk of setting out to sea in small, dilapidated boats. In addition, it is possible that many Vietnamese who were considering flight were encouraged by the announcement in late summer (broadcast by international radio) that the US would accept more “boat case” refugees.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Domestic and Diplomatic Concerns*

Throughout Southeast Asia there is a longstanding and intense ethnic animosity toward the Vietnamese, which makes it difficult for the individual ASEAN governments to offer more than temporary humanitarian assistance to the refugees. The ASEAN nations, moreover, are concerned with their internal security and are worried that Communist agents, posing as refugees, might stimulate Communist and dissident movements in their countries. The present Thai government has made clear that it will not attempt to resettle any Vietnamese, although it has planned a program to absorb Lao and Cambodian refugees in its northern provinces. The Malaysian government has found many Chinese among the Vietnamese refugees<sup>4</sup> and fears that the presence of both ethnic groups would exacerbate existing communal tension between Chinese and Malays. The Indonesians dislike the Vietnamese almost as much as their own Chinese minority, who they treat largely as unwelcome resident aliens.

---

<sup>2</sup> A record 1,271 boat cases arrived in Malaysia in October. There are an additional 85,000 Lao and Cambodian refugees who crossed river and land borders into Thailand. [Footnote in the original.]

<sup>3</sup> See Document 113.

<sup>4</sup> Most of those fleeing Vietnam are from urban, not rural, areas, and many are Chinese with enough money to provision boats and bribe Vietnamese patrols. [Footnote in the original.]

The ASEAN governments are also concerned about the economic problems that any increase of refugees would pose. The financial burden for Thailand has been especially heavy, and the government has been criticized by farmers who believe that the refugees are receiving better treatment than they and are consuming scarce development funds. Malaysian authorities cite the social and economic problems they face with the growing refugee influx. Although not a financial burden, the care of large numbers of refugees strains local government manpower and facilities in several Malaysian states. Both Thailand and Malaysia claim that the newest refugees appear to be unskilled farmers, motivated by monetary factors, who would compete for land with local farmers.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the status and cost of the refugees may become a political issue in the forthcoming Malaysian general elections.

Faced with serious problems of overpopulation, food shortages, and unemployment, the Indonesian government finds it difficult to justify offering even temporary asylum to refugees and has turned away many attempting to land. The Philippine government has sought to capitalize on the presence of the small number of refugees in its borders by widely publicizing—primarily for US consumption—its humanitarian aid. Faced with a serious armed rebellion in its southern province, however, the Marcos government is not likely to extend more than temporary asylum and may, in the future, find the prospect of additional refugees intolerable. Singapore has felt that it cannot offer even temporary asylum because of its small size and dense population. It has no room for a separate camp and has housed its few refugees either in a prison or in a fishing village.

In the wake of the Communist victories in Indochina and a reduced US role in Southeast Asia, the non-Communist ASEAN nations have been very sensitive to maintaining Vietnamese good will. All the ASEAN nations have been careful to inform the Vietnam government of their policies with regard to accepting, even temporarily, refugees. Thailand and Malaysia have unofficially raised the idea of repatriation with Vietnam.

The Vietnamese government continues to equivocate, however, on the subject of repatriation. Although it has stated that “political” refugees will not be taken back, the broader issue of repatriating the Vietnamese in Thailand has been under discussion with the Thai. For the most part, Vietnam has not made an issue of the refugees in its bilateral relations with the other four ASEAN nations. Diplomatic considera-

---

<sup>5</sup> This has not been substantiated. If true, there has been a significant change in the reasons for leaving Vietnam. [Footnote in the original.]



tions are secondary, however, to the common ASEAN concern with domestic dislocations.

### *Refugee Policies*

Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines have agreed to accept Vietnamese refugees for temporary asylum until arrangements are made by the US and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for them to leave the country. Singapore, thus far, has been unwilling to grant even temporary asylum, although it is currently negotiating an agreement with the UNHCR. None has offered to resettle—i.e., give permanent asylum to—any Vietnamese, and several are beginning to impose tougher measures denying temporary asylum in many cases.

Critical of the slow pace of US and UNHCR efforts to resettle refugees in other regions and of the absence of any concrete, long-term US or UNHCR program to bear the burden of future refugees, the ASEAN nations have begun to discuss concerted measures to deal with the refugee situation. The issue was raised at the ASEAN summit conference in August and again at the recent standing committee meeting,<sup>6</sup> where it was discussed in terms of urging the UNHCR to accelerate efforts to resettle Indochinese refugees in third countries.

In November, Thailand and Malaysia announced policies aimed at discouraging new refugees and encouraging the international community to take effective steps to grant permanent asylum to the refugees and reduce the number presently in camps in the ASEAN nations. The new Thai and Malaysian policies involve treating all refugees as illegal immigrants; classifying them into “political” and “economic” categories and forcing repatriation of those determined to be motivated by purely economic factors; and turning away those attempting to land by boat.

Indonesia already has such guidelines, and it is likely that Singapore and the Philippines will ultimately adopt similar policies to avoid being swamped by refugees turned away from neighboring countries. Unpublicized negotiations between the UNHCR and Singapore over the latter's offer to designate an island for temporary asylum may be adversely affected by the announcement of the Thai and Malaysian policies. The Singapore government has already placed stringent conditions on an agreement—an ironclad written guarantee that refugees will be moved out at a reasonable rate and under no circumstances be permitted to remain permanently—and may find it necessary to reconsider its offer.

---

<sup>6</sup> The second ASEAN Summit was held in Kuala Lumpur August 4–5. The ASEAN Standing Committee met in Singapore November 23–24.

*Implications for ASEAN-US Relations*

The strict policies announced recently by Thailand and Malaysia are strongly opposed in principle by the US and the UNHCR, which argue that enforcement of the measures, especially turning away boats, could violate human rights and, thus, both tarnish the countries' international image and jeopardize the willingness of third countries and the UNHCR to provide further financial and resettlement assistance.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, the ASEAN nations—Thailand and Malaysia in particular—will weigh their concerns over domestic dislocations and relations with Vietnam against the possibility of international disapproval and will probably decide to enforce, at least on a case-by-case basis, tougher anti-refugee measures. Despite objections on the grounds of violating human rights, these policies—including forced repatriation and return to sea—will probably be enforced when the number of refugees in camps is high in order to induce the US and UNHCR to reduce the numbers immediately and implement serious follow-on programs. Tactically, the ASEAN governments probably believe that they can shift the blame for any violations of human rights onto the US and the international community and apply moral pressure on them to accelerate resettlement programs.<sup>8</sup>

In so doing, the ASEAN nations will argue that the situation is not of their making, that they have carried more than their share of the burden, and that the US and UNHCR are ultimately responsible (by written guarantee) for resettling the Vietnamese elsewhere. From the ASEAN nations' point of view, the only viable long-term solution will be permanent resettlement of the Vietnamese refugees in other, non-ASEAN countries. Consequently, they are not likely to consider suggestions that they attempt to share the burden among themselves or offer permanent asylum and resettlement.

The ASEAN nations will probably also seek other means of solving the refugee problem. They may reach an understanding with Vietnam and the UNHCR that would provide for repatriation of some refugees (under UNHCR supervision), and they may privately encourage Vietnam to tighten its border patrols and prevent people from leaving.

---

<sup>7</sup> The UNHCR, through its representative in Southeast Asia, has assumed the responsibility of providing financial support for refugee relief efforts by ASEAN governments and of persuading third countries to take refugees. [Footnote in the original.]

<sup>8</sup> For instance, in southern Thailand some 400 refugees arriving in seaworthy boats were reprovisioned and towed back to sea, while some 500 in unseaworthy boats were forced into a detention center. Later boat cases were allowed to land at the urging of the US and the UNHCR and in response to US promises to speed up processing and to take all boat cases out of the camps, if not the country, by the end of 1977. Malaysia has similarly been mollified temporarily by US promises to reduce the number of refugees in camps by the end of the year. [Footnote in the original.]

Finally, in the councils of the UNHCR, they will oppose measures to give refugees legal rights, and they will seek to lobby in developing nation caucuses to influence the choice of a new UN High Commissioner for Refugees. ASEAN nations (along with many other developing nations) will seek to insure that the commissioner and deputy commissioner will be sympathetic to their particular situations and points of view and not have the “Western preoccupation with human rights.”<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> The European nominee, Poul Hartling, was recently elected as commissioner. He is under pressure from the developing nations to replace the incumbent deputy—an American—with an African. [Footnote in the original.]

---

#### **119. Memorandum From the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 19, 1977

##### **SUBJECT**

Emergency Parole for Indochinese Refugees

In the memorandum at Tab A<sup>2</sup> Secretary Vance recommends that you approve 7,000 additional parole numbers for Indochinese boat-case refugees. *We currently face an emergency situation in Indochina. Approximately 5,000 new boat cases without opportunities elsewhere have accumulated over the past several months. This number is growing at the rate of roughly 1,500 per month—three times the rate estimated as recently as September.*

Based on population, resources, economic conditions, and motivation, the U.S. is the country most able to absorb Indochinese refugees. To date, only France has approached the level of effort which the U.S. has sustained of slightly more than one Indochinese refugee for each 1,300 in population. *Excluding the U.S., the worldwide total of accepted*

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 19, Indochina. Confidential. Sent for action. A stamped notation on the memorandum indicates that the President saw it. Carter wrote “C” at the top of the memorandum.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 117.

*boat cases has averaged 450 cases per month over the past four months. The State Department is hopeful that with the naming of Poul Hartling as the new UNHCR, the international situation will improve, but they are not optimistic for a dramatic increase in boat case acceptances.*

State estimates the *resettlement costs for 7,000 additional refugees at \$6.3 million*, all of which would be taken from the Emergency Fund. HEW estimates the *welfare cost impact at \$24.22 million over the next four years*. HEW also points out that the amount required for FY 1978, \$3.01 million, would require a supplemental appropriation, and that the FY 1979 and subsequent budgets must be increased over currently approved or projected levels.

The data are simply not available to make reliable estimates of escape rates from Indochina; however the numbers are likely to remain high over the next several years. Without reliable estimates, you have two options. *You could draw the line now*. We all believe that there should be limits to the extent of U.S. involvement, and we have already accepted over 75 percent of the Indochinese refugees that have been resettled—164,000 of 217,000. Such an action would result in considerable suffering in Indochina, and would surely be viewed as inconsistent with our human rights policy.

*Alternatively, I recommend that you approve a parole of 10,000 and that you authorize the Administration to support Congressman Eilberg's legislation which would provide long-term refugee acceptance authority and set limits on the extent of U.S. assistance.* The additional 3,000 parole numbers will provide enough time for Congress to act on legislation before we are confronted with another refugee build-up. If legislation is not forthcoming, Congress would share the responsibility of a subsequent emergency. The increase over Cy's request would increase the HEW costs by approximately \$10 million over four years. Resettlement costs would increase by roughly \$2.7 million, exhausting State's available funds. Every effort should be made to keep our additional parole low-key so that we do not raise expectations unrealistically in Indochina.

#### RECOMMENDATION

That you approve a parole of 10,000 additional numbers.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Carter checked the approve option and wrote "7000" beside his approval. Underneath the recommendation, Carter wrote, "Tell State to evolve rapidly a permanent approach. We may be inducing unnecessary suffering by encouraging refugees to leave home with no place to go." Hodding Carter announced on December 22 that the President had authorized Vance to request the Attorney General to admit an additional 7,000 Indochinese refugees into the country. ("President Agrees to Admit 7,000 Indochinese Refugees," *Washington Post*, December 23, 1977, p. A11)

**120. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the Department of State (Tarnoff) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, February 18, 1978

SUBJECT

Indochinese Refugees

The Department has continued efforts to maintain a strong international response to the problem with particular emphasis on maintaining resettlement offers at the highest possible level. We expect that the international community will permanently resettle in 1978 a total of almost 18,000 refugees from camps in Thailand and other countries of temporary safehaven.

We have continued discussions with the Congress on the most appropriate means for accepting Indochinese on a continuing basis. The Eilberg bill<sup>2</sup> is one possibility. A revised Department position on the bill is being discussed with relevant executive agencies. If a new executive position can be developed and agreed to by Eilberg and the Subcommittee, the bill might be a means of admitting Indochinese. On the basis of discussions we have had with the Subcommittee staff, they appear to be reconsidering some key aspects. Unless and until legislation is actually passed, parole remains the most practical means of admitting Indochinese.

Further thoughts on the longer range including suggestions about defining a national refugee policy for all groups are incorporated in the attached paper.<sup>3</sup>

**Peter Tarnoff<sup>4</sup>**  
*Executive Secretary*

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Subject File, Box 51, Refugees, 1–12/78. Limited Official Use.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 5, Document 116.

<sup>3</sup> Also attached was a copy of Document 116.

<sup>4</sup> Wisner signed for Tarnoff above Tarnoff's typed signature.

## Attachment

### Paper Prepared in the Department of State<sup>5</sup>

Washington, undated

#### *The Status of National Policy On Indochinese Refugees*

The Department of State has continued to review the Indochinese refugee situation along the lines recommended in Dr. Brzezinski's memorandum of November 9, and has taken certain steps suggested therein to deal with this situation. In terms of the interim program suggested in the referenced memorandum, the following actions have been taken:

(1) We have made a continuing, strong, and partially successful effort to maintain and increase the degree of international participation in assistance to Indochinese refugees. In the multilateral sphere, we have obtained resolutions in the Executive Committee of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Council of the Intergovernmental Committee on European Migration (ICEM). We have also raised the subject in the NATO Council meeting. We have made a large number of bilateral approaches, including visits by American officials to Paris, Ottawa, Geneva and most Southeast Asian capitals. These approaches included a visit to Thailand and other South-east Asian countries by Assistant Secretary of State Patricia Derian, who also stressed the importance of strong UNHCR attention to this problem to the new High Commissioner Poul Hartling in Geneva.<sup>6</sup>

International participation in resettlement of Indochinese refugees is actually substantially better than is generally understood. Leaving aside the initial evacuation and its aftermath in the summer and fall of 1975, the record for the last two years has seen a total of 74,000 Indochinese resettled; 31,000 in the United States and 43,000 in third countries, not including Thailand.

The bulk of this resettlement has been accounted for by the programs of France, Australia, and Canada. All three have active ongoing programs and both Australia and Canada have recently made fresh commitments to assist these refugees. We estimate that resettlement in third countries in 1978 will accommodate over 18,000 refugees.

---

<sup>5</sup> Limited Official Use.

<sup>6</sup> Derian's trip to Southeast Asia took place January 7-18. She stopped in Geneva January 19-20 before returning to Washington.

(2) We have also found it necessary to deal with the emergency created by the sharp increase in the numbers of refugees leaving by boat; with the President's approval, the Secretary of State recommended that the Attorney General parole an additional 7,000 "boat" refugees into the U.S. This authorization was granted on January 25 following a hearing before the House Subcommittee on Immigration on January 24.<sup>7</sup> This parole was intended to deal only with the immediate emergency—to buy a few months time during which we expect to discuss longer term policy with the Congress.

(3) We have continued to attempt to establish reliable estimates of escape rates for Indochinese refugees over the next few years but this has proven most difficult. *Our best judgement is that these refugees will continue to leave Indochina at least at present levels over the next year or so and their numbers may increase somewhat, though probably not greatly.* It seems clear that the process of excluding the former Vietnamese middle class from participation in the life of the nation will continue to be a major impetus in maintaining the rate of escape. Former members of this class find it very difficult to obtain permission to work and many survive by selling their possessions, a process that only provides relief for a limited time. In addition, it is increasingly plain that not only are these individuals branded as "class enemies" and permanently disadvantaged in the new society, but also their children and children's children. Countering this strong pressure on large numbers to leave are the active efforts of the Vietnamese government to prevent such departure; it is plain that this outflow is embarrassing to Hanoi. Increasingly, we hear of heavy prison sentences for those attempting escape.

A straight line projection of escape rates of the past six months would forecast an annual outflow of about 18,000 "boat" refugees and about 26,000 refugees escaping by land. The number of these that might be taken into the United States would depend on the nature of the commitment made to these refugees.

The Interagency Task Force report<sup>8</sup> recommended that the commitment of the U.S. Government to assist Indochinese refugees be expressed not in terms of numbers but in terms of classes of refugees. It further recommended that these classes of refugees be:

- refugees escaping by boat and with no other offer of resettlement, and

- refugees escaping by land who meet the criteria established in previous programs.

---

<sup>7</sup> For Derian's January 24 statement before the Subcommittee, see Department of State *Bulletin*, March 1978, pp. 33–35.

<sup>8</sup> See Documents 114 and 115.

Of the 18,000 escaping by boat, we hope that approximately one third will be accepted by third countries, leaving about 12,000 boat refugees needing resettlement opportunities in the United States. Of the refugees escaping by land, our experience has been that about one third, or 12,000–14,000, meet the criteria established in previous programs for acceptance into the United States; i.e., close relatives in the United States, former employment with the United States Government, or other close association with the United States.

Thus, a projection of past experience would provide a total of about 12,000 “boat” refugees and 12–14,000 refugees escaping by land for a total of 24–26,000 Indochinese refugees annually which we would need to accept into the United States. This total for all three countries is somewhat less than the number that entered the United States under normal immigration procedures annually from single countries such as Korea or the Philippines.

(4) In relative terms, therefore, the number involved is not very considerable. The problem has been that there is no provision for such a continuing flow of refugees under the present Immigration and Nationality Act except for continued resort to the Attorney General’s parole authority. Not only has this situation been the subject of criticism by some Congressmen but also it has been most unsatisfactory because it has required us to wait until we faced a serious emergency before acting. The results of utilizing the parole have been quite discouraging. Some lives have been lost. Though we have been very generous in our final response, increasingly our public image, both here and abroad, has become one of very grudging acceptance of these refugees. The uncertainty of our program leaves countries of first asylum fearful that they will have to absorb the refugees themselves and, unwilling to do that, they grow more hostile towards accepting refugees on even a temporary basis.

The need, therefore, is clearly to establish longer term, more orderly and predictable programs and procedures. Our goal in assisting these refugees could quite easily and efficiently be met by a more open-ended use of the Attorney General’s parole power with advance consultation on refugees expected over the coming year. This would be the type solution favored by Senator Kennedy. It is, however, anathema to some members of Congress, including Congressman Eilberg, Chairman of the key House Subcommittee on Immigration. Congressman Eilberg has introduced his own bill providing refugee legislation which would codify present procedures on the group admission of refugees as well as adding some additional features of his own. The Department has reviewed this bill within the framework of the future admission of a continuing flow of refugees of special concern to the United States. Such refugees would include those from the Soviet Union and Eastern



Europeans as well as Indochinese. We have made recommendation to OMB regarding acceptance of the Eilberg bill with minor (but important) amendments and are awaiting OMB's approval at this time. Congressman Eilberg has scheduled hearings on his bill, H.R. 7175, on February 22. The Administration needs to complete a review of the bill as soon as possible in order to allow the bill to move forward with Administration support during this session of Congress if it is found acceptable.

(5) The Department has also begun informal consultations with the Congress to try to resolve the question of what authority should be used in admitting Indochinese in the future and which Indochinese refugees should be the beneficiaries of a commitment by the United States Government. The Department believes that it is exceptionally important to try to bring this matter to a conclusion as rapidly as possible. The longer it drags on, the more views on the appropriate handling of this problem polarize between those who think we have done enough and those who believe our commitment should be broader. If we can reach agreement on a long term program relatively quickly and structure it in such a fashion that the future implementation of the program is seen as within the broader context of overall United States efforts to assist refugees, we will meet the desires of most of the proponents of refugee assistance with minimum aggravation to those opposing such a program. Congressman Eilberg intends to question us about long term policy at the February 22 hearing. As Assistant Secretary Derian noted during the January 24 hearing before Eilberg on the parole of 7,000 "boat" refugees, that parole would only buy about three months time, during which a long term policy needs to be agreed upon. Otherwise, circumstances will probably force us to go to the Congress once again with an emergency parole request for a further short term respite.

(6) The Department has also begun a review of overall refugee programs.<sup>9</sup> In each of the following aspects of refugee policy, it is important to move in the direction of a more uniform policy. Whatever legal authorization is used to admit refugees of special concern to the U.S., these arrangements should include all such groups and not only Indochinese refugees. The options outlined in the InterAgency Task Force report or a revised Eilberg bill could be used to accomplish the objective of uniform treatment of such refugees. In terms of payment of resettlement grants to voluntary agencies, we should also seek uniformity as soon as possible once the outlines of a future program becomes clear. A supplemental appropriation to the 1978 Migration

---

<sup>9</sup> Reference is to PD-30; see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. II, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, Document 119.

and Refugee Assistance budget would make it possible to integrate Indochinese and other refugee programs in this respect. Finally there is a requirement to review the appropriate level of domestic support to be extended to additional Indochinese refugees. This is, of course, a matter to be coordinated with HEW. We note, however, that PL 95-145 passed in 1977 extended reimbursement to the States for welfare expenses incurred for the resettlement of Indochinese refugees on the following basis:

FY 78-100%; FY 79-75%; FY 80-50%; and FY 81-25%. Thereafter the Federal Government does not reimburse any of the States' shares of domestic assistance because the alien came as an Indochinese refugee but only provides assistance on the same basis as to other citizens and residents of the United States.

Some form of continuing assistance to States to meet costs incurred as a result of continuing flow of refugees would seem appropriate. The Department believes, however, that we should seek to provide such assistance to States on a uniform basis for all refugees. At present, there are, in addition to the Indochinese program, a special program of assistance to Cuban refugees, as well as an Administration proposal for FY 79 for additional assistance to voluntary agencies for the resettlement of refugees other than Indochinese or Cubans. A priority concern, therefore, should be to attempt to develop such a uniform method of providing domestic benefits to refugees. The goal should be to seek such uniformity in the FY 1980 budget cycle.

In view of the above, the Department of State proposes to proceed along the following lines:

(a) While implementing the new parole for 7,000 boat refugees, we will coordinate closely with other countries and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees so that maximum utilization can be made of third country resettlement programs. We will continue to vigorously press for international participation, recognizing, however, that substantial increases above present levels are not likely.

(b) We will continue consultations with the Congress to seek agreement on a future commitment to Indochinese refugees defined in terms of classes as follows:

—refugees escaping by boat who do not have offers of resettlement opportunities elsewhere, and

—refugees escaping by land, who meet the agreed upon criteria of close association with the United States.

(c) We will also consult with the Congress on appropriate authorities for the admission of such groups of refugees.

(d) We will continue to seek agreement within the Administration on a more forthcoming position towards the Eilberg refugee bill in the

hope that it might provide an acceptable framework for dealing with this problem. But we should be prepared to admit refugees under the parole authority until any legislative mechanism is passed.

(e) We will coordinate with HEW to seek to develop a more uniform policy for the resettlement and provision of domestic benefits to all refugees accepted into the United States.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> An Estimated Annual Indochinese Refugee Outflow chart is attached but not printed.

---

## **121. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, February 27, 1978

SUBJECT

Vance Memo Re: Indochinese Refugees

### *STATE DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION*

In the memorandum at Tab A<sup>2</sup> the State Department asks you to establish a longer-term Indochinese refugee policy which would provide for the regular admission of refugees escaping by boat who have no offer of resettlement elsewhere and refugees escaping by land, who are closely associated with the United States. This is estimated to be 25,000 per year for the next few years.

The State Department has come forward with this recommendation in response to a general feeling that we need a more regular and orderly way to deal with the Indochinese problem, rather than waiting until an emergency exists before acting.

The Immigration Subcommittee of the House of Representatives has scheduled hearings on the Eilberg refugee bill for Wednesday, March 1, and administration witnesses are scheduled to testify.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Box 83, National Security Issues—Indochinese Refugees [2/24–12/31/78]. Confidential. Carter wrote "C" in the upper right-hand corner of the first page.

<sup>2</sup> Tab A, an undated memorandum from Vance to Carter on Indochinese refugees, is attached but not printed.

*OTHER CONSIDERATIONS*

In essence, you are being asked to approve a policy for Indochinese refugees while the State and Justice Department continue to draft an overall policy affecting other refugees. The Justice Department opposes this approach and feels strongly that:

- A comprehensive policy for all refugees is needed. Moreover, there would be less opposition to admitting Indochinese refugees if linked to a more comprehensive policy including the admission of Soviet Jews.

- The State Department proposes to explore the possibility of introducing legislation to implement their proposal, but any immediate implementation of the policy would be through the Attorney General's parole power. The Justice Department opposes the continued use of the parole power in situations such as the Indochinese refugees because:

- The parole power was not meant to be exercised for the wholesale relocation of refugees. It was originally established to help certain types of seamen enter the U.S. (e.g., shipwrecked sailors or sailors from Communist vessels jumping ship.)

- There has been increasing Congressional criticism of using the parole power in these situations. Congress has recently insisted on hearings each time the Attorney General consults on the additional use of the parole power. While it is true that Kennedy favors liberal use of the parole authority, Congressman Eilberg and Senator Eastland are strongly opposed.

OMB and the Congressional Relations staff have raised the following concerns:

- The proposal as submitted to you contains no firm recommendation on reimbursing costs to local governments, but simply notes that if past reimbursement levels are continued the cost would be \$78 million over a four year period. Failure to reach a decision on reimbursement prior to announcement of the policy would cause serious criticism from affected states.

- It is not clear from the memorandum whether Congress has been adequately consulted. Although there is some support for an expanded and more regular admission policy, there is also some resistance.

There has been considerable agreement between the State and Justice Departments on the principles which are required for a sound refugee policy.

The essence of the remaining disagreement between Justice and State on the overall policy question comes to whether we should support the Eilberg approach of placing some numerical limitations on the normal flow of refugees, or whether we should avoid numerical limits altogether. The differences within the Administration reflect

those on the Hill, with the Justice Department in agreement with Eilberg and Eastland that there should be numerical limitations, and the State Department and Senator Kennedy opposing them.

These differences could be quickly brought to a head, and submitted to you for decision.

In light of the above considerations, OMB, the Congressional Relations staff and your Domestic Policy staff feel that you should hold a decision on Indochinese refugees and:

- Ask that the State and Justice Departments develop a comprehensive policy position within 14 days, including a firm recommendation on reimbursement costs to local governments and a frank assessment of probable Congressional reaction.
- Request a continuance of the Judiciary Committee hearing, and, if this proves impossible, present general testimony and return when a decision has been made on a comprehensive policy.<sup>3</sup>

#### NSC RECOMMENDATION

However, I feel that the Vietnamese issue raises not only moral problems but has become also politically urgent. The *New York Times* is attacking us editorially for inaction and the Congress is proceeding with hearings which will be quite critical in their direction. Accordingly, I feel you should approve the general approach proposed by Cy Vance, as indicated on page 3 of his memorandum. This approval can then be followed by the development of the comprehensive policy recommended above by the OMB, the Congressional Relations staff and your Domestic Policy staff.

If you agree, please so indicate on page 3 of Vance's memorandum.

If you do not, please indicate whether the two specific recommendations marked with • are your preferences.

---

<sup>3</sup> Carter circled the two bullet points and wrote his initials in the left-hand margin. Brzezinski conveyed this decision to Vance in a February 28 memorandum. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Agency File, Box 17, State Department (State), 2–3/78)

**122. Paper Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>**

GC 78-10048

Washington, March 1978

**The Refugee Resettlement Problem in Thailand****Key Points**

In the two and a half years since the Communist takeovers in Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos, approximately 160,000 displaced Indochinese have sought refuge in Thailand. An estimated 100,000 of these refugees remain in the country.

The repressive political systems and poor economic prospects in the Indochina countries continue to spur large numbers to seek better conditions in Thailand. Nearly all Indochinese reaching Thailand are admitted to 1 of the 13 refugee camps jointly operated and funded by the Thai Government, the UN High Commission for Refugees, and a number of voluntary agencies. Among the 13 camps there is considerable variety in living conditions. There are common complaints over inadequate food rations, insufficient water, and crowded conditions, but reliable observers familiar with refugee conditions in other parts of the world report that none of the problems with basic camp services are critical. There is generally adequate food, shelter, and medical attention.

Confronted with the prospect of a continuing influx of new refugees, the Thai Government has been reluctant officially to concede that many will have to be permanently resettled in Thailand, believing that to do so would encourage a substantial increase in the influx of refugees. Privately, however, senior government officials realize the inevitability of Thailand absorbing a large number of the Indochinese refugees.

Bangkok is only now beginning to formulate a long term refugee policy, and permanent resettlement of camp inhabitants is not expected to begin before mid-1978. Worrisome problems, however, are associated with resettlement and the Thai Government has expressed a number of major concerns:

- the difficulties in locating an adequate number of suitable resettlement sites in the underdeveloped but politically sensitive North and Northeast regions
- the perception that the refugees pose an increased security threat in areas already troubled with Communist insurgents

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Transnational Issues, Job 79T01050A: Production Files, Box 7, Folder 9: The Refugee Resettlement Problem in Thailand. Confidential. Prepared in the National Foreign Assessment Center.

- the fear that Thai peasants will resent more than minimal aid to the refugees, particularly as they are resettled in remote rural areas where the central government traditionally has lagged in providing development funds for its own citizens.

According to US Embassy officials in Bangkok, Thailand is unable to bear all the costs of major permanent resettlement programs alone. Senior Thai officials, for their part, have made clear that greater international recognition and financial and technical support for Thailand's role in absorbing the Indochinese refugees are expected. Bangkok looks to the United States in particular for long term major financial assistance, and, at the least, Thai officials probably expect an increase in US funds already contributed through the UN High Commission for Refugees to help offset the costs of a resettlement program.

[Omitted here is the body of the paper.]

---

**123. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) and the President's Assistant for Domestic Affairs and Policy (Eizenstat) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, March 18, 1978

SUBJECT

Refugee Policy

On February 27 you asked us to develop a comprehensive refugee policy.<sup>2</sup> Since then, NSC, the Domestic Policy Staff, State, Justice, OMB and HEW staffs have met, and this memorandum presents decisions based on three agreed-upon assumptions.

- New legislation is needed to regularize and make more efficient the process by which refugees are admitted into the United States.
- The U.S. has a continuing obligation within limits to assist refugees escaping from Indochina.
- The provision of Federal assistance to refugees is appropriate to help in their absorption into American society.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Box 83, National Security Issues—Indochinese Refugees [2/24–12/31/78]. Confidential. Sent for action.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 121.

## I. A Comprehensive Policy and Legislation

A. *Policy Elements*. There is general agreement among the agencies on the basic policy. It could be implemented through testimony on and proposed amendments to the Eilberg and just-introduced Kennedy bills<sup>3</sup> or, if necessary, through an Administration legislative initiative.

- *Definition*—The definition of refugee should be broadened to more closely conform to the UN definition,<sup>4</sup> thereby freeing our acceptance of refugees from geographic or ideological limitations. The current law limits conditional entry just to refugees fleeing Communist regimes or Middle East countries.<sup>5</sup> Actual admittance of refugees into the United States would be limited to those of special concern to the U.S.

- *Refugee Acceptance*—Legislation should provide for the acceptance of refugees whose entry into the United States can be foreseen (normal flow) and for the acceptance of refugees whose entry cannot be foreseen (emergent conditions). If we continue to assist those Indo-chinese refugees we have helped in the past, the normal flow for all refugees of special concern to the United States could be as high as 50,000 per year.<sup>6</sup> This increase of 30,000 in foreseen admissions over what is provided for in current law would raise total authorized annual immigration from 290,000 to 320,000, but would be offset by elimination of the present procedure of using the parole to accommodate foreseen refugee flows.

- *Consultations*—The Administration would be prepared on a voluntary basis to report to the Congress on the allocation of the normal flow authority and to provide updates on progress during the year. Consultations with the Congress would be *mandatory* before unforeseen group admissions could be undertaken. This posture would give up some of the authority vested in the President by the current law; however, the agencies, particularly Justice, feel that the admission of groups of refugees requires the early involvement of Congress.

- *Retention of Parole*—Parole authority should be retained for the unlikely event of an emergency evacuation direct from a country in crisis to the United States, for the individual admission of political “persecutees” who do not meet the definition of refugee because they are in their own country of nationality, and for individuals.

---

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to S. 2751 (95th Congress), introduced by Kennedy on March 15, which proposed to increase the number of refugees and displaced persons admitted to the United States each year.

<sup>4</sup> For the UN definition of refugees, see the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees in *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1951, pp. 520–522.

<sup>5</sup> Reference is to the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (P.L. 89–236).

<sup>6</sup> Carter underlined “50,000 per year” and wrote in the adjacent left-hand margin next to the sentence, “seems higher than this memo later indicates.”



• *Joint Commission*—The most recent draft of the Eilberg bill also proposed a mixed Executive/Legislative Commission to study all aspects of U.S. immigration and refugee policy and to make recommendations for changes.<sup>7</sup> In the past, Congress has tended to pass immigration legislation with little reference to the Executive Branch; thus the establishment of such a commission by the Congress is viewed by all agencies as a positive step. In your consideration of the undocumented alien<sup>8</sup> policy, you rejected such a commission and requested that an Interagency Task Force<sup>9</sup> be established, instead. We request that you reconsider your previous decision. The Interagency Task Force is still in the formative stage<sup>10</sup> and could easily be assimilated by such a commission.

We recommend that you approve this policy framework.<sup>11</sup>

B. *Invoking Unforeseen Group Admission Procedures.* The principal unresolved issue concerning U.S. acceptance limits is the conditions under which unforeseen group admission procedures previously embodied in the parole power could be invoked. We need your guidance to prepare Administration testimony and to establish a clear legislative history on this issue. There are two basic options:

1. Retain the power to invoke such procedures whenever the allocation of normal flow authorizations becomes insufficient and a build-up of refugees of concern to the U.S. results. (Supported by State and NSC.) This option recognizes that the U.S. stance on human rights precludes a less forthcoming posture. Kennedy would probably attempt to block legislation which greatly restricted what he views as Executive flexibility in this regard. This option would permit a continued flexible policy of responding to refugee flows exceeding normal flow provisions of the law when deemed in the public interest. (This has been done in the past with Cuban, Soviet and Indochinese refugees through the parole authority.)

2. Invoke such procedures only in emergency situations for refugee flows which cannot be foreseen. (Supported by the Domestic Policy Staff and OMB.) This option would place a ceiling on normal flow refugees accepted by the U.S. Any group admissions over the ceiling, would have to be the result of new unforeseen emergency conditions. For example, if the normal flow ceiling is reached and Indochinese

---

<sup>7</sup> Carter wrote and underscored "ok" in the left-hand margin adjacent to this sentence.

<sup>8</sup> Carter underlined "undocumented alien."

<sup>9</sup> Carter underlined "Interagency Task Force."

<sup>10</sup> Carter underlined "still" and "formative stage" in this sentence. In the left-hand margin next to this sentence, he wrote, "Why still in the formative stage after all these months? If we can't act, maybe we should let Congress do it."

<sup>11</sup> Carter checked the approve option and initialed "J" in the right-hand margin.

refugees continue to accumulate at the present rate in Thailand, we would not accept any more until the next year. However, if the accumulation was caused by an unforeseen circumstance, they could be admitted under this emergent group procedure. This option is in accordance with the views of Senator Eastland and Congressman Eilberg. It clearly states what the U.S. is willing to do under normal circumstances, and thus encourages the International agencies and other countries to assist those in excess of our limit, but permits us to act swiftly when an emergency arises.

YOUR DECISION<sup>12</sup>

## II. *Indochinese Refugees*

A. *Whom to Accept.* All agencies agree that the United States should limit its future acceptance to the same two classes of Indochinese refugees that we have accepted in the past—boat cases without offer of resettlement and land refugees closely associated with the U.S. If we were to accept all such cases, State estimates that about 25,000 refugees per year over the next several years would qualify. Such a program would have broad public support confirmed in recent editorials and letters to you.

State Department resettlement costs are based on \$1,000 per refugee (Transportation—\$500, Administration—\$100, Resettlement Grant—\$400). The HEW domestic assistance costs are based on an extension of the current program until 1981 when the Administration's welfare reform proposal is to be implemented. The Indochinese refugees arriving in each of the next three years would constitute a cohort whose special assistance would be provided on the same four-year phase-out schedule as the current program. The States would identify the refugees in each year to determine the reimbursement base.

The estimated additional costs of such an acceptance program for Indochinese are summarized in the following table.

*Costs Additive to Current Budget Estimates*  
(millions of dollars)

	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>Totals</u>
State Resettlement Costs for Indochinese Refugees (25,000/year)	25.0	25.0	25.0	75.0

<sup>12</sup> Carter checked Option 2 and initialed "J" in the right-hand margin.

HEW Indochinese Refugee Assistance Program (25,000/year)	<u>15.0</u>	<u>25.0</u>	<u>40.0</u>	<u>80.0</u>
TOTALS	40.0	50.0	65.0	155.0

We recommend that you approve a continuing commitment to these two classes of Indochinese refugees.<sup>13</sup>

*B. Authority to Accept Additional Indochinese and Other Refugees.* Until new legislation is passed, the only authority available to admit Indochinese and other refugees for which normal entry numbers are not available is the parole. Legislation could pass by the end of this session; however, most estimates place passage at least a year away. The following factors bear on your consideration of whether and how to use the parole authority until legislation is passed.

- The Indochinese flow is estimated at 25,000 per year, and up to 5,000 additional parole numbers will be needed for Eastern European and Russian Jews before the end of the year.
- Congressional sentiment is mixed; Eastland and Eilberg oppose use of the parole for foreseen refugee flows, particularly Indochinese, while Kennedy, Cranston and Jackson all support a forthcoming policy toward Indochinese and other refugees, including use of the parole authority. The acceptability of any parole you propose will be enhanced since it will be presented in conjunction with support for new legislation.
- The Attorney General feels strongly that the continued admission of normal flow refugees should be expressly authorized by statute, or perhaps as time and need dictate, by Congressional resolution expressing the sense of Congress for an additional interim group admission of some number.

The options for the interim period include:

1. Request a parole which accepts Indochinese refugees limited to those who fit into the two classes identified above on a continuing basis until new legislation is in place. (Supported by State and the NSC.) This option has the advantage of providing long-term guaranteed acceptance to those whom we want to help. It avoids the problems with the Congress, encountered when it becomes necessary to go back for repeated uses of the parole authority when numbers in each ad hoc parole are exhausted. Additional parole numbers to accommodate Eastern European and Russian Jews would also be requested.

<sup>13</sup> Carter checked the approve option and initialed "J" in the right-hand margin.

2. Request a parole of 3,000 per month (roughly 2,000 for Indo-chinese and 1,000 for Eastern European and Russian Jews) beginning in April on a cumulative basis to accommodate all refugees for which normal entry numbers are not available until new legislative authority is available. (Offered as a compromise proposal. No Agency's first choice.) This option would establish a limit and regularize the acceptance of refugees as an interim measure. It should allow the U.S. to accommodate all refugees of concern unless escape rates from the Soviet Union or Indochina were to increase dramatically.

3. Request a parole of a fixed number of Indochinese over a stated period, say 25,000 over the next 12 months (State's estimate of one year's expected flow), to provide for an orderly program until legislation passes. A separate parole of 5,000 numbers would be requested for Eastern European and Russian Jews. (Supported by the Domestic Policy Staff and OMB.) By paroling a specific number, this option is similar to the form legislation is likely to take, a specific number with consultations required should the number prove inadequate. If legislation does not pass before these numbers are exhausted, subsequent paroles would be necessary; if legislation passes quickly, any unused numbers would lapse.

4. No further use of the Attorney General's discretionary parole authority for the admission of anticipated Indochinese or other refugees. (Supported by Justice.) This option is consistent with the view that the statutory parole authority expressly applies only to "emergent" situations or for reasons deemed strictly in the public interest. And its continued ad hoc use for group admissions of refugees whose flow is anticipated and predictable is in the view of several key members of Congress (most notably Senator Eastland) an encroachment on the Constitutional Article 1 plenary power of Congress to regulate immigration. Continued acceptance of normal flow refugees would be a matter to be worked out with the Congress.

#### YOUR DECISION<sup>14</sup>

C. *A Possible Initiative for the Vice President's Trip.* Over 100,000 land refugees have accumulated in Thailand. They are being kept in deplorable conditions in camps there. The long-term solution to that build-up must include acceptance of a considerable number of those refugees by the international community, and financial assistance to the Thais to resettle the remainder in Thailand permanently. All agencies concur in requesting your authorization to review this question as a possible initiative for the Vice President's trip to East Asia in April.

<sup>14</sup> Carter checked Option 1 and wrote beside it, "with maximum as in option 3."

His trip presents a unique opportunity to move the Thais toward a more forthcoming position on resettlement. If you approve, we will begin urgent staffing and raise the issue with the Vice President.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> Carter underlined “staffing,” checked the approve option, and wrote beneath it, “no decision yet.”

---

**124. Memorandum From the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 28, 1978

SUBJECT

Vice President’s Refugee Initiative

You approved on March 27,<sup>2</sup> the preparation of an initiative for the Vice President during his visit to Thailand<sup>3</sup> regarding the permanent resettlement in Thailand of a large portion of the almost 100,000 refugees which are currently subsisting in camps there. This memorandum presents a recommended initiative for your approval concurred in by State, Justice, the Domestic Policy Staff, and OMB. (and the Vice President)

Resettlement in Thailand is an important part of the overall solution to the Indochinese refugee problem. The Vice President’s presence there presents a unique opportunity to move the Thais toward a more forthcoming position on resettlement. U.S. support would be conditioned on two factors:

—It would be part of a broader international effort to assist in permanent resettlement.

—It would be carefully phased so that continued assistance would be conditioned on Thai progress toward resettlement.

The agencies have identified the following elements of a Vice Presidential resettlement initiative with the Thais.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Materials, Mondale Papers, Box 83, National Security Issues—Indochinese Refugees [2/24–12/31/1978]. Confidential. Sent for action. Carter initialed the upper right-hand corner of the first page.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 167 and 168.

1. *U.S. Policy Toward Indochinese Refugees*—Our continuing commitment to boat cases without resettlement offer and land refugees closely associated with the U.S., including U.S. acceptance of up to 25,000 per year, should do a great deal to allay Thai concerns over the continued growth of the refugee population in Thailand, and demonstrate the U.S. long-term commitment to Indochinese refugees.

2. *INS Officers in Thailand*—The Immigration and Naturalization Service plans to station two officers in Thailand to improve the processing of refugees reducing current delays, and to provide a better focus to resolve refugee problems.

3. *U.S. Financial Assistance*—The U.S. would be willing to provide from \$1.0 to \$2.0 million for Thai resettlement planning and pledge additional U.S. assistance as part of a broader international effort during the actual resettlement program. This pledge would be conditioned on a Thai commitment to pursue resettlement seriously. The offer of planning money could require a supplemental appropriation.

Ultimately, the Thais might need to resettle as many as 80,000 refugees. The costs of such a program are uncertain but a recent study estimates \$1,500 per capita would be required yielding a total cost of \$120 million, of which the U.S. share would approach 50 percent or \$60 million.<sup>4</sup> We expect such a program would require up to five years and would involve the significant participation of other countries such as Japan.

4. *U.S. Acceptance of Additional Refugees*—We would pledge, as part of an international effort, to consider accepting additional refugees beyond the current U.S. program after the Thai resettlement program became well established. We could help the Thais greatly by accepting those refugees which would be difficult to resettle in Thailand—Cambodians and Vietnamese of which 15,000 and 2,000 respectively are living in camps in Thailand. Such a program would probably occur after new legislative authority were available and the additional refugees could be accommodated within the normal flow provisions.

#### RECOMMENDATION

That you approve a refugee permanent resettlement initiative by the Vice President when he meets with the Thais composed of four elements:

1. A full exposition and explanation of current U.S. policy toward Indochinese refugees.

---

<sup>4</sup> Carter underlined "50 percent or \$60 million" and wrote a question mark in the right-hand margin next to this sentence.

2. Announcement of plans by INS to station two officers in Thailand to improve refugee processing and assist the Thais in the resolution of refugee problems.

3. The offer of \$1.0–2.0 million for resettlement planning and the pledge of support for an international program of assistance, conditioned on a Thai commitment to pursue resettlement seriously.

4. A pledge to consider the acceptance of additional refugees beyond the current U.S. program once the Thai resettlement program is well established.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Carter checked the approve option for all four recommendations and initialed “J” underneath the last one.

---

## 125. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs (Derian) to Vice President Mondale<sup>1</sup>

Washington, undated

### SUBJECT

Human Rights and your Asian Trip

*Overall Theme:* How you handle human rights issues on your trip to the Philippines and Indonesia will substantially affect the credibility of the Administration’s human rights policy—and your personal credibility on this subject. In Thailand you have an exceptional opportunity to restate our concern about Indochinese refugees.

### *Philippines:*

*Background:* The continued pattern of human rights violations was highlighted by the recent election campaign, widely reported in the U.S. and world press. Although the opposition demonstrated wide popularity (at least in Manila) it won no seats. The country continues

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Trip File, Box 34, Vice President, Pacific and Southeast Asia, 5/2–10/78: Topical Briefing Book. Confidential. In the upper right-hand corner, an unknown hand wrote, “we need list of things against Philippines that we have done.” Underneath it, the same hand wrote, “cut in Grant MAP an example to MARCOS of Congressional attitude.”

under martial law, the legitimate legislature having been abolished by Marcos over five years ago. The regime holds 500–2,000 political prisoners without trial. Torture continues, confirmed by intelligence reports and public testimony of former prisoners, and virtually acknowledged to me in January by Defense Minister Enrile.<sup>2</sup>

The press is virtually as controlled as in a communist country through ownership by Marcos cronies and outright censorship. Marcos' chief rival, Benito Aquino, has been jailed for five years. I visited him at the Bonifacio Barracks where he is held and was impressed by his political skill and commitment to democratic processes. Marcos has sought to tie him to the CIA and the communists. Aquino's television defense against these charges was so electrifying he was barred from further public appearances. Although confined to his cell he was the highest vote-getter of the opposition candidates. He is a remarkable man.

*What you should do:*

Above all, Marcos will want to use your visit<sup>3</sup> to demonstrate business as usual between the U.S. and his government. It is this image, carefully cultivated in the past, that most upsets opposition and human rights figures. This point will be emphasized at a House International Relations Subcommittee hearing April 27 chaired by Rep. Leo Ryan, whose California district is home for many Filipinos. Prof. George Kahin (Cornell University) who was in the Philippines for the election campaign will seek to document this theme with news clippings such as the attached,<sup>4</sup> from a pro-government paper, showing that the U.S. remains Marcos's main support.

To avoid merely perpetuating this image, you should concentrate on ways to make clear that *U.S. ties are to the Philippines, not Marcos*. Your meetings with Father Reuter, Cardinal Sin, and other opposition and human rights figures will help. I hope you will give them ample time.

Of particular concern to human rights groups will be the plan for you publicly to sign a bilateral assistance package, to say nothing of the possibility of signing a new bases agreement. We are currently abstaining on a loan in the Asian Development Bank, are declining to sell a computer to the Philippine police, and are delaying (although the sale ultimately will probably go forward) the sale of six patrol

---

<sup>2</sup> Derian met with Philippine officials, including Marcos and Enrile, on January 11. (Telegram 721 from Manila, January 13; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780020–0228)

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 318–322.

<sup>4</sup> Not attached.



boats. None of these negative actions are visible, however, compared to your publicly signing the aid agreements. These could be signed routinely at another time, rather than publicly during your visit.

*Indonesia:*

*Background:* Despite the releases of political prisoners in December, the restrictive nature of the Indonesian Government remains evident. More than 20,000 prisoners, some untried or uncharged for more than a decade, remain in prison. The conditions they endure range from barely adequate in Indonesian terms to totally inadequate by any standards. There is no good reason why the releases of the remaining prisoners—whether 20,000 as the Government says or more as Amnesty<sup>5</sup> states—could not be accelerated. During the recent election campaign, there were widespread arrests, with some 150 opposition leaders remaining in jail, and a crackdown on the press (which had become relatively free at the time of my visit in January).<sup>6</sup>

*What you should do:*

As in the Philippines, the essential theme should be to make clear that our ties are to Indonesia and its people. The Embassy is arranging for you to meet with a representative group of non-government figures, many of whom I also saw. This will give you a chance to hear various points of view.<sup>7</sup>

I am particularly concerned about the plan for you to participate in arrangements to sell the Indonesians a squadron of A-4's. This is an outdated airplane of questionable efficacy—but such a sale would look bad for the President's effort to limit conventional arms sales, and for our human rights policy. Indonesia has already recently received a squadron of F-5's and an M-16 plant, both initiated prior to this Administration, but with the final OK coming last December, on the understanding that the release of 10,000 political prisoners would go forward. No such human rights forward step is contemplated in connection with your visit. I do not believe you should get involved in the A-4 sale.

*Thailand*

The great majority of refugees from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia go first to Thailand. I visited refugee camps around the country in

---

<sup>5</sup> Reference is to Amnesty International.

<sup>6</sup> Derian visited Jakarta January 12–14.

<sup>7</sup> See Documents 206 and 207.

January<sup>8</sup> and am glad you will visit a refugee center. (I'm sorry your schedule won't allow a visit to a boat camp—where the refugees from Vietnam first land.) There are over 100,000 now in Thailand, supported by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees primarily with U.S. funds.

Prime Minister Kriangsak assured me his government would continue to allow refugees to land (consistent with humane religious traditions).<sup>9</sup> He is under pressure, however, to find additional ways to get rid of refugees. Some Thai officials have sent refugees back to Laos, there are also cases of boats being turned away. Continued programs by the U.S., France, and other countries to accept refugees are essential to enable the Thai to continue serving as a country of first resort.

You can tell the Thai of the President's recent decision (on which I testified in the House April 12) for the U.S. to accept up to 25,000 refugees per year.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Derian visited Thailand January 16–19. Telegram 2184 from Bangkok, January 20, reported on her visit to the refugee camps. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780030–1044)

<sup>9</sup> Telegram 1857 from Bangkok, January 18, summarized Derian's January 16 meeting with Kriangsak. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780026–0829)

<sup>10</sup> Derian testified before the Immigration, Citizenship, and International Law Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee on April 12. Regarding Mondale's meeting with Thai officials, see Documents 167 and 168.

---

## 126. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State and the Embassy in the Philippines<sup>1</sup>

Bangkok, May 3, 1978, 1207Z

12853. Manila pass Vice President's party for (Holbrooke/Oakley). Subject: Indochinese Refugees: Suggestions for Coping With Increased Boat Refugee Flow.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Materials, Mondale Papers, Box 129, [Vice President's Trip to Asia: 4/29–5/10/78]: Thailand—Diplomatic Trip Cables [2/13–6/5/78]. Confidential; Priority to the Department; Immediate to Manila. Sent for information to Canberra, the UN Mission in Geneva, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, and INS.

1. We share concerns Embassy Kuala Lumpur has expressed Ref A<sup>2</sup> regarding boat case refugee situation.

2. The heavy arrival rate of boat refugees in Malaysia and Thailand during April will inevitably create serious strains, threatening the present policies of both countries permitting temporary asylum. While we can hope that the monsoon weather starting in June will result in a temporary reduction in boat arrivals, the likely prospect is for resumption of a heavy influx later in the year. We are fortunate in the face of this boat refugee increase that the Australians will be accepting an additional 2000 refugees between now and June. However, even with this Australian effort and a continuing US program, we will also have to speed the rate of movement of boat refugees after they are approved for the US (see para 5) if we are to have even temporary impact on growing boat case refugee populations.

3. Despite the impending boat refugee crisis, we must not lose sight of the fact that the total Indochinese refugee population in UNHCR-supported camps in Thailand is over 100,000. There was forcible repatriations from north Thailand to Laos as recently as March 27 (Ref C).<sup>3</sup> Pressures on Prime Minister Kriangsak to reverse his policy of accepting Indochinese refugees are gathering strength. The new U.S. program should offer some assurance to the Thai of an orderly and substantial flow of Indochinese boat refugees to the United States.<sup>4</sup> However, it is essential that our program encompass a balance between boat cases and land refugees to encourage Thai acceptance of refugees coming across border. Further whatever hopes we have for significant refugee resettlement is dependent on continuing USG acceptance of a good number of refugees from inland camps.

4. Ultimately we may soon have to face the unpalatable fact that in order to continue accepting the two classes of refugees whom we have been assisting and for whom the new program is designed, the 25,000 annual projection may well be too low—particularly if we wish to see the RTG move towards resettlement of a significant number of refugees in Thailand. However, for the present, at a minimum, we must try to show enough movement on both the boat and land cases

---

<sup>2</sup> Presumably reference is to telegram 3603 from Kuala Lumpur, April 28, which described the problem in Malaysia caused by the growing number of Vietnamese refugees in the country. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780181–0737)

<sup>3</sup> Presumably reference is to telegram 11298 from Bangkok, April 19. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780170–0725)

<sup>4</sup> On May 2, Attorney General Bell informed Congress of his intention to use his parole authority to admit an additional 25,000 Indochinese refugees in the following year. (Telegram 112091 to Manila and Bangkok, May 2; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780187–0736)

to maintain a hospitable attitude in Thailand and Malaysia toward asylum for refugees.

5. Ref C made some suggestions for speeding up processing of boat refugees for the U.S. as a means of encouraging continued host government hospitality towards new arrivals. From our point of view, the principal time delays are in the following areas:

A. Obtaining of sponsorships

B. Medical examinations and particularly medical clearances for those who do not pass the examination.

C. Movement to the capital and booking out

D. Inability to consider for 30 days from the taking of the UN bio those refugees without close relatives in the U.S.

E. Only periodic availability of INS officers

6. To ease these problems and facilitate faster movement, we have the following recommendations, some of which we are employing in Thailand, and many of which should be applicable to programs in other countries:

A. Assign a UNHCR representative to each major boat camp (already in effect in Malaysia, not yet in Thailand) so that bios may be taken immediately on arrival.

B. Institute a centralized UNHCR-controlled checklist program similar to the blue card system used in Malaysia.

C. Conduct simultaneous immigration interviews with the Australian delegation.

D. Station an INS officer in Thailand for coverage of Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore (under consideration).

E. Conduct medical examinations of approved refugees in the camps rather than in the capital (already initiated in Thailand) so that there is no medical clearance delay in the capital.

F. Mail to ACVA, in advance of INS approval, biographic data on those refugees who have at least a 90 per cent chance of being approved. Category I refugees are the most likely candidates (Department suggestion).

G. Open a reception center in Macau.

H. Establish a special ICEM unit to expedite departure of refugees to the U.S. (such an arrangement worked well in the EPP in 1976).

7. There is a final proposal which would have the greatest immediate importance in clearing up the backlog of refugees approved for the U.S. program—namely, the establishment of a transit center in the United States. This would allow the immediate departure of approved refugees and would thus be the most important step we could take in insuring that countries of first asylum accept new boat refugees on a

continuing basis. We recognize there are domestic political obstacles. But given the seriousness of the refugee situation we believe we have to address this issue again since a reception center in the US would have more impact than all the other innovations combined, both on refugee movement and politically on the Thai and other governments.

Whitehouse

---

**127. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassies in Thailand and Indonesia<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 4, 1978, 1741Z

113713. For Vice President's party (attn Holbrooke/Oakley). Subject: Australia Message Asking Vice President To Discuss Boat Refugees with Indonesians. Ref: A. Canberra 3434 (Notal), B. State 112959 (Notal), C. State 113208 (Notal)<sup>2</sup>

1. Ref A carries message from Australian Foreign Minister Peacock to Vice President asking him to assure GOI at highest levels that U.S. will accept any boat refugees in Indonesia not accepted by Australia. Purpose is to reinforce previous Australian demarches to GOI to intercept boats transiting Indonesian waters headed to Australia. Australians hope this will help prevent boats from arriving directly in Australia which could turn public opinion there against GOA policy of accepting significant numbers of Indochinese from countries of temporary asylum.

2. Ref A apparently crossed Ref B which stated that, until new U.S. 25,000 parole program was authorized, it would not be useful for U.S.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780191–0137. Confidential; Immediate. Drafted by Jere Broh-Kahn (HA/ORM); cleared in substance by Tice (P), Denend (NSC), Thomas Wajda (EA/ANP), and Frank C. Bennett (EA/RA); approved by Shepherd C. Lowman (HA/ORM). Sent for information Immediate to Canberra; sent for information to Kuala Lumpur, the UN Mission in Geneva, Paris, and Ottawa.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 3434 from Canberra, May 4, transmitted a message from Australian Foreign Minister Peacock to Mondale. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780190–0194) Telegram 112959 to Canberra, May 3, clarified U.S. policy on approaching third countries with regard to refugees. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780189–0421) Telegram 113208 to Manila and Bangkok, May 3, addressed the new program for parole for Indochinese refugee. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780189–0633)

to make approaches along with Australians to Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia to deter boats from leaving for Australia.

3. In light of Peacock's urgent request to Vice President, however, Dept recommends that latter, if he wishes, raise point with GOI along following lines. Vice President could say that U.S. expects soonest to authorize new parole program for 25,000 and, once this is done, we would be prepared accept all boat refugees in Indonesia not accepted by Australia or third countries repeat or third countries and not inadmissible under INA.

4. Note that, as Peacock himself stated, Indonesians have not replied substantively to Australian demarches on intercepting boats and have in fact been providing them food and fuel. Thus, Vice President may wish to be cautious about requesting GOI to stop doing something which it is continuing to do despite Australian urgings to cease and desist.

5. In discussing U.S. 25,000 parole program, Vice President should be fully au courant with status, depending on follow-up to discussions mentioned Ref C.

6. If he has not already done so, Vice President may wish to make use in those discussions of following point in addition to those set forth Ref C. —Australia is very hopeful that U.S. will be able to move ahead soonest with new 25,000 U.S. program in order to assure countries of temporary asylum that we will help relieve them of rapidly increasing burden of boat refugees. This in turn should help persuade countries of temporary asylum not to push off boats to Australia. Direct arrivals in Australia seriously risk jeopardizing present Australian program of accepting from countries of temporary asylum Indochinese refugees at rate of 8,000 a year, which is very large in comparison to Australian population.

**Christopher**

**128. Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>**

RPM 78–10204

Washington, May 12, 1978

*CHINA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA*

The Chinese traditionally have attached special importance to their relations with Southeast Asian countries and have considered the region one where China's influence ought to be greater than that of any other country. Through much of the past quarter century, Peking regarded US activity in the region—especially its military presence—as an indirect threat to China's own security. It also viewed most of the governments in the region that had close relations with the US as no more than American sycophants. Consequently, Peking had cordial relations only with North Vietnam, and, at times, Burma, Cambodia and Laos. The Chinese had close ties with and provided varying levels of support to communist parties in the region, some of which were engaged in active anti-government insurgencies.

When the US began to draw down its involvement in the region in the early part of this decade, Peking adopted a dramatically different stance. In addition to taking a far more relaxed view of the remaining US presence in the region, the Chinese began to court Southeast Asian governments intensively and to scale down the involvement with communist insurgencies in the area. In 1974 and 1975, Peking established diplomatic relations with Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines, and improved ties with Burma. Only Indonesia, which suspended diplomatic relations in 1965, and Singapore have not yet restored ties with Peking.

Peking's objectives during this period have been to establish the closest possible official relationships with Southeast Asian countries in order to block the growth of Soviet influence in the region. The Chinese have been especially sensitive about the possibility that the USSR would attempt to fill the "vacuum" left by the reduced US presence, a concern that Chinese officials expressed colorfully by warning Southeast Asian countries not to "drive the wolf out the front door and let the tiger enter by the back door." In fact, the Chinese have

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 80T00634A: Production Case Files, Box 13, [unfolded material], China and Southeast Asia. Secret; [handling restriction not declassified]. Prepared in the National Foreign Assessment Center. A note on the first page indicates that the memorandum was prepared by the East Asia-Pacific Division of the Office of Regional and Political Analysis in response to a request from the National Security Council.

become so concerned about possible Soviet encroachments that they have implicitly approved a continuing US military presence in the region. On a number of occasions, Chinese officials have assured Southeast Asian leaders that, while they object "in principle" to the presence of foreign troops in another country, they understand the "special circumstances" that necessitate the continued US military presence in the Philippines.

### *Indochina*

A secondary but growing Chinese concern is Vietnam's role in the region. Since the war ended in 1975, signs of friction between Peking and Hanoi have become increasingly apparent. While these indicators have focused on issues such as the two country's conflicting claims to islands in the South China Sea, the land border itself, and most recently, Vietnamese treatment of the ethnic Chinese population in Vietnam, Peking's fundamental concerns center on what it sees as Hanoi's tilt toward Moscow and the possibility of growing Vietnamese influence in the region. The Chinese are especially displeased with the prospect of Hanoi's domination over the rest of Indochina.

Peking has addressed concern about Hanoi's intentions in a number of ways. The Chinese have maintained close ties with Cambodia hoping that its xenophobic and anti-Vietnamese leadership will help brake Hanoi's regional ambitions. But the Chinese have been careful not to allow their differences with the Vietnamese to reach the point where Hanoi would be driven deeper into Moscow's arms. Finally, Peking has encouraged other countries in the region—as well as the US—to improve their relations with Hanoi, apparently in the hope of blunting whatever "expansionist" ambitions the Vietnamese might have, as well as limiting Soviet leverage in Hanoi.

The outbreak of heavy fighting between Vietnamese and Cambodian troops late last year confronted Peking with a dilemma.<sup>2</sup> The Chinese, while publicly adopting a relatively evenhanded stance on the conflict, were reluctant to reduce their support to Phnom Penh for fear that this would undercut Phnom Penh's utility as a counterweight to Hanoi. At the same time, Peking would risk a complete break with Hanoi if its support for Phnom Penh's side became too obvious. The Chinese, therefore, officially expressed "regret" over the fighting and urged the two sides to negotiate their differences. Although the Chinese have insisted that they will not play a mediating role in the dispute, there are signs that Peking has directly and at high levels urged both sides to resolve the problem peacefully.

---

<sup>2</sup> See Document 32.



Meanwhile, the continuation of this stalemate between Cambodia and Vietnam has added salt to old wounds in the Peking-Hanoi relationship. Reports of small-scale fighting along the Vietnam-China border have become increasingly frequent since the beginning of the year. Chinese posturing along the border may be intended, in part to remind Hanoi that China will not take lightly Vietnamese meddling in Cambodia. A Vietnamese decision in March to nationalize all businesses and to send "traders" to rural areas hit the ethnic Chinese community in Vietnam especially hard and apparently resulted in anti-government demonstrations in Cholon, Saigon's "Chinatown." There are reports that large numbers of Chinese are attempting to flee Vietnam and that many of them are trying to reach China. Peking responded to the situation by publicly warning Hanoi that it was "watching developments closely," the most direct public acknowledgment China has yet made of the level of friction between the two countries.

Peking almost certainly would welcome US initiatives to regain a degree of influence in Indochina. The Chinese have realized for some time that their association with the Cambodians is not enough to block Soviet and Vietnamese designs in the region. Peking believes that the establishment of US-Vietnam relations, for example, would serve to limit Soviet influence in Hanoi and discourage any "hegemonistic" plans Vietnam may have in the area.

#### ASEAN

China's recent policies toward the ASEAN countries have also been deeply influenced by Peking's growing concern over Soviet and Vietnamese intentions in the region. Peking's courtship of these nations has been determined, patient, and, for the most part, successful. The Chinese have restated their own interest in the region and have attempted to allay traditional Southeast Asia fears of Chinese domination.

Peking has focused on its strong support of ASEAN as a vehicle for unifying and strengthening the region, implicitly to prepare it to resist "outside interference." China insists that it will never become a "superpower" and that it will not interfere in the internal affairs of these countries. Chinese diplomats who have arrived in Manila, Bangkok, and Kuala Lumpur since the Chinese missions were opened have been careful not to stir up old concerns about Chinese meddling. For the most part, the Southeast Asian governments have been pleased with the cautious behavior of the Chinese diplomats.

China's relations with Southeast Asian countries have for many years been strained by Chinese involvement in the large overseas Chinese communities and its support of communist parties in the region. When ethnic Chinese were among the leaders of communist groups, these problems have overlapped.

In approaching the first problem, Peking has emphasized that it is encouraging ethnic Chinese to become citizens of the countries in which they reside. Peking has rejected the concept of dual nationality, and has urged residents who retain Chinese citizenship to abide by the laws and customs of their host countries. Earlier this year, as part of its effort to induce overseas Chinese to return to China to contribute to the modernization drive, Peking did insist on its right to protect the interests of Chinese citizens in other lands and noted that it retained a "kinship" relationship with all ethnic Chinese abroad. Privately, however, Peking has played down this aspect of its overseas Chinese policy, asserting that it was intended primarily for an internal Chinese audience.

Peking realizes that it has little to gain by pressing too far on this issue, especially since it would jeopardize the diplomatic progress the Chinese have made in the past five years. Nonetheless, Peking's renewed interest in overseas Chinese matters has aroused some old misgivings among the Southeast Asians. While China's relations with countries in the region probably will not be seriously ruffled, Southeast Asian governments clearly intend to watch Chinese behavior carefully.

Peking is having more difficulty allaying Southeast Asian concerns about Chinese involvement with communist parties in the region. Although it has scaled down its involvement with the various communist insurgencies, Peking has refused, despite frequent Southeast Asian protests, to cut off ties with the local parties. The Chinese argue that strictly party-to-party relations should not interfere with continuing cordial official relationships. The levels of Chinese material support to local communist parties—none of which currently represents a threat to existing governments—remains relatively low, but the Southeast Asians are displeased by China's reluctance to end its links with them.

*[1 paragraph (8 lines) not declassified]*

Most Southeast Asian leaders clearly are skeptical of Chinese attempts to explain away their support to communists in this way, and a good deal of suspicion about Chinese intentions still exists in the region. Some Indonesian officials, for example, still cite their "special problem"—that of overseas Chinese involvement in the abortive coup attempt in 1965<sup>3</sup> and the continuing distrust of Chinese residents—as the reason for their reluctance to resume normal relations with Peking. The Chinese have frequently made clear their readiness to normalize relations with Indonesia at any time, but the outlook is for continued

---

<sup>3</sup> See *Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, vol. XXVI, Indonesia; Malaysia-Singapore; Philippines, Documents 142–205.

stalling on Jakarta's part. Singapore has indicated that it would wait for Indonesia to move before recognizing Peking.

*The US and Southeast Asia*

Peking believes that the US has an important role to play in South-east Asia. Since the end of the Vietnam war, the Chinese have from time to time been distressed over what they saw as a US lack of interest in the region. They have clearly been pleased, however, by Vice President Mondale's recent trip. For example, the Chinese press noted approvingly that, while the Vice President was in Manila, a joint statement was issued calling for the continued use by the US of Philippine military bases.<sup>4</sup>

The Chinese also are pleased with US contributions to the economic development of the region and can be expected to encourage the US to strengthen its economic ties with the Southeast Asian countries. The Chinese have shown special interest in the International Rice Research Institute in the Philippines and may urge the US to increase its involvement in projects of this kind. Chinese motivation here, of course, is to underscore the importance it attaches to strengthening the economy of the region as a hedge against possible Soviet inroads.

---

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 2, Document 321.

---

**129. Memorandum From Vice President Mondale to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 15, 1978

SUBJECT

Report on Visit to the Pacific

My visit to the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Australia and New Zealand produced a number of useful results, and flagged several issues requiring further attention by the Administration.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Overseas Assignments—Trip Files, 1977–80, Box 19, Vice President's Visit to the Pacific, 4/29/78–5/11/78: Post Trip Actions. Secret. Carter wrote at the top of the first page of the memorandum, "Fritz—Good—Have answers drafted to attached letters. J."

Your letters to President Marcos,<sup>2</sup> Prime Minister Kriangsak,<sup>3</sup> President Suharto,<sup>4</sup> Prime Minister Fraser<sup>5</sup> and Prime Minister Muldoon<sup>6</sup> were well received. Each leader welcomed your statement affirming that America would participate actively in the Pacific. Replies from President Marcos and Prime Minister Muldoon are at Tabs A and B.<sup>7</sup> Intelligence reports subsequent to my talks with Suharto indicate that his doubts about your policies in the Pacific region have been removed. *Accordingly, I believe the principal objective of this mission—effectively affirming the United States commitment to the Pacific—was realized.*

### *The Philippines*

In Manila, we took a step forward on the base negotiations by agreeing to a joint statement embodying the principles for these negotiations.<sup>8</sup> These principles involve respect for Philippine sovereignty (of importance to Marcos) and full protection of command and control arrangements for U.S. facilities and personnel (essential to the United States). President Marcos and I did not get into detailed talks on the level of U.S. compensation. There are indications that Marcos is considering setting aside the difficult compensation and criminal jurisdiction issues to concentrate on the question of base arrangements. We agreed that military-to-military talks should begin as soon as possible. *En route home, CINCPAC representatives were briefed in Hawaii. Admiral Weisner will meet next week with Marcos to ensure early initiation of the talks.*

Marcos was concerned about the House International Relations Committee's \$5 million cut from the foreign assistance budget for the Philippines. I told him we would do our best to restore the full amount. *The Senate Committee has now approved the full \$18.1 million. I will work with Frank Moore and State to press for full restoration of the funds in Conference.*

On human rights, my private talks were frank and Marcos' reaction was calm.<sup>9</sup> He has the message that our relations can only suffer if he continues on a repressive course. He indicated that a partial lifting of the martial law, with the exception of Mindanao, might soon be forthcoming. My talks with the Philippine opposition and Church lead-

<sup>2</sup> See Document 317.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 166.

<sup>4</sup> Carter's letter to Suharto, April 27, is in the Carter Library, Donated Historical Materials, Mondale Papers, Overseas Assignments—Trip Files, 1977–80, Box 22, Vice President's Visit to the Pacific, 4/29/78–5/11/78: Indonesia (5/6/78–5/7/78)—President's Letter to Gen. Suharto.

<sup>5</sup> See Document 252.

<sup>6</sup> See Document 251.

<sup>7</sup> Not attached. Tab A is printed as Document 320. Tab B was not found.

<sup>8</sup> See footnote 2, Document 321.

<sup>9</sup> No record of these private talks has been found. See Document 322.

ers were valuable.<sup>10</sup> I told the former that we had made the visit because we felt it would have a favorable impact on human rights, and they subsequently endorsed the visit in a meeting with the press. Cardinal Sin described his role in the Philippines as one of “critical participation.” While he is deeply concerned about the future of the Philippines under Marcos, his underlying and twice-repeated message was “do not abandon us” over human rights differences; if you do, the Communists will take over. *I have asked Under Secretary Newsom to draft a proposed letter for your signature to Marcos reflecting on the visit and dealing with both the base negotiations and human rights.*<sup>11</sup>

### *Thailand*

General Kriangsak was pleased to receive your invitation to visit Washington in 1979.<sup>12</sup> He accepted on the spot.

*On security matters*, he welcomed your statement of commitment to the region as well as your offer of a squadron of F-5 aircraft. He made no reference to insurgency problems; however, he stressed Thailand’s exposed position in Indochina, its need for more reliable arms supplies and his hope that we would make more equipment of interest to Thailand available on more favorable terms than currently provided by FMS. Without commitment on any specific item, I told him we would give careful attention to each Thai request. *I will remind State and Defense of this point.*

Our most pressing problem with the Thais is refugees. We must work harder and more effectively if we are to deal humanely with this tragedy of growing proportions. We must help Thailand, we must keep up pressure on other nations to accept refugees, we must expedite our own in-field processing and resettlement procedures in the United States and we must find ways to make the UN High Commissioner on Refugees a more useful and effective agent.

*I have asked State to forward specific recommendations, and I will be contacting U.S. volunteer organizations to urge greater action.*

### *Indonesia*

I believe the visit to Jakarta has provided the foundation for a more positive US-Indonesian relationship. Suharto was pleased by your favorable decision on the A-4 Squadron;<sup>13</sup> he and his staff understood the human rights linkage and the fact that we could not accept use of such aircraft in Timor. I stressed the hope that the 20,000 political

---

<sup>10</sup> See Documents 318 and 319.

<sup>11</sup> See Document 323.

<sup>12</sup> See Document 167.

<sup>13</sup> See Documents 206 and 207.

detainees would be released before the current timetable of December, 1978 and December, 1979. Within 24 hours of my visit, the Indonesians officially confirmed to our Ambassador press reports that they were preparing to release an additional 5,000 before August, 1978.<sup>14</sup> *I have asked State to continue to press the Indonesians to agree to an International Red Cross and Catholic Relief Service presence in Timor.*

While in Jakarta, I advised Suharto of your decision to make an additional 50,000 tons of PL-480 rice available. In Indonesia and in the Philippines I believe it is important that we study wider use of PL-480 Title III to stimulate greater food production. *I will ask Agriculture and AID to follow up.*

In Jakarta, as in Bangkok and the Philippines, I stressed U.S. interest in closer cooperation with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and our hopes for ministerial level consultations in Washington this August.<sup>15</sup> There is still some reluctance in Thailand and Malaysia. *I will ask State to continue to press the ASEAN nations for approval of this meeting.*

#### *Australia and New Zealand*

Security and trade were the issues foremost on the minds of Prime Ministers Fraser and Muldoon.<sup>16</sup> Both leaders worry about the Soviets in the Pacific. Both welcomed your decision, announced in Canberra, to hold a joint US-Australian ANZUS naval exercise in the Indian Ocean off western Australia.<sup>17</sup>

Both Australia and New Zealand are heavily dependent on their exports of beef and agricultural products. Both are bitter and frustrated over the policies of Japan and the European Community. Both insist that the MTN talks, if they are to be successful, must have a meaningful agricultural component. *I agreed on this point, and I will follow up with Bob Strauss.*

On bilateral trade both leaders stated concern over pending meat import legislation, particularly the Bentsen Bill.<sup>18</sup> I told them that we do not favor such legislation. *I will work with Frank Moore and Bob Bergland on this problem.*

---

<sup>14</sup> In telegram 6074 from Jakarta, May 10, the Embassy confirmed this information. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780198-0132)

<sup>15</sup> Reference is to the second U.S.-ASEAN Dialogue held August 3-4. See Document 131.

<sup>16</sup> See Documents 254 and 255.

<sup>17</sup> See Document 254.

<sup>18</sup> Reference is to S. 2895 (95th Congress), the Beef Import Act, which Bentsen introduced on April 12.

Finally, in all five capitals, we reviewed domestic and international energy developments, and we identified areas for increased energy cooperation, with the emphasis on conservation and development of alternate energy sources. *I will follow up with Jim Schlesinger to insure that these cooperative programs are implemented.*

---

**130. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to Vice President Mondale<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, undated

SUBJECT

Initiatives to Help in the Resettlement of Indochinese Refugees

Your interest in the Indochina refugee problem will be of great assistance in meeting the serious problem we face. As you saw during your recent trip to Southeast Asia, the boat case escape rates in the past month have unexpectedly tripled. The program to admit 25,000 Indochinese refugees annually which was recently approved by the President is likely to prove inadequate.

The most immediate assistance which you could render in this situation would be to help in explaining the growing magnitude of the problem and the inadequacy of current measures to deal with it.

We suggest you talk to Griffin Bell, Joe Califano and Jim McIntyre to discuss specific aspects of the program in which their agencies are involved.

In your discussion with Griffin you could:

—Ask him to authorize the parole for 25,000 refugees that the President approved April 6. A call by you to Judge Bell would be useful to impart a sense of urgency in implementing this program. It has been almost six weeks since the President approved it in early April and the number of refugees continues to grow.

—Explain that you understand Griffin's concerns about the continued use of the parole power by the Attorney General and offer your assistance with key members of Congress in seeking new immigration

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Materials, Mondale Papers, Box 83, National Security Issues—Indochinese Refugees [2/24-12/31/78]. Confidential. Printed from an unsigned copy.

legislation, but stress the necessity of parole until there is satisfactory legislation.

In your discussion with Jim McIntyre you could stress the importance of obtaining funds for more adequate domestic benefits for Indochinese refugees in this country.

—The present HEW proposal for reimbursement to the states for welfare costs<sup>2</sup> falls substantially below what has been done for these refugees in the past and is probably seriously inadequate. Welfare officials from many of those states most involved in resettling refugees would oppose these proposals. I attach a letter Doug Bennet sent on May 15 to Jim on this subject.<sup>3</sup> Supplemental authorizations for Fiscal 1978 and 1979 for State Department costs in processing these refugees will only get through both Appropriations Committees if key committee members are assured that domestic benefits for the refugees will be sufficient.

You could also alert Jim to the problems we are having with the voluntary agencies which resettle refugees in this country.

—One of the principal obstacles to faster VOLAG action is the decrease in federal support (down from \$500 to \$350 per refugee despite inflation) they have had to absorb since 1975. Since the President has already completed action on all the supplemental appropriations for 1978 and 1979, all that can be done over the short-term is reprogramming funds if any can be found in other programs. Even reprogramming would reduce the total number of refugees which could be processed, thus forcing us to seek a further supplement in Fiscal 1979.

In talking with Joe, your expression of continuing interest in the Indochinese refugee issue will be quite helpful.

—HEW has not given high-level attention to this issue in the recent past, although it was the primary action agency in the big 1975 resettlement program. I would appreciate it if you could make the same point about the necessity for adequate domestic benefits for the Indochinese refugees. HEW has the machinery for dealing with the individual states while State has none. I recommend that State and HEW form a special working group to coordinate their efforts and position themselves to work closely with the Voluntary Agencies. This is very important.

You have indicated a desire to meet with the Voluntary Agencies which have been working with Indochinese refugees. I feel this is an excellent idea but would recommend that you meet with the VOLAGS only after you have talked with the President and the above-mentioned cabinet officers and have clearer ideas on how to answer their questions.

---

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> Not attached.



In June you could then meet with the Coalition for the Effective Resettlement of Indochinese Refugees, the core group composed of state welfare officials from key refugee states and officials from some of the VOLAGS. We meet with them weekly and a word from you would certainly inspire greater efforts.

We are also exploring reopening one of the temporary facilities used during the massive 1975–76 evacuation and resettlement program, in an effort to alleviate pressure on Thailand, Malaysia and Australia. We do not need your assistance but you ought to know that Wake Island, with a capacity for 8,000 refugees, is a possibility if we determine it will accelerate substantially the removal of refugees from the camps and we can find the funds. (Wake Island offers fewer political problems than Guam.) Other improvements in existing procedures are also being considered in an effort to speed up processing of refugees by State and INS, and the location of sponsors by the VOLAGS.

We are also following very closely the particular problems of over 100,000 Lao and Cambodian refugees residing in Thailand. You were briefed on the terrible conditions of the camps in Thailand in which these refugees reside and the conditions inside Laos and Cambodia to which they have no hope of returning. The atrocities in Cambodia, in particular, have aroused widespread public and Congressional concern. Several weeks ago Leo Cherne of the International Rescue Committee called for a special one-shot parole for the 15,000 Cambodian refugees in Thailand. This idea has generated support from black and labor leaders and should elicit Congressional sympathy. While I recognize that a further parole request at this time is a sensitive issue, nevertheless I am sure your recent first-hand exposure to the problem of Indochinese refugees convinces you of the necessity for continued U.S. concern.

We will keep you posted on developments as they occur.

### 131. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, August 4, 1978, 11:30–11:52 a.m.

#### SUBJECT

Summary of the President's Meeting with ASEAN Ministers

#### PARTICIPANTS

##### *U.S.*

The President

Secretary Blumenthal

Secretary Bergland

Zbigniew Brzezinski, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Henry Owen, Special Representative of the President

David Newsom, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

Richard Cooper, Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs

Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia

Edward Masters, U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia

Nicholas Platt, NSC Staff Member for East Asia

Anthony Geber, Advisor, East Asia Bureau, State Department

##### *ASEAN Participants*

General Carlos P. Romulo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, The Philippines

Mrs. Imelda R. Marcos, Minister of Ecology and Human Settlements, The Philippines

Ambassador Rosario Manolo, Director General, ASEAN Affairs, The Philippines

Widjojo Nitisastro, Coordinating Minister of Economics, Finance and Industry/

Chairman of the National Planning Board, Indonesia

Tengku Ahmad Rithauddeen, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia

Sinnathamby Rajaratnam, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Singapore

Uppadit Pachariyangkun, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Thailand

Radius Prawiro, Minister of Trade and Cooperatives, Indonesia

Cesar Virata, Minister of Finance, The Philippines

Gerardo Sicat, Minister of Economics Planning, Director General of National Economic and Development Authority, The Philippines

Vincente Paterno, Minister of Industry, Chairman, Board of Investments, The Philippines

Goh Chok Tong, Senior Minister of State for Finance

Prok Amarand, Deputy Minister of Commerce, Thailand

Arporn Sribhibhadh, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Thailand

D. Ashari, Indonesian Ambassador to the U.S.

Datuk Zain Azraai, Malaysian Ambassador to the U.S.

Edwardo Romualdez, Philippine Ambassador to the U.S.

Punch Coomaraswamy, Singaporean Ambassador to the U.S.

Klos Visessurakarn, Thai Ambassador to the U.S.

Datuk Ali Bin Abdullah, ASEAN Secretary-General

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Platt Chron File, Box 65, 8/1–10/78. Confidential. The meeting took place in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

*President:* I am honored and pleased you have come. The remarkable progress made by your five countries has aroused the admiration of everyone. I am particularly impressed with the rates of economic growth you have sustained over the past ten years and the open, hospitable climate you have created for private investment. The harmony which has developed among you, the stability of your societies and the dedication to peace you have demonstrated should serve as example for others and contrasts sharply with other countries in your area. We are proud to have you as friends, and grateful for the opportunity your presence in our country affords us to learn more about you.

I would like a brief report from Secretary Blumenthal on the progress of the ministerial meetings.<sup>2</sup> Then I would like you to tell me what the United States can do to help ASEAN achieve its goals.

*Secretary Blumenthal:* This is the second day of a fruitful and constructive dialogue on economic issues. Secretaries Vance, Schlesinger, Kreps, Bergland and I have reviewed trends, progress, and problems in our respective areas. We have covered a wide variety of topics, including North-South issues, trade relations, investment, tax policy, and the development of new sources of energy, to name several. I reported on the Bonn Summit,<sup>3</sup> on the importance we attach to working closely with the LDCs, and on our commitment to the Common Fund<sup>4</sup> and commodity price stabilization. I reported in detail on your efforts to control inflation, perpetuate steady growth and stabilize the dollar.

Our ASEAN colleagues have not been shy in presenting their own points of view, or in voicing approval or dissatisfaction with what we have said.

*President:* Secretary Vance gave me a report on the Common Fund at breakfast this morning.<sup>5</sup> This is an area in which we can move together.

*Foreign Minister Romulo:* Nothing I can say will adequately express how deeply honored, appreciative, and privileged we feel that you have taken time from your heavy schedule to be with us. The ministerial dialogue has been fruitful and constructive. It is an historic meeting that serves the interests of our countries and the United States in

---

<sup>2</sup> No records of the sessions have been found. For Secretary Vance's statement at the opening session, his and Foreign Secretary Romulo's August 4 press conference, and the joint press statement issued at the end of the conference, see Department of State *Bulletin*, September 1978, pp. 19–25.

<sup>3</sup> See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. III, Foreign Economic Policy, Documents 145–148.

<sup>4</sup> At the end of its fourth session in Nairobi, Kenya, in May 1976, UNCTAD agreed to consider the establishment of the Common Fund to finance a buffer stock program designed to smooth out primary commodity price fluctuations.

<sup>5</sup> The breakfast meeting took place in the Cabinet Room at the White House, 7:30–9:41 a.m. (Carter Library, Presidential Materials, President's Daily Diary)

material ways. We came not to ask for favors but to enter into mutual agreements.

We have remained dedicated to freedom despite the fall of the dominoes around us. The end of the Vietnam War represented a low point. We are now turning another page, this one marked by good will, mutual understanding, and cooperation. Secretary Vance gave us an excellent briefing on global problems as you see them. We are enthusiastic about your attitude toward the Common Fund. The Fund will give us real strength. These meetings will have great benefit for all our peoples.

This morning, I noted in a press summary an article in the *London Daily Telegraph* which stated that the ASEAN meetings in Washington are evidence of the American stake in the Western Pacific and your determination not to pull out of the area militarily. The article also speculated that the meetings are a curtain raiser for a Carter trip to Asia. I hope the speculation is true. If you come, a rousing welcome awaits you.

*President:* Few people have incurred more admiration for their efforts in behalf of peace than General Romulo, particularly for his work in the United Nations.

The United States has an intense and abiding interest in Southeast Asia. Mistakes in the past have led to some tragic consequences. We have found that trade and investment are crucial to the stability and peace of the region. We have sent Vice President Mondale and several Cabinet officers to Southeast Asia to determine what we can do to help. They have reported on what they have found, on the tremendous growth in the region, and on the superb progress made on the production of food in Indonesia and other countries. We are proud of the commitment you have to political integrity and independence. At the same time your search for common ground and multilateral cooperation has been impressive. I have met leaders from 68 countries in Asia and Europe, and all, including specifically those from Japan, China, and Australia have expressed great interest in the viability of ASEAN and the success of your experiment.

Difficult problems remain. We need to cooperate on ways of helping the pitiful people who seek refuge in your countries. We would like to know what your plans are for dealing with the refugees and what we can do to help. We want your advice without shyness or hesitation. There are great opportunities for cooperation in the future, particularly in the fields of trade and investment. Your meetings with Commerce Secretary Kreps could be particularly advantageous. I realize that differences exist on particular trade and investment issues, including repatriation of profits. That is understandable. I recognize also that you have disparate rates of growth and levels of per capita

income, with Singapore for example standing out as one of the most prosperous states in Asia.

We have a lot to learn from ASEAN and need to strengthen our friendship. I have no more important responsibility than this. I thank you for being here and hope that this brief meeting will broaden further the dialogue between us.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> For the White House statement issued following this meeting, see *Public Papers: Carter, 1978*, Book II, pp. 1378–1379.

---

### 132. Interagency Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>

NI IIM 78–10024

Washington, November 14, 1978

#### SINO-SOVIET COMPETITION IN INDOCHINA

##### KEY JUDGMENTS

- Indochina today is divided into two camps, with the USSR backing Vietnam and Laos, and China backing Kampuchea (Cambodia). This development is largely the result of the conflicting national ambitions of China and Vietnam, each of which wishes to exercise paramount influence in the area. This competition, although muted during the Vietnam war, has deep roots and is likely to intensify.

- The immediate cause of the present Sino-Vietnamese confrontation is the escalating border war between Vietnam and Kampuchea.<sup>2</sup> China believes Vietnam is determined to replace the Pol Pot government with one responsive to Hanoi's direction. Although China is unhappy with some of the policies of the present Khmer regime, it considers an independent Kampuchea allied with Peking an essential

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, History Staff Files, Sino-Soviet Competition in Indochina. Secret; [*handling restriction not declassified*]. A note on the first page indicates the memorandum was drafted by analysts from the Office of Regional and Political Analysis and the Office of Economic Research of the Central Intelligence Agency. It was coordinated on the working level with representatives of the National Foreign Intelligence Board.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 32.

buffer against the expansion of Vietnamese, and by extension Soviet, influence in the area.

—China hopes to thwart Vietnamese ambitions by providing strong support for Kampuchea while undertaking a diplomatic and propaganda campaign to portray Vietnam as a Soviet cat's-paw and arouse suspicions about Hanoi among non-Communist Southeast Asian states.

—China is the principal source of military and economic aid to Kampuchea. It has several thousand advisers in Kampuchea and has increased military aid since the escalation of the Kampuchean-Vietnamese border war. China's termination of all aid to Vietnam earlier this year will trouble but not cripple the Vietnamese economy because Chinese aid had already been reduced after the end of the Indochina war. China also supplies economic aid to Laos. Northern Laos has been a Chinese sphere of influence for many years as the result of a roadbuilding project in the area.

—China is trying to encourage the Pol Pot government to moderate its domestic and foreign policies in order to improve its international standing.

- Vietnam over the long term would like to establish a special relationship with Kampuchea similar to the one Hanoi has with Laos. Over the short term, however, Vietnam could tolerate a government in Phnom Penh with close ties to China so long as it ceased provocative actions along the Vietnamese border.

—Vietnam is unlikely to launch an all-out invasion of Kampuchea, although it might be tempted to move if there were an open breakdown of political order in Kampuchea. In the event of such a Vietnamese attack, China would have only limited ability to aid the Phnom Penh regime. Despite the excesses of the Pol Pot government, few Khmer would welcome Vietnamese intervention, and Vietnam would probably become bogged down in a guerrilla war.

—Vietnam is more likely to pursue its present policy of trying to secure its borders against Kampuchean attacks while seeking to raise an antigovernment insurgent movement inside Kampuchea.

- The USSR is the most likely to benefit, at least over the short term, from the developing situation in Indochina. The Soviets will take advantage of the opportunity to try to make Vietnam dependent on Moscow, thereby establishing a sphere of influence on China's southern boundary.

—Laos and Vietnam are the only countries in Southeast Asia to allow the Soviets more than a token presence. The Soviets probably hope that their position in Vietnam will aid them in extending their influence elsewhere in the area. If the Southeast Asians believe that

Vietnam is acting as a Soviet stalking-horse, however, it will harm rather than help Soviet interests.

—Vietnam has already moved closer to Moscow by signing a friendship and cooperation treaty and joining the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CEMA).<sup>3</sup> The Soviets are the major source of aid to Vietnam, but most of it is still economic. Soviet military shipments do not appear to have increased since the confrontation with China, but this may change in the near future. The Soviets will take over some of the formerly Chinese aid projects.

—The USSR may hope eventually to obtain access to Vietnamese military facilities. Vietnam is unlikely to grant the Soviets formal base rights but might permit the Soviets access to air or naval facilities under certain circumstances.

- The non-Communist states of Southeast Asia are concerned about the consequences of intensified Sino-Soviet competition in the area although they draw comfort from the prospect of Communist countries fighting among themselves. Thus far the main impact on the countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has been an intensive diplomatic campaign to court their favor by all sides. Since September a top official from each of the four major parties to the dispute has visited Southeast Asia.

- Vietnam's deteriorating relations with China have increased Hanoi's interest in establishing diplomatic ties with the United States. Vietnamese leaders believe an American embassy in Hanoi would serve as a symbol of Vietnam's international acceptance. Vietnam is also seeking aid and foreign investment from the West to help balance aid from the Soviet bloc.

[Omitted here is the Discussion section.]

---

<sup>3</sup> The treaty was signed on November 3.

133. Memorandum to the Files<sup>1</sup>

Washington, December 12, 1978

## SUBJECT

Refugees

[1 line not declassified] told reporting officer (12/11) details of a cable dated 12/8 from [less than 1 line not declassified] in Hanoi based on their Ambassador's recent visit to Ho Chi Minh City. According to the report, there are now two functioning prices for overseas exodus by SRV residents, one price for Sino-Viets and one for Vietnamese. The Hoa must pay between 11 and 12 gold taels per person (\$US 200 per tael) while the Vietnamese must pay 14. Children go for half price. Higher price for Vietnamese is based partially on the need to have extra documentation forged to state that they are Chinese and not native Vietnamese; this requires an additional \$150 to \$200 just for the documentation.

Once payment is made to officials, a boat is arranged for the departees and a permit for departure is issued. This has now become so regularized as to permit departures from Ho Chi Minh City itself and not just from the coast. (About 3 weeks ago a boat capable of handling about 200 persons and laden down with 600 capsized in the Saigon River with most of the passengers drowning. Vietnamese authorities turned over the bodies to next of kin on following day.) Persons traveling under these arrangements are permitted to take the international allowance of 20 kilos of personal baggage per person.

There is also a semi-official organization method whereby several families contact a ship owner who, for the general price of \$500 to \$1,000 per person, arranges to get the exit permit for his boat—most of the fee goes for the permit.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Vietnam General Files for 1978, Lot 80D307, General Memos. Confidential. Drafted by Dennis G. Harter (EA/VLC). Copies were sent to Kenneth Bleakley (EA), J. Friedman (EA/RA), Gerald Scott (HA), and EA/TIMBS.



**134. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Jakarta, April 24, 1979, 0845Z

6493. Subject: Conference of U.S. Ambassadors to ASEAN. Ref: (A) State 95706 (Notal), (B) Jakarta 6144 (Notal).<sup>2</sup>

1. (S—Entire text).

2. U.S. Ambassadors to the ASEAN nations conferred in Jakarta April 17–18. Discussions were dominated by the situation in Indochina, particularly Kampuchea, and urgent recommendations on that subject have been transmitted to the Department in Ref B. Other topics discussed include ASEAN, refugees, pan-Islamic activities, human rights and narcotics. Ambassador Dick Clark joined the group on the second day for a discussion of the refugee situation. Following is a summary of discussions and major recommendations.

3. Indochina—The Ambassadors were concerned to note that Vietnamese forces, with Soviet assistance in transportation and other fields, have been able to organize a major offensive in western Kampuchea. This has already pushed some 3,000 refugees over the border into Thailand, and tens of thousands more may well arrive during the next few weeks. (Note: This is already occurring). Due to the continuous fighting and the inability of the Heng Samrin regime effectively to administer even the area under Vietnamese control, the orderly planting of this year's rice crop is in danger, and a major famine is a very real possibility in the next few months. Thailand's political stability is increasingly threatened by the dual pressures of hungry Kampuchean refugees on the borders and Vietnamese charges that Thailand is aiding the Pol Pot forces. More worrisome from a U.S. strategic standpoint is the continuing growth of Soviet military presence in Vietnam, including both naval and air elements, which could be accelerated by a not-unlikely second round of Chinese-Vietnamese hostilities.

4. In the face of these developments, the Ambassadors concluded that Thai political stability and ASEAN unity were seriously threatened, with Thailand willing to seek Chinese support to counter Vietnamese

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790187–0885. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information to Bangkok, Beijing, Canberra, the Mission in Geneva, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Rangoon, Seoul, Singapore, Tokyo, Vientiane, Wellington, and CINCPAC.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 95706 to Jakarta, April 16, posed questions regarding ASEAN and the future. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790175–0990) Telegram 6144 from Jakarta, April 18, relayed the recommendations on Indochina of the five U.S. Ambassadors to ASEAN countries. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790178–0437)

thrusts while other member states tended to look on Vietnam as a possible buffer against Chinese expansionism. They agreed that the U.S. therefore risked important strategic interests in the region if it did not step up efforts to achieve a solution to the Kampuchean conflict (see Ref B).

5. ASEAN—The Ambassadors believe ASEAN has made real progress in both the political and economic fields. The ASEAN states have demonstrated increasing political solidarity in adopting joint positions on such major issues as the Indochina conflict, and they have shown a growing degree of self-confidence as a regional organization. While their perceptions of the threat posed by the Indochina situation differ somewhat, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia share a grave concern over the Kampuchean problem and the possible increase in the Soviet military presence in Vietnam. The Philippines supports ASEAN initiatives on Indo China but seeks to avoid any criticism of Hanoi, Moscow, or Beijing. All five nations recognize that ASEAN must play a role in the resolution of the Cambodian crisis but are in some disarray over just what that role should be. The Ambassadors believe ASEAN would welcome a U.S. initiative to get things off dead center.

6. ASEAN leaders have recognized the need to work closely together in the face of external threats. The bilateral meetings among Kriangsak, Suharto, and Hussein Onn held during the last few months to discuss the implications of the Indochina situation, for example, have been publicly associated with ASEAN solidarity. Similarly, the ASEAN states have increased the number of bilateral joint military exercises, such as the recent naval and amphibious exercises among Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. While the five states have reassessed their defense needs, and, except for the Philippines, begun an expanded program of acquisition of military equipment, there is still no sentiment for any formal military pact as a part of ASEAN.

7. The Ambassadors were encouraged by the progress in U.S.-ASEAN relations since the August 1978 dialogue in Washington.<sup>3</sup> An array of well-designed economic and cultural projects are now under discussion between the U.S. and ASEAN and have been moving along well. These projects are most important as symbols of U.S. concern for ASEAN and to help strengthen ASEAN cohesion. Any delays and difficulties at this point are due primarily to administrative problems on the ASEAN side, which have made it difficult for ASEAN to digest the projects as rapidly as they are proposed. The Ambassadors con-

---

<sup>3</sup> See Document 131.

cluded that the U.S. Government was moving ahead effectively in this area and progress to date serves our basic interests in the area.

8. North-South issues were noted as a very important factor in U.S.-ASEAN relations. Indonesia and Malaysia in particular see these issues as a benchmark of U.S. attitudes toward the developing nations in general and ASEAN in particular. The Ambassadors were gratified that at the last meeting on the Common Fund in Geneva some of the major difficulties were overcome, and the U.S. no longer risks isolation at UNCTAD V<sup>4</sup> as a major obstacle to agreement on this issue. The recent rubber accord<sup>5</sup> was also seen as encouraging progress in the area of commodity agreements, which are of great importance to ASEAN. At the same time, ASEAN members are disturbed by what they see as a growing trend toward protectionism in the U.S. market.

9. The Ambassadors discussed in detail and strongly welcomed the forthcoming trip of Secretary Vance to the ASEAN area.<sup>6</sup> They believe this visit comes at an extremely important time, that it will underscore our continued interest in the area and that it will carry forward the momentum begun last year by the Vice President's visit<sup>7</sup> and the ASEAN-U.S. Dialogue.<sup>8</sup> The Ambassadors do not believe the Secretary needs to offer additional projects or other assistance to ASEAN; the organization needs to digest what we have already offered. The main objective of the meeting among the Secretary and the five ASEAN Foreign Ministers should be to show that we take the organization seriously and are willing to consult with it in a straightforward and truly candid manner. The Ambassadors believe the centerpiece of the meeting should be the situation in Indochina, including the refugee problem, and what we and ASEAN might do about it (Ref B). It would also be useful for the Secretary to review the considerable development of U.S.-ASEAN relations this past year, including progress on the Common Fund and the rubber agreement, and what needs to be done next. ASEAN would also welcome the Secretary's views on U.S. relations with the Soviets (including SALT), China, our view of the energy situation and what all of us might do about it, and prospects for peace in the Middle East.

---

<sup>4</sup> The meeting took place in Manila May 7–June 3. Documentation on the U.S. position on the Common Fund is in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. III, Foreign Economic Policy.

<sup>5</sup> The UN Conference on Natural Rubber, meeting in Geneva in April, had achieved agreement on an international rubber accord, which was concluded in October.

<sup>6</sup> Vance traveled to Bali July 1–2 to meet with ASEAN Foreign Ministers after their Ministerial session. For his statement to the Foreign Ministers and press conference after the meeting, see Department of State *Bulletin*, September 1979, pp. 35–39.

<sup>7</sup> April 29–May 11, 1978. See Document 129.

<sup>8</sup> See Document 131.

10. The Ambassadors commended the visits to the ASEAN states in late 1978 by the OPIC investment mission and by EXIM Bank President Moore, and urged that additional visits of this type be scheduled in the near future. The \$100 million line of credit granted by EXIM Bank to the Philippines was hailed as an excellent example of the positive fall-out of the Moore visit to ASEAN. The Ambassadors hope this type of constructive initiative may also apply to other ASEAN nations.

11. It was noted that serious bilateral problems exist with several of the ASEAN states in the field of security assistance. The urgency these countries feel to build up their defenses in the face of the Indo-chinese threat has heightened their dismay with the continuing reductions in FMS credits and IMET training programs to several ASEAN nations and what they see as undue delays and postponements in the processing of this assistance. The Ambassadors strongly agreed that the most important item in our security relationship is the provision of military hardware. Next in priority is IMET training. They concluded that it was essential for Thailand and Indonesia to receive adequate FMS credits, for continued strong support for the Philippines to ensure continued use of the bases, and for all ASEAN members to be allowed to purchase additional needed military items from the US through commercial channels.

12. In addition, the Ambassadors recommended the following:

A) Continued and expanded political briefings for the ASEAN Ambassadors in Washington on SALT, the Middle East, U.S.-China policy, the Indochina situation, and other key topics of interest.

B) The establishment of a full-time position for an ASEAN affairs officer in EA to handle and coordinate the political, economic, cultural and development assistance aspects of U.S. relations with ASEAN.

C) Demonstration of the regional usefulness of the U.S. bases in the Philippines by encouraging their use for joint exercises or for training military personnel or units of other ASEAN member states. The invitation for such activities should come from the Government of the Philippines.

D) Periodic briefing of the ASEAN nations in the field by visiting USG experts on matters of common interest such as Soviet capabilities.

13. Refugees—The Ambassadors expressed their pleasure at having the opportunity to discuss refugee problems with Ambassador Clark during this crucial period. They welcomed administration proposals to increase the number of refugees to be admitted to the United States to 120,000 for FY 1979, including 7,000 per month from Indochina, as well as to provide greater flexibility in the allocation of these numbers. They expressed the hope that the United States Government will continue to seek ways to reduce the time required to process these refugees.

14. At the same time the Ambassadors expressed their grave concern that the refugee situation in the region is worsening rapidly. The facilities and the patience of local governments are strained, making it increasingly difficult for us to persuade them to accept refugees and to support U.S. policies and initiatives. The avalanche of Kampuchean refugees which has fallen on Thailand has made it even more imperative that immediate action be taken to meet this situation. The Ambassadors strongly endorsed the concept of a special processing center for refugees from Indochina, and believe it essential that we, the UNHCR and the international community generally support and move ahead quickly to implement this proposal. They expressed particular concern over the UNHCR's seeming lack of real interest in the SPC. Recent events belie the view that the flow of refugees is decreasing or that Hanoi will necessarily handle the problem in an orderly manner through family reunifications. The Ambassadors urge we do everything possible to get the UNHCR to move rapidly and to play a more active role in working out the details of the proposed center. (Note: Late reports in Jakarta indicate the UNHCR may not plan even to survey the proposed island before the May 15–16 Jakarta Refugee Conference).<sup>9</sup>

15. Pan-Islam—The Ambassadors noted that the Ayatollah Khomeini's takeover in Iran had accelerated the revival of Islamic social and political activity throughout the area. In Malaysia, there has been an upsurge in Islamic social comment, and many pictures of Khomeini are seen in the villages. The Malaysian Government is seeking a middle-of-the-road policy which will satisfy radical Muslims without provoking a reaction from the Chinese community. Malaysian relations with the Philippines, probably the least satisfactory among ASEAN nations, have been complicated by the Muslim rebellion in the Southern Philippines which the Malays of Sabah view with considerable sympathy. In south Thailand, GOM-RTG differences over the Malay separatist movement are being resolved, with no GOM support for the separatists. The Islamic resurgence is not a serious threat to the stability of the GOM, but it will keep the GOM reluctant to stick its neck out on any international issue related to Islam.

16. An Embassy survey in Indonesia showed little sign of a potential Iran-type situation in the making, and a far greater danger there would be the rise of an ultra-nationalist regime at some future point. President Suharto is seen to be stronger and more confident than ever, and might well run again in 1983. He is moving ahead on development projects, and only a major economic collapse is likely to endanger his completion

---

<sup>9</sup> Oakley represented the United States at the conference, which was attended by 24 nations, including Vietnam. See footnote 8, Document 136.

of a full five-year term. Islamic activity has been peaceful and generally nonpolitical.

17. In the Philippines, President Marcos has been actively trying to get Muslims to participate in the elections to be held in the areas affected by the rebellion. He hopes thereby to wind down the Muslim rebellion. Marcos has reportedly irritated Khaddafi and the Libyans, however, by his handling of the districting for the elections which the Libyans had desired.

18. Human Rights—The Ambassadors noted with satisfaction that there had been a general improvement in the human rights climate in the ASEAN region. While problems remain in many areas, the human rights policies of the Carter administration, backed by quiet but consistent diplomatic efforts, have had a significant and beneficial impact on ASEAN.

19. In Singapore, many political prisoners have been released and only eight prominent Communists are still being held. The human rights situation there has improved to the point that Amnesty International has largely dropped its attention to Singapore during the last year. The situation in Indonesia is much improved, with political detainees down now to about 12,000, all of whom are due to be released or tried this year. U.S. human rights policy in the Philippines has sparked an internal GOP crackdown on human rights abuses. About 450 political prisoners, whom the GOP terms “hardcore subversives,” are now believed to be under detention. Although complaining that they are menaced by Communist subversion, the Malaysian Government has made progress in the human rights area recently and has just released International Transport Workers Federation representative Donald Uren, held since February 15 in connection with the MAS strike.

20. Narcotics—The Ambassadors discussed the narcotics production and trafficking situation in the ASEAN region and expressed satisfaction that bilateral and regional cooperation in narcotics control enforcement and demand reduction is continuing to grow. They were particularly encouraged by the fact that the nations of the region have become more aware of the problems created by narcotics abuse and trafficking within their societies, and have begun to play a greater role themselves in local and regional narcotics control. It will be necessary for the USG to focus more on the building of institutions and attitudes, and this should be a major component of DEA’s role. The Ambassadors agreed that it was necessary to maintain pressure on all five governments to continue to build on the groundwork already laid.

21. The Ambassadors felt this exchange of views was most useful and, subject to Washington’s concurrence, agreed to meet again in Manila in October.

**135. Memorandum From the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (McIntyre) and the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 15, 1979

SUBJECT

Additional FY 80 FMS Credits for Southeast Asia

At Tab A is a memorandum from Harold Brown,<sup>2</sup> recommending that you authorize State and Defense to support Congressional initiatives to add increases in FMS credits for Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia. Shortly after Harold sent his memorandum, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee completed action on the security assistance legislation. As the House Foreign Affairs Committee had done previously, the SFRC added \$15 million to the FMS authorization for Thailand. The SFRC also approved Glenn amendments adding \$10 million for Indonesia and \$5 million for Malaysia.

The issue for your decision, therefore, is whether the Administration should support the additional authorizations as they proceed to conference and to the respective appropriations committees. Harold, and Cy Vance, recommend that you authorize such support. Our views on this subject, which differ, are set out below.

*Views of Jim McIntyre*

Secretary Brown proposes that State and Defense be authorized to support the proposed FMS increases for Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia in the 1980 authorization bill without requesting a budget amendment, on the grounds that this approach better accords with your concern to keep the budget down, limit arms sales, and avoid making security assistance a major Congressional issue.

OMB is concerned that support of additional assistance for these countries in the wake of the numerous security assistance supplementals and amendments already transmitted and our consultations about still other potential supplementals (which you subsequently disapproved) will confuse the Congress as to the Administration's priorities. It could also encourage (and provide a ready excuse for) a growing

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, President's Files, Presidential Handwriting File, Box 132, 5/21/79 [3]. No classification marking. Carter initialed the upper right-hand corner of the first page.

<sup>2</sup> Brown's May 2 memorandum, in which he supported supplemental FMS funding for Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, is attached but not printed.



tendency of the committees to modify specific country programs at their whim.

Moreover, OMB believes the recommended approach would undercut the integrity of the budget process. We cannot have it both ways. Either we support additional FMS credits for these countries or we do not. If we do, we should transmit a budget amendment so that the appropriations committees will have an unequivocal budget request. *In the absence of a budget amendment, the appropriations committees are unlikely to take the additional requests for these countries seriously.* If, on the other hand, we do not want to increase the overall total of FMS credit but merely wish to change priorities among countries, all we need do is inform the Congress of the revised country allocations. The country levels in committee reports are not legally binding.

In conclusion, OMB believes that Administration support now for the additional FMS credits for Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia is unlikely to affect the overall total finally authorized and appropriated. Administration support, moreover, will raise expectations in these countries that we may be able to meet only at the expense of fulfilling higher priority needs already before the Congress.

*Views of Zbig Brzezinski*

As Harold notes in his memorandum, I agree with the recommendation to support the Congressional initiative for Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia. The investment of a small amount of additional obligational authority will, in my view, produce a very significant return in an area of the world that is looking to the United States for tangible evidence of continued interest in its regional security. This is especially true because of the Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea, and continuing Soviet efforts to upgrade both its and Vietnam's forces in Southeast Asia.

Also, you should be aware that your words in the Georgia Tech speech<sup>3</sup> have already given rise to significant expectations on the part of our ASEAN friends with regard to security assistance:

*"Many nations are troubled—even threatened—by the turmoil in Southeast Asia and in the Middle East. To stand by our friends and to help meet their security needs in these difficult times, I will consult with the Congress to determine what additional military assistance will be required. This added measure of support is crucial for stability throughout the Indian Ocean area. And let me repeat, in the Middle East, in Southeast Asia, and elsewhere in the world we will stand by our friends—and*

---

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to Carter's February 20 speech. For the text, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. I, Foundations of Foreign Policy, Document 111.



we will protect the vital interests of the United States, and you can depend on it.”

Unless these proposed additions receive our support, it is very likely that, once the appropriations committees have made their almost inevitable across-the-board cuts, the FY 1980 FMS funds for these countries will be less than what they will receive in FY 1979. I think that this result would be a very unfortunate signal to the ASEAN countries, particularly at this sensitive time.

#### DECISION

Authorize State and Defense to support additional FMS financing for Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia. (NSC, State, Defense) (Congressional Liaison)<sup>4</sup>

Reaffirm your earlier decision denying additional FMS financing, while holding open the option to provide additional financing to these countries within existing totals by *reprogramming*. (OMB)

---

<sup>4</sup> Carter checked and initialed his authorization for additional FMS funding.

---

### 136. Summary of a Presidential Review Committee Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, June 18, 1979, 1:30–2:45 p.m.

Vice President Mondale chaired a meeting to discuss the Indochina refugee situation. The outflow from Indochina is growing rapidly, 30,000 last month—60,000 this month. The outflow exceeds the capacity of the first-asylum countries to absorb them on a temporary basis, and Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia have all recently threatened not to admit additional refugees. The refugee flow threatens the political stability of the countries involved and introduces tensions in U.S. relations with the region. Henry Owen will prepare a paper for the President suggesting initial measures to attempt to cope with the problem.<sup>2</sup> (S)

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Platt Chron File, Box 67, 6/15–30/79. Secret. The meeting took place in the Situation Room at the White House.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably reference is to Owen's June 21 memorandum to Carter. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, Outside the System File, Box 53, Chron, 6/79)

A State paper which served as the basis for the discussion is attached.

## Attachment

### Memorandum From the U.S. Coordinator for Refugee Affairs (Clark) to Vice President Mondale<sup>3</sup>

Washington, June 18, 1979

#### SUBJECT

Indochina Refugees

#### 1. *Current Situation*

The refugee population in Southeast Asian countries of first asylum now exceeds 330,000 (170,000 in Thailand; 78,000 in Malaysia; 52,000 in Hong Kong; 34,000 in Indonesia; 6,000 in the Philippines). In May alone, about 65,000 new refugees arrived, including 59,000 "boat people" from Vietnam and 6,000 "land refugees" from Laos. In addition, about 90,000 "new Khmer" fled Cambodia, but one-half of them have already been forcibly repatriated by the Thai, and the remainder face a similar threat.

The character of the refugee flow has changed since April 1978 as a result of Hanoi's decision to register and deport large groups of its population to barren "new economic zones" in Vietnam.<sup>4</sup> Many Vietnamese chose to flee by boat rather than face what *Le Monde* has called "Gulag Vietnam." Hanoi is now offering its entire ethnic Chinese population the choice of domestic deportation or departure by boat (with exit fees ranging up to \$3,000 per adult). Two-thirds or more of the refugees now fleeing from Vietnam, and many Cambodian refugees, are ethnic Chinese.

Refugee arrivals are now exceeding departures by six to one. First-asylum countries thus see themselves threatened with large, indigestible, permanent additions of Vietnamese/Chinese. In response, they have strengthened their defenses against this influx. Indonesia and Malaysia have announced they will not take any new boat arrivals. Thailand is forcibly repatriating 80–90,000 Kampuchean refugees and refusing sanctuary to new boat arrivals. These actions will probably

---

<sup>3</sup> Confidential. Drafted by Charles W. Freeman (S/R) and Oakley (EA); concurred in by M. Lyall Breckon (S/P).

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 4, Document 46.

moderate, but only a strong positive response by the international community both in pressuring Vietnam and providing stepped-up resettlement can prevent massive loss of life. Hong Kong remains open but is under severe pressure as it receives 2,000 new refugees a day (many from north Vietnam).

## *2. The Proposed International Conference*

British Prime Minister Thatcher asked UN Secretary General Waldheim to convene an international conference to draw public attention to the reprehensible nature of Vietnam's policies, highlight the magnitude of the refugee problem, and encourage other countries to increase their acceptance of refugees. We have strongly endorsed this initiative, and the initial response by most governments has been positive.

There is no consensus yet on the forum or site for the conference, but there is agreement by Waldheim and UN High Commissioner for Refugees Hartling to a two stage approach separating political from humanitarian issues. We believe the first step should be an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council to consider the tensions in the Southeast Asian region and the Vietnamese policies that cause them, despite the risks of a Soviet veto or addition of other refugee questions to the agenda. Having highlighted the political issues in the Security Council, we would seek authorization for the Secretary General to convene a special follow-on international conference (or, much less desirably, a special session of the United Nations General Assembly) to address the practical issues of greater resettlement opportunities, vastly increased financial support for the care and maintenance of the burgeoning camp population, creation of more refugee processing centers (RPC) in Southeast Asia to relieve the burdens on the countries of first asylum, and reaffirmation of the principle of first asylum. Waldheim seems inclined to a July 19 meeting in Geneva.<sup>5</sup>

The President's talks with Japanese leaders and other participants at the Tokyo Economic Summit,<sup>6</sup> followed by Secretary Vance's meetings with ASEAN and ANZUS,<sup>7</sup> offer an excellent opportunity to enlist and coordinate broad support for a series of urgent actions (Canada and Japan have already indicated their intention to raise the refugee issue at the Tokyo Summit). We want to achieve a strong consensus

---

<sup>5</sup> See Document 138.

<sup>6</sup> For the minutes of the Tokyo Summit, June 28–29, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. III, Foreign Economic Policy, Document 222; and *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, vol. XXXVII, Energy Crisis, 1974–1980, Document 221.

<sup>7</sup> Regarding Vance's meeting with ASEAN Foreign Ministers in Bali, see footnote 6, Document 134. After that meeting, Vance traveled to Canberra for the ANZUS Council meeting July 4–5. For Vance's July 5 press conference and the text of the communiqué issued on July 5, see Department of State *Bulletin*, September 1979, pp. 53–58.

not only on the idea of a Security Council meeting followed by an international conference, but also greatly increased participation by the Tokyo participants in resettlement and financial contributions. With ASEAN, we will want to stress their renewed commitment to first asylum.

### 3. *Pressure on Vietnam*

Specifically, we want Vietnam to: cooperate with resettlement countries and the UNHCR in processing people for orderly direct departure from Vietnam at a rate at which they can be absorbed by the international community; treat all its citizens in accordance with the UN Charter so that they do not feel compelled to risk their lives by fleeing in small boats; cease abusing those who have expressed a wish to leave so that they can live under bearable conditions while awaiting departure.

Vietnamese tactics and statements have sought to convey flexibility, but their actions in promoting the outflow from their country have remained unchanged over the past eight months.

Two types of international pressure may hold some promise, even though the Vietnamese have proven extremely resistant to pressure of all types in the past.

The Vietnamese might respond if the international community can be mobilized to apply economic pressure. Aid donors might be induced to shift resources from development projects to support for refugees, whether inside Vietnam, in temporary asylum, or in resettlement countries. In 1978, multilateral assistance to Vietnam amounted to \$150 million; in addition bilateral aid was \$130 million (principally from Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Japan).

The impact of such economic sanctions would be enhanced if combined with an outcry of international public opinion, including denunciations by key Asian governments and the Nordics against the inhumanity of the Vietnamese. But, psychological factors aside, neither foreign aid nor trade is essential to Vietnam's current military activity in Kampuchea or build-up against China. The Soviet Union can easily offset any financial loss to Hanoi. International pressure would be of greatest effect if it stresses that the Soviets must share responsibility and opprobrium with Vietnam.

### 4. *Increased International Efforts*

At present, about 10,500 refugees are being resettled each month (7,000 to the U.S., 3,500 to other countries), but monthly arrivals now exceed 60,000. Though most resettlement countries plan to continue programs, commitments are made *ad hoc* or annually. UN High Commissioner Hartling has a proposal, with specific targets for countries,

to double the total number of resettlements. This should be a centerpiece of the international conference. In addition to increasing resettlement opportunities in Western Europe and other traditional resettlement countries, the proposed conference might, therefore, consider creating an international fund to promote resettlement of refugees in developing countries, and to underwrite economic development projects based on refugee labor. Some Latin American countries have expressed interest in this idea. Capitalization of the fund would probably have to be about \$500 million. Such an approach would, however, yield only limited results in the short term.

Inevitably we are being drawn towards efforts to persuade the PRC to take more refugees, either permanently or temporarily. Some Southeast Asian countries have begun to discuss this with the PRC. The PRC has already taken about 230,000 Chinese and claims it continues to take about 10,000 per month. If we wish to see a substantial increase, we must consider financial aid, probably through the UNHCR, for resettlement in the PRC. We would have to agree to take some refugees with past associations with the U.S. from among those going to the PRC. A collateral PRC contribution could be establishment of a very large temporary asylum camp in the PRC for refugees awaiting onward resettlement.

Should refugee flows continue anywhere near current levels, and first asylum continue to be granted by the ASEAN nations and Hong Kong, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees' costs for feeding, clothing and sheltering refugees in Southeast Asia will rise sharply. The conference would, therefore, have to address the question of how to raise an additional \$300 to \$400 million for these purposes.

Finally, in order to bridge the gap between the rate of permanent resettlement and the numbers in the camps, there is an urgent need to follow up on the ASEAN/UNHCR-sponsored Jakarta conference agreement of May 15<sup>8</sup> to establish one or more island Refugee Processing Centers (RPC). An RPC is an area in which the international community can hold refugees until they can be resettled, while relieving the pressure on first asylum. Thus, resettlement countries must be able to make at least generalized long-term commitments on resettlement rates. Indonesia has agreed to establish one RPC to accommodate an initial population of 10,000 refugees, against U.S. and Australian assurances that they will accept the inhabitants of the center in a reasonable time (three years). The ASEAN nations must be encouraged to offer additional and larger island center sites.

---

<sup>8</sup> Telegram 7824 from Jakarta, May 17, transmitted a summary of the May 15–16 Jakarta conference. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790223–0432)

### 5. U.S. Resources

The U.S. refugee program for Indochinese is currently processing an average of 7,000 Indochinese per month through FY 1979 to be resettled in the U.S. The President has authorized a budget request for FY-1980 which would continue this rate through FY-1980, but he has indicated his desire to review this rate before the start of the fiscal year. The direct costs of this U.S. resettlement program in FY-1980 will be \$244.3 million (\$95.3 million to the Department of State for screening, transportation, and resettlement and placement grants to voluntary agencies; and \$149 million to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare for public assistance, medicaid and other social services). It is clear that our projected resettlement rate of 7,000 per month will not be enough to persuade other countries to do more. We must therefore seriously consider responding positively to High Commissioner Poul Hartling's suggestion that we increase our rate to 10,000 per month, while supporting him in his efforts to seek significantly larger increases from others. Such an increase would add \$41 million in State Department costs and \$45 million to HEW costs each year.

UNHCR care and maintenance costs for expanding refugee population may quadruple in the coming year. We have had a policy of contributing 50 percent of these costs. There is no alternative to continuing this policy if we wish others to commit themselves to quadruple their own contributions. We estimate that this could involve an FY-1980 budget amendment of as much as \$175 million, in addition to substantial amounts (perhaps \$50 million from the U.S.) required to expand the system of Refugee Processing Centers. We will have to move quickly to define and submit a budget amendment. Costs are rising so rapidly that the UNHCR effort would be in danger of bankruptcy if we waited for a supplemental in 1980.

Finally, the agreement between the UNHCR and Hanoi on direct departures from Vietnam for family reunification<sup>9</sup> (the only present alternative to the unregulated human flood in Southeast Asia) raises serious policy and financial issues. We initially saw this family reunification program as an immigration rather than a refugee program, which would leave the costs of transportation and resettlement in the U.S. to the families concerned, rather than the U.S. Government. However, this would be contrary to policies followed on refugees received directly from the Soviet Union. In any case, most Vietnamese in this country will be eligible for citizenship next summer. In the interim, they will not be able to qualify their relatives for admission

---

<sup>9</sup> The UNHCR-SRV agreement was signed on May 30. For the text, see Department of State *Bulletin*, October 1979, p. 5.

under the Immigration and Nationality Act. When they do acquire citizenship, quota restrictions will quickly be exceeded and the flow of immigrants from Vietnam will be shut off. In addition, any significant direct flow from Vietnam could generate welfare costs for which the states would insist on reimbursement. Thus, we must give serious consideration to changes in policy and law if we are not to be vulnerable to charges from Hanoi that we have failed to facilitate the humane emigration we claim to seek.

---

**137. Memorandum From the U.S. Coordinator for Refugee Affairs (Clark) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 20, 1979

SUBJECT

Indochinese Refugees: Tokyo and Beyond

*I. Tokyo Summit*

The exodus of refugees from Indochina has reached such staggering dimensions as to pose major political and security problems for South-east Asia as well as a refugee problem of proportions not matched since Nazi Germany in the 1930's. In May alone, 65,000 refugees found sanctuary in the ASEAN nations and Hong Kong. 10,000 more may have gone to China. The issue will inevitably assume an important place on the agenda of the Tokyo Summit.<sup>2</sup> We suggest that you make several key points to stress both the seriousness of the problems and point the way toward how the world might cope with it.

—We cannot individually or collectively ignore such a staggering humanitarian problem, one which is already creating serious problems for Southeast Asia and promises to get even worse without urgent action.

—One part of our effort should be heavy pressure upon Vietnam to stop treating its citizens so inhumanely that many of them actually pay for the privilege of fleeing, knowing that they may well die or remain for years in refugee camps.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Records of Cyrus Vance, Secretary of State, 1977–1980, Lot 84D241, President's Breakfast, 5/1/79–8/31/80. Confidential.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 6, Document 136.

—We should press Hanoi to create humane conditions whereby the number wanting to flee Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia will decrease and those that do will feel safe in waiting until they can leave gradually under controlled conditions.

—But we should recognize that pressure is unlikely to change the fundamental nature of the regime in Hanoi. We must therefore also consider how to deal with the hundreds of thousands of refugees now in camps, on the seas, or likely to leave in the months ahead.

—We need a much greater international effort to do three things: (1) to ensure the extension of temporary asylum; (2) to increase permanent resettlement; and (3) to meet the large costs involved. This will require at least an immediate doubling of annual permanent resettlement numbers (from 120,000 worldwide, exclusive of the PRC, to 240,000), and a quadrupling of funding for temporary asylum (\$100 million from all nations to \$400 million) in 1980. Similar international resettlement rates and financial contributions will be required for years to come.

—The United States is prepared to do its part, and more. But such an effort needs to be spread more widely around the world. In addition to the UNHCR we should also enlist the help of international agencies such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank to help with financing resettlement, particularly in developing nations.

—After the Tokyo Summit, we believe that Vietnam should be called to account right away in the Security Council. The Soviets will veto any resolution directed at Vietnam but world attention and pressure on Vietnam will be maximized. If the Soviets choose to link themselves with Vietnam's behavior, they may share the public opprobrium. The UNSC should be followed by a conference under UN auspices before the end of July, aimed at agreement on a program of practical steps to increase temporary asylum, permanent resettlement and financial support. It should be carefully prepared. To this end, I suggest we agree to appoint a group of several—perhaps four—people as a preparatory committee (one selected by the Government of Japan; one jointly by the governments of the U.S., Canada and Australia; one by ASEAN; and one by the European Community) to work with Secretary General Waldheim and High Commissioner Hartling.

—We believe we should make a special effort to ensure the PRC both participates in such a conference and in the resettlement programs. The ethnic Chinese background of so many of the refugees makes their resettlement in China easier than in many other areas. The non-participation by China is likely to make it more difficult politically for other countries to participate at the increased levels required.

## II. *Scenario*

After generating momentum at Tokyo, we envisage proceeding down parallel tracks of pressuring Vietnam in the Security Council



and by other political and economic means, and of preparing for an international conference on greater assistance for the refugees. Cy Vance's talks at Bali with ASEAN and then in Canberra (ANZUS)<sup>3</sup> will supplement the Tokyo Summit discussion by maximizing Asian support for both tracks, although some of the ASEAN states (especially Indonesia and Malaysia) may still be reluctant to condemn Vietnam formally. A possible pressure point would be redirection of Western bilateral and multilateral aid from Hanoi to the refugee program, also helping finance the latter. (The Japanese would be the key to such an effort, but they have recently told us they will not cut off bilateral assistance on the basis of the refugee problem. Also, the Swedes told us yesterday that they are now ready to make a demarche to Hanoi, and consider additional steps.)

It is our judgment that this scenario will maximize the chances of at least medium-term action to deal with the refugee problem, although success cannot be safely predicted. In the short term, however, it should produce a renewed willingness by the ASEAN countries and Hong Kong to provide temporary asylum, if they are convinced these actions will yield concrete action to relieve them of some of their short-term burdens and long-term fears.

If an international conference is to approach a doubled international resettlement intake, we must be able to announce a 40% increase in our own program, and be prepared to submit a budget request to cover it. You should also be aware of the large projected increases in financial support for the temporary asylum program of the UNHCR to accommodate perhaps 700,000 refugees by year's end. Initial decisions on United States admission rates and financial contributions will need to be made in connection with the work of the preparatory group, after you have returned from Tokyo.

It is, in any case, imperative that we seek actions that might stop the present tragedy unfolding in the South China Sea and on the Cambodian border. The above is a minimum program, measured against the size of the problem.

#### *BACKGROUND AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS*

There may be as many as 1.5 million more people yet to be expelled or to flee from Vietnam, Kampuchea and Laos—unless conditions in Indochina change radically. At current rates, allowing for seasonal fluctuations in the refugee flow, we may expect over half a million new refugees to seek to add themselves to the existing population of 330,000 in the ASEAN countries and Hong Kong within a year, with

---

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 7, Document 136.

only 120,000 being resettled elsewhere. These Southeast Asian countries will not accept such a burden; political upheavals could ensue; hundreds of thousands of refugees would die; tens of thousands could come straight to U.S. territories (e.g., Guam).

Condemnation by the international community may embarrass Hanoi, but its embarrassment threshold is astonishingly high. We will seek ASEAN support to press those countries now providing bilateral aid to Vietnam (about \$130 million, principally from Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Belgium, The Netherlands, and Japan) to shift their aid to support Indochina refugees. We will also attempt to divert the approximately \$150 million in multilateral aid to Vietnam (e.g., IBRD, ADB) to refugee relief. Even were we to be entirely successful in these efforts, however—and we doubt we will be—the Soviet Union can easily offset any financial losses to Hanoi. No other foreign aid nor trade is essential to Vietnam's military buildup and economic survival.

The ASEAN countries and Hong Kong are clearly at or near the limits of their ability to cope. They see themselves threatened with large, indigestible permanent communities of Vietnamese/Chinese already creating very serious economic and social and political problems and posing a potential security threat. Only a strong positive response by the international community both in pressuring Vietnam and in providing greatly stepped up resettlement can prevent massive loss of life. Such an international effort will inevitably draw some additional refugees from Indochina, but the alternative is to sit idly by while people die.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Poul Hartling, has suggested to our Ambassador at Geneva<sup>4</sup> that he might be able, by carefully targeted approaches to specific countries in Europe and Latin America, to double the current annual resettlement rate by the international community from 120,000 to 240,000 per year. He suggests that, as part of this effort, the United States could increase our resettlement rate from 7,000 per month to 10,000 per month, thus reducing the United States percentage from about 70% to 50% of the worldwide total. The first year combined cost for State and HEW would be an estimated \$86 million. This relatively modest increase in the U.S. program, leading to much larger increases by other countries and placing our program on something approaching the 50–50 matching basis proposed by Hartling, would have considerable political appeal. The church groups, the Jewish community and organized labor, all of whom are already pressing the Attorney General to exercise his authority to double our

---

<sup>4</sup> William Vanden Heuvel.

admission rate from 7,000 to 14,000 per month, and the Congress are suddenly showing new sympathy for major increases.

Nevertheless, at 240,000 resettlements by the international community per year, it could take six to seven years to remove all eligible refugees from the countries of first asylum. This might mean the U.S. admissions of Indochinese would have to continue at the rate of 10,000 per month until 1985 or 1986, raising questions about job competition and burdening local social services.

Nor can resettlement by other countries at the proposed rate of 10,000 per month be achieved without cost. Substantial resettlement of refugees in developing countries, particularly in Latin America, presupposes the international financing of economic development projects based on refugee labor. A special fund with an initial capitalization of \$300–\$500 million would be required to underwrite this effort, although some funds might be available from the IBRD and other multilateral institutions. Our share, over a two-three year period could total \$50–\$100 million.

In order to help bridge the gap between the rate of permanent resettlement and the numbers in camps awaiting resettlement, there is an urgent need to follow up on the Jakarta Conference agreement of May 15<sup>5</sup> to establish one or more isolated island Refugee Processing Centers (RPCs), where refugees can wait several years for resettlement without contact and friction with local populations. What is required is a system of RPC's capable of accommodating hundreds of thousands of people. The ASEAN nations, and possibly the PRC (which is considering Hartling's suggestion that it do so), must be encouraged to offer these. To make them work, the international community, including the U.S., would have to be willing to make good faith commitments on resettlement levels three to six years in the future.

Apart from any increases we may make in our resettlement program, we cannot realistically avoid huge increases in the amount of money we contribute to the UNHCR for temporary maintenance of refugees from Indochina. Costs may quadruple in the coming year, but the alternative to meeting them is to allow scores of thousands to die of malnutrition and disease. We have had a policy of contributing 50 per cent of these costs. We should make a major effort to get Japan to increase their percentage substantially from its present 25%, but there is little alternative to continuing at 50% ourselves if we wish others to commit themselves to quadruple their own contributions. We estimate that this could involve a FY–1980 budget amendment of

---

<sup>5</sup> See footnote 7, Document 136.

approximately \$225 million, including a network of RPCs to relieve pressures.

Between now and your return from Tokyo we will be refining the cost estimates noted above and consulting quietly, on a contingency basis, with members of Congress. The two Appropriation Committees will obviously be the most important. Based upon these consultations and the views you and Cy bring back from Tokyo and Southeast Asia we shall prepare a series of options for your decision before the international process has proceeded so far as to commit us, at least implicitly, to something beyond the financial limits that can be sustained by our humanitarian concern.

We will have to focus domestic political attention broadly on the immense human suffering involved in order to mobilize public support for substantially increased levels of funding and commitment to increased levels of refugee acceptance. The Security Council and UN Conference will help in achieving this but you may have to personally engage yourself in the effort as well.

At OMB request, rough estimates of the costs of the initiatives discussed in this paper are appended.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Not attached.

---

### 138. Briefing Paper Prepared in the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Washington, July 25, 1979

#### *UN Conference on Indochinese Refugees*

The Geneva Conference on Indochinese Refugees July 20–21 resulted in significant progress in coping with the humanitarian aspects of the refugee problem,<sup>2</sup> continuing the process initiated at the Economic Summit in Tokyo and at Bali. Total resources contributed and pledged met the goals set by the UNHCR for resettlement and funding. Resettlement commitments now exceed 260,000, more than double the

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Molander, Box 80, Refugees (Indochinese), 7–10/79. Confidential.

<sup>2</sup> See also *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1979, pp. 918–919.

pre-Tokyo level; and funding pledges for the UNHCR Indochina program have reached approximately \$190 million, not including a Japanese pledge to fund half the UNHCR program in Southeast Asia.

The announced United States programs of increased resettlement of refugees and funding for the UNHCR, rescue at sea, support for Refugee Processing Centers (RPCs) and the proposal for an International Resettlement Fund were important in setting direction and pace; and the momentum of the meeting was aided dramatically by the Philippine announcement that it would provide an island for a Refugee Processing Center to hold up to 50,000. Canada was outstanding with a tripling of its resettlement rate to 3,000 per month, and France increased its intake by an additional 5,000.

On the other hand, some countries could have done much more than they did in terms of resettlement offers and financial pledges, e.g., the FRG. Argentina is the only Latin American country to indicate significant interest in resettlement and there was no significant African offer. Indonesia has not yet agreed to a large Refugee Processing Center.

Among the other delegations taking a prominent role, the British performed reasonably well, considering the balance of pressures on their government, and pledged to take 10,000 refugees from Hong Kong. The Chinese played a low-key role, were relatively non-obstructionist, and offered to accept 10,000 refugees from Southeast Asian camps for permanent resettlement, though not yet agreeing to provide an RPC. The USSR took the standard line, blaming Sino-U.S. collusion for the problem.

The Vietnamese performance was the most interesting and hard to judge. First, they (and the USSR) are clearly feeling concerted international moral/political pressure and announced their intention to reduce the outflow of refugees. How much of the outflow and for how long remain to be determined; and so does the vital question of how Vietnam will treat those who are no longer able to leave by sea. Despite this "moratorium," we expect that a much-reduced but still sizeable number will leave in genuine, non-sanctioned, escapes. Second, the Vietnamese continued their efforts to place the entire responsibility for the refugee exodus upon the United States and China, also claiming inability to control it, even after having undertaken to stop "illegal departures for a reasonable period of time." Their propaganda was moderately effective, and the idea of a moratorium was a great relief to the countries of Southeast Asia. Third, Vietnam reiterated its offer of a controlled program of departures in cooperation with the UNHCR. We are willing to participate in a family reunification program involving United States consular personnel on TDY in Vietnam serving as part of the UNHCR office to process prospective immigrants. We will watch very closely any specific Vietnamese proposals for an expanded program.

The ASEAN countries did not adopt a unified approach and took no major initiatives. They were generally pleased, however, with the outcome of the meeting, although Thailand was concerned that neither the land refugee problem nor the Kampuchean situation received adequate attention. Since Geneva, there has been no information one way or the other as to whether Malaysia or Thailand has moderated its policy of discouraging arrivals, although probably, in practice, their behavior will continue to be mixed, depending on local officials. Indonesia, though withholding its decision on a large RPC, has not maintained a strict cordon against refugee arrivals and did not indicate any prospective change in this practice.

As noted by Waldheim in his summation, the meeting was the scene of numerous bilateral and multilateral meetings off the floor. In his meetings with fifteen Foreign Ministers, with Waldheim and with High Commissioner Hartling, the Vice President stressed, as he did in his speech,<sup>3</sup> that the time had come to deal not only with the human misery and political repercussions of the refugee exodus but also to see what could be done about the causes of the tragedy.<sup>4</sup>

Overall, substantial progress was made at Geneva in meeting the immediate humanitarian problems. Immediate follow-up actions must be taken to consolidate this progress, by ourselves as well as by the UNHCR and other concerned governments. We must pursue establishment of the proposed RPCs on an urgent basis, activating that offered by Marcos and seeking additional offers to put them into operation as soon as humanly possible. Actions are well underway to increase air and sea search and rescue operations; more will follow. We will have to watch Japan closely to make sure that it lives up to its commitment to fund half of the UNHCR's costs in Southeast Asia and the ROK for its commitment in connection with infrastructure support for the RPCs. Secretary General Waldheim stated that he will report on the refugee situation and the implementation of the UNHCR's action plan to the upcoming UN General Assembly.

We will want to use the General Assembly to maintain the international momentum for solving the refugee problem and to encourage various UN agencies to contribute to this process. Most important, we must maintain the international pressures upon Vietnam to take concrete measures to provide more humane treatment for its people. We wish to implement an international program of orderly departure from Vietnam, including family reunification for the United States, but

---

<sup>3</sup> See Department of State *Bulletin*, October 1979, pp. 1-3. Mondale headed the U.S. delegation.

<sup>4</sup> No records of these meetings have been found.

we do not wish to let Vietnam use this or its “moratorium” to temporize and evade its responsibilities. In addition, we recognize that it is necessary to maintain pressure for a political solution in Kampuchea. While this received little attention at Geneva, as was also the case with land refugees, it is part of the over-all threat to the stability of Southeast Asia arising from the situation in Indochina. We will be consulting ASEAN and other governments on the desirability of a UN Security Council meeting as a means of maintaining the pressure on Vietnam.

---

**139. Memorandum From Director of Central Intelligence Turner to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 20, 1979

SUBJECT

Increased Intelligence on Indochinese Refugees (C)

REFERENCE

Your Memorandum Dated September 7, 1979<sup>2</sup>

1. I have already taken steps to ensure that intelligence collection and analysis on Indochinese refugees, requested in your memorandum dated September 7, 1979, will continue to be made available to you on a timely basis. You may already have seen NFAC assessments on Indochina refugees<sup>3</sup> and the Kampuchean famine, fighting and refugee situation<sup>4</sup> published in July and September respectively, which were produced as a result of working-level collaboration between NFAC and the Department of State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research. (S)

2. There has been a hiatus in the refugee outflow following Vietnam's commitment at the Geneva refugee meetings to regulate the movement of refugees.<sup>5</sup> It is probable, of course, that Hanoi's promise was a tactical move designed to diminish international criticism, and

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Global Issues, Bloomfield Subject File, Box 19, Indochinese, 7–12/79. Secret; Noform.

<sup>2</sup> A copy is *ibid*.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 2, Document 142.

<sup>4</sup> See Document 56.

<sup>5</sup> See Document 138.

that the exodus will resume in the near future. The monsoon has started to turn earlier than usual, so that weather conditions are now suitable for the southwesterly movement of boat refugees. In the meantime, we continue to focus our collection and analytical resources on the following areas:

a. [3 lines not declassified] we are continuing to look for signs of boat and refugee camp construction and of refugee boats at sea.

b. *Clandestine Collection*. Considerable resources continue to be employed in debriefing refugees through programs initiated in [place names not declassified]. During the period January through August, for example, the Deputy Directorate for Operations disseminated sixty-nine intelligence reports on refugees, obtained both through our own direct efforts [less than 1 line not declassified]. Field stations at present collectively devote five Agency personnel and twelve agent work-years to this project—a prodigious effort and one which we believe is adequate to our needs.

c. *Analytical*. Indochina analysts continue to spend [less than 1 line not declassified] of their time on Indochina refugees. I have called for an all-source updated refugee assessment, including the points made in your memorandum, to be produced by NFAC by October 31st.<sup>6</sup> This project will be coordinated with the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research. [portion marking not declassified]

3. [5 lines not declassified] [portion marking not declassified]

Stansfield Turner<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> See Document 142.

<sup>7</sup> Turner signed "Stan" above his typed signature.



**140. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, October 23, 1979, 1826Z

43440. For Acting Secretary from Dick Holbrooke—please pass to Secretary Vance. Subj: CODEL Sasser.

1. (S—Entire text)

2. After three busy and productive days in Thailand, Senators Sasser, Danforth and Baucus leave for Phnom Penh in a few hours. They are immensely satisfied with their efforts so far, and it is my view that the trip has been productive and useful in focusing attention on both the dimensions of the crisis on the border and ways that it could be somewhat alleviated.

3. If the emotional high point of the trip was the tour of the border yesterday, the surprise was the Vietnamese decision to allow the CODEL to visit Phnom Penh. Mort,<sup>2</sup> Mike Armacost and I think that this may reflect a change in Vietnamese strategy towards how to present Heng Samrin to the outside world, although we must await the results of their trip before reaching any firm conclusions.

4. It is difficult to describe the scene that we saw at the border yesterday. The phrase “refugee camp” does not suggest the scene we encountered: Tens of thousands of people seeking shelter in bushes or fields, in advanced states of disease or malnutrition. Among these desperate refugees were a surprising number of Pol Pot soldiers, who had left their weapons in Cambodia, crossed into Thailand to rest and await the order to return to Cambodia.

5. The Senators quickly and correctly focused on the concept of the land bridge—i.e., an overland distribution of food from the Thai border into Cambodia. They have skillfully avoided getting entangled in any of the political complexities of the region. They will present this idea in Phnom Penh tomorrow to whomever they see, and continue to avoid any political discussions.

6. Pursuant to my conversation with the Secretary before departure,<sup>3</sup> Mort and I did not join the Senators yesterday when they walked into a refugee area which may have been inside Cambodia. As we agreed, we are sending two highly skilled FSO language officers (in

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Cables File, Far East, Box 13, 9–11/79. Secret; Immediate; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to Abramowitz.

<sup>3</sup> No memorandum of conversation of this discussion has been found.

Cambodian, French, Vietnamese and Chinese) with the CODEL to Phnom Penh.

7. Because of the importance and delicacy of that mission, Mike Armacost and I delayed our trip to Manila until after they return;<sup>4</sup> we will wait in Bangkok to debrief them before resuming our previously planned trip. I will return on schedule.

8. One point that we are all stressing is that the trip to Phnom Penh does not imply recognition of Heng Samrin. The Senators readily agreed to this point and we sent a special message to this effect to the Chinese Embassy prior to the announcement.<sup>5</sup> Mike Armacost and I will call on the Chinese Ambassador tomorrow to further stress this point. Thach explicitly accepted this key point as well.

9. Looking beyond the desperate humanitarian crisis, the situation on the border is more explosive than I had expected. The tension is palpable and the presence on the Thai side of the border of large numbers of unarmed Pol Pot soldiers creates a very real danger of hot pursuit by the Vietnamese, a risk accentuated by Vietnamese artillery shellings into Thailand, which occurred while we were in the region. In my meeting with Nguyen Co Thach, however, Thach made a remarkable flat statement that Vietnam will never invade Thailand, not even attacking the sanctuaries "as you Americans did in the past in Cambodia". While we have not made this precise quote public it goes further and is more explicit than any previous statement that I am aware of by a Vietnamese. (Full memcon septel.)<sup>6</sup>

10. Despite Thach's assurances the game China, Thailand, Pol Pot, and the Vietnamese are playing at the border is one fraught with the possibility of dangerous miscalculations. I will have more to say on this subject when I return.

11. The Senators, incidentally, hope to meet with the highest levels of the U.S. executive branch right after their return,<sup>7</sup> as well as meeting with the Majority and Minority leaders. Ken Bleakley and Dennis Harter will be on the plane back with them and will be cabling more precise requests when their exact arrival time is known; at this time it

---

<sup>4</sup> Armacost and Holbrooke met with Marcos on October 25. Telegrams 20778 and 20779 both from Manila, October 29, document the discussions. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790495-0346 and D790495-0357)

<sup>5</sup> Not found.

<sup>6</sup> See Document 64.

<sup>7</sup> According to the President's Daily Diary, Baucus, Sasser, and Danforth met with Carter on October 16 from 2:04 until 2:25 p.m. (Carter Library, Presidential Materials, President's Daily Diary) No memorandum of conversation of this meeting has been found.

appears they will arrive at Andrews around 2230 Thursday<sup>8</sup> night although this may change.<sup>9</sup>

Abramowitz

---

<sup>8</sup> October 25.

<sup>9</sup> The Senators met with Ha Van Lau in New York on November 5 to discuss their trip and the “land bridge” proposal. See Document 67.

---

**141. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the  
Department of State (Tarnoff) to the President’s Assistant for  
National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 26, 1979

SUBJECT

Kampuchea Working Group Designation

The Department has decided to form an interagency working group in the Operations Center to coordinate efforts to meet the special situation of the relief of displaced persons inside Kampuchea and of Khmer refugees crossing into Thailand. We have placed this group under the overall direction of Dick Clark who will extend his interagency responsibilities for refugees to cover this unfolding tragedy.

The group is charged with the implementation of the program already approved by the President which makes available \$39 million for disbursement principally through the international organizations of ICRC/UNICEF, the World Food Program, and the UNHCR. The group will also direct, largely through the AID Disaster Relief and Food for Peace offices, government liaison with voluntary agencies in the United States, Thailand and Kampuchea which require special support in organizing the logistical elements of their various relief programs. The working group will also have the major function of coordinating responses to congressional, press and public inquiries.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Global Issues, Bloomfield Subject File, Box 19, Kampuchea, 9–10/79. No classification marking.

The Deputy Secretary has directed that this group be established effective at 1600, October 26, 1979.

**Peter Tarnoff<sup>2</sup>**  
Executive Secretary

---

<sup>2</sup> Seitz signed for Tarnoff above Tarnoff's typed signature.

---

#### 142. Intelligence Assessment Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>

NI 79-10009

Washington, November 1979

##### The Indochina Refugee Situation: An Update [*portion marking not declassified*]

###### *Overview*

Vietnam has shown it can regulate the refugee flow essentially according to its own dictates. The exodus of boat refugees from Vietnam decreased dramatically following strict governmental measures taken to moderate the outflow after the Geneva refugee meetings in July. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Hanoi does not seem to be preparing to resume the exodus. On the other hand, there is no evidence that Hanoi has abandoned its basic decision to rid itself of unwanted citizens, especially Chinese, and the

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, Outside the System File, Box 46, Carter (Rosalynn): Thailand Trip: 8/79-1/80. Secret; [*handling restriction not declassified*]. Prepared in the National Foreign Assessment Center. Carter wrote in the top right-hand corner of the cover page, "Ros[alynn] Info. J." A note on the cover page indicates the assessment was prepared in the Office of the National Intelligence Officer for China-East Asia and the Pacific. Contributions were received from the Office of Political Analysis and the Office of Geographic and Cartographic Research, National Foreign Assessment Center. The assessment was prepared at the request of the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and was coordinated with the Office of Economic Research and the Office of Strategic Research in the National Foreign Assessment Center and with the Bureau of Intelligence and Research in the Department of State. A map of the Indochinese refugee camps is not printed.

flow of assisted departures could resume at any time. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Vietnam's dry-season campaign and widespread food shortages in Kampuchea have caused another mammoth refugee influx into Thailand, the worst effects of which are probably yet to come. As many as a half million potential refugees may already be in western Kampuchean provinces, within reach of the Thai border. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The strong possibility that anti-Vietnamese resistance in Kampuchea will become a protracted guerrilla war means that the Kampuchean refugee problem—for Thailand in particular—will also be a long-term one. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The number of refugees from Laos has decreased considerably since Thailand and Laos agreed in August to cooperate in preventing border crossings. Reported Chinese plans to put pressure on Vietnam by supporting resistance in Laos, however, along with other factors, could result in future in another large refugee exodus. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Thailand has said it will grant temporary sanctuary to all persons fleeing to its territory. Bangkok might reverse this policy, however, if it decided permanent resettlement to other countries was too slow or international funding of holding centers was inadequate, or if domestic pressures became too strong. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The attitudes of other ASEAN countries toward first asylum will depend on the rate of new arrivals vis-a-vis departures to countries of permanent resettlement. A resumption of the large-scale refugee exodus from Vietnam might result in increased attempts to prevent refugees from landing, particularly in Indonesia and Malaysia. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The flow of boat refugees from Vietnam to Hong Kong has decreased. Hong Kong and China are cooperating in preventing the entry into Hong Kong of persons posing as refugees from Vietnam. [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *Present Vietnamese Policies: Boat Refugee*

1. The mammoth outflow of boat refugees<sup>2</sup> from Vietnam in the period January–June 1979, which totaled almost 60,000 during May,

---

<sup>2</sup> See NFAC Intelligence Assessments NI 79–10004 of July 1979, entitled *Indochina Refugee Situation*, and PA M 79–10292 of June 1979, entitled *Vietnam's Refugee Machine*, for background on the current situation. [Footnote in the original. The “Indochina Refugee Situation” assessment is in Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330–82–0227, 1, Refugee Situation. The “Vietnam's Refugee Machine” assessment is in Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 80T00942A: Production Case Files, Box 12, Folder 7: Vietnam's Refugee Machine.]

has slowed dramatically. The refugee total was less than 9,000 in both August and September, clearly demonstrating that Hanoi can reduce the flow as and when it sees fit. (Table 1 contains monthly statistics on Indochinese refugee arrivals in 1979.) Since mid-June, the government has implemented effective measures to diminish the exodus, particularly of Chinese, by turning off its "refugee machine" and by publicizing the harsh punishment meted out to offenders, including the death penalty for organizers and the shooting of escapees on sight. Increased land and sea patrols, and restrictions on boat building, also help prevent departures. Adverse weather may have been a factor at first but is so no longer. Several reports even indicate the government is refunding exit permit fees previously paid by Chinese. Refugees report increasing difficulty in bribing officials to facilitate departure. Recent escapees typically have been ethnic Vietnamese in small groups of friends and relatives using small boats, avoiding contact with the authorities, and departing clandestinely from southern locations. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Table 1  
Indochinese Refugee Arrivals in Countries of Temporary Asylum in Southeast Asia, January–September 1979<sup>3</sup>

Month	By Land	By Boat	Total
January	7,200	10,500	17,700
February	3,332	8,632	11,964
March	5,668	17,189	22,857
April	5,636	24,886	30,522
May	4,976	59,412	64,388
June	14,936	45,451	60,387
July	9,571	24,315	33,886
August	3,188	8,792	11,980
September	4,569	8,988	13,557
Total	59,076	208,165	267,241

[1 line not declassified]

2. Vietnam does not, however, appear to have changed its basic policy of intending to expel most of its Chinese, and there are reports

<sup>3</sup> Includes Hong Kong and Macao but not China. [Footnote in the original.]

of continued registration of Chinese for departure and of assertions by Vietnamese officials that the moratorium is temporary. Hanoi fears the Chinese represent a Fifth Column in the conflict with China and, furthermore, comprise an economic class that does not fit in with socialization plans. Desire to emigrate by ethnic Vietnamese unhappy with the government's policies, especially deteriorating economic conditions, is expected to remain high for years to come. At present, the weight of international opprobrium, spearheaded by complaints from the ASEAN countries, keeps Vietnam from once again opening up the floodgates. Its future actions, however, will depend upon its own perceived interests, especially in the field of internal security, and will not necessarily be responsive to external pressure. [*portion marking not declassified*]

3. Vietnam is loudly publicizing, for propaganda purposes, a legal emigration program of orderly departures run in conjunction with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The numbers involved so far are small—about 100 people a week fly out of Ho Chi Minh City on charter flights—and Hanoi has dragged its feet on implementation. There is no evidence that Hanoi has established new refugee processing centers, although the government could use the large number of existing military camps as holding centers if necessary. At the moment, most of the paperwork needed to acquire an exit permit is completed well before the departure date, the immediate predeparture steps take little time, and those permitted to leave apparently stay in their homes until shortly before departure. Some would-be refugees may be trying to leave under the orderly departure program rather than risk a hazardous and clandestine boat voyage. [*portion marking not declassified*]

4. [*11 lines not declassified*]

*Thailand's Refugee Problem: Disaster in Kampuchea, Less Urgency in Laos  
Kampuchea*

5. Vietnam's dry-season campaign, coupled with widespread and severe food shortages, has created yet another potentially disastrous refugee situation in Thailand. Actual numbers are confused, but possibly as many as 200,000 refugees in various stages of malnutrition and ill health have fled to Thailand in recent weeks. Perhaps 200,000 others in various locations just across the border in Kampuchea may soon flee to Thailand; upwards of 100,000, for instance, are reportedly gathered inside Kampuchea across from Aranyaprathet. We estimate that several hundred thousand more Kampucheans in the western and southwestern regions contiguous to Thailand may be facing famine and military pressure and thus also represent a pool of potential refugees. In sum, up to 10 percent of Kampuchea's current population, estimated at 5.7 million, could seek refuge in Thailand. [*portion marking not declassified*]

6. The refugees fall into the three groups: Pol Pot forces and their supporters; Khmer Liberation Movement and other non-Communist resistance groups plus supporters; and Kampuchean civilians with no ties to either group. Large numbers of Kampucheans also cross back and forth into Thailand to barter for food in a flourishing Thai trade or to obtain relief supplies. Volunteer agencies based in Thailand have access to these enclaves. Refugees report severe food shortages in western Kampuchea; they say it is no longer possible to find edible vegetation along the border area and that many will be unable to survive without relief assistance. [*portion marking not declassified*]

7. Current Vietnamese/Heng Samrin policy is apparently designed to deny food and medical supplies to Kampucheans who live in contested areas—except civilians under their direct control—not only in areas close to the Thai border but also in the central and northeast regions. Vietnamese troops have reportedly seized food and medicines from Kampuchean civilians. Vietnamese military strategy seems aimed in part at driving Pol Pot guerrillas and their supporters over the border into Thailand. Over the long haul, these guerrillas may be able to form the nucleus for an anti-Vietnamese protracted struggle, which means that the problem of refugees from Kampuchea will also be a long-term one. [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *Laos*

8. The influx of refugees from Laos has decreased from approximately 6,000 to 3,000 per month since Thailand and Laos agreed in August to cooperate in preventing border crossings. Vientiane's recent decision to suspend forced agricultural collectivization may also have contributed to this diminished flow. The Laotian Government reports that several thousands of refugees have returned from Thailand—a figure that is probably exaggerated—and has given reassurances that returnees will not be treated harshly. [*portion marking not declassified*]

9. The basic causes of the refugee exodus have not been removed. The government may resume forced agricultural collectivization following the 1979 rice harvest. Furthermore, Vientiane reports a projected 1979 shortfall of between 70,000 and 80,000 tons of foodgrains. These economic factors, possibly combined with departures caused by political frustration, could once again increase the rate of departures. In the future China's apparent plans to put pressure on Vietnam by supplying resistance groups in Laos could step up fighting there and result in an increased refugee flow. [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *Reactions and Policies of ASEAN States*

##### *Thailand*

10. Earlier in 1979 Thailand took a hard line against Kampuchean refugees, at one time forcibly repatriating 48,000 to an uncertain fate.



On 19 October, Prime Minister Kriangsak announced a major policy change, stating that, for humanitarian reasons, and in view of the high level of international assistance, Thailand would henceforth accept for temporary asylum all Kampuchean refugees and would abandon forced repatriation. [*portion marking not declassified*]

11. Bangkok intends to transfer newly arrived Khmer refugees away from the immediate border area to temporary holding centers to be constructed in Prachin Buri, Chanthaburi, and Surin Provinces with UNHCR support. Some of these holding centers have already started operating, but so far they are little more than open fields surrounded by barbed wire where conditions are bad. Thousands of refugees reportedly fled back into Kampuchea to avoid being sent to these rear camps. After a few weeks in these centers, the refugees will be transferred to a “national refugee center” to be created by expanding a small existing camp in Trat Province at the southern end of the border into a facility capable of accommodating up to 300,000 persons. However, priority is being given to the temporary holding centers and it may be some months before the “national center” is operational. Thailand also wants to set up a relief task force, composed of government and international volunteer relief agencies, to bring order to emergency relief efforts at present hampered by lack of central coordination. Thailand has recognized the need for additional medical assistance, and promised to permit more foreign medical personnel to operate in refugee camps. It has also called for a United Nations factfinding mission to monitor the Thai-Kampuchean border. [*portion marking not declassified*]

12. Thailand continues to cooperate with international organizations in sending food and medicines to refugees inside Thailand and across the border into Kampuchea. It also permits the use of Bangkok as a stopover for Red Cross and UNICEF supply planes en route to Phnom Penh. Bangkok has stipulated that it will retain full control over all relief efforts in the border area and insists that some aid must go to Thai villagers displaced by the refugee influx. [*portion marking not declassified*]

13. Bangkok continues to discourage refugees from Laos from entering and to try to repatriate those who evade checkpoints. Thai leaders have stated, however, that they will not forcibly repatriate Lao refugees, although in June provincial officials reportedly sent back several hundred persons. At the Geneva meetings, China offered to accept up to 10,000 refugees already in Thailand or other ASEAN countries and in September agreed to resettle 10,000 Lao and Hmong refugees from Thai camps. [*portion marking not declassified*]

14. The new Thai policy entails considerable political risk for Kriangsak, although it may also accrue international praise to him for

Thailand's humanitarianism. Thai authorities view the large number of Indochina refugees as a potential security problem and an economic burden that threatens the government's stability. The Thais in particular are concerned that the influx of refugees, including Pol Pot's supporters, could provoke incursions by and conflict with Vietnamese troops; indeed, several small-scale incidents have already occurred in the border area. The Vietnamese have stated forcefully and publicly that, despite public Thai denials, they have evidence of Thailand's cooperation with China in the training and resupply of Kampuchean resistance forces. *[portion marking not declassified]*

15. Thailand's new, more lenient refugee policy is undoubtedly contingent on the timely movement of refugees either to countries of permanent resettlement or back into Kampuchea (or Laos) when conditions permit. If this does not proceed as expected, or if the flow of international assistance to camps inside Thailand diminishes, the policy may be reversed and forced repatriation again employed. *[portion marking not declassified]*

#### *Malaysia*

16. The refugee presence in Malaysia could cause domestic repercussions affecting the regime's stability, although tensions have decreased recently because of a decrease in arrivals and the increased rate of departures to countries of permanent resettlement. Malaysia has a long history of ethnic confrontation between Malays and Chinese and believes the refugee presence—including many Chinese—could result in ethnic violence. *[portion marking not declassified]*

17. In 1978, Malaysia granted first asylum to all boat refugees. In the first few months of 1979, however, when the sheer weight of arrivals threatened to overwhelm the country's capacity to absorb the refugees and become a major political issue, it adopted a hard line. It set up a naval cordon off its east coast and towed new arrivals out to sea after providing fuel and food. Malaysia softened its stance somewhat following a major outflow of refugees from its camps to permanent resettlement elsewhere. Only seaworthy boats are now towed back to sea. While publicly reiterating its policy of refusing first asylum, in practice Malaysia has permitted some new arrivals to land and be processed. It has also allowed all of the "limbo" refugees—those scattered in unorganized small camps along the beach—into regular camps. *[portion marking not declassified]*

18. Malaysia, however, as cautious as ever in its dealings with Vietnam, appears reluctant to return to an acknowledged first-asylum policy at a time when Vietnam is critical of Malaysia and its ASEAN partners for their anti-Vietnamese stance at the nonaligned meetings in Havana and in the UN General Assembly. Malaysia reportedly feels

that Vietnam might resume the refugee flow so as to put pressure on ASEAN to soften its collective policy toward Vietnam and the Heng Samrin regime. [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *Indonesia*

19. The Indonesian Government, despite strong anti-Chinese and anti-Communist attitudes, has generally been more lenient in granting first asylum to refugees. It too fears that the refugee presence may give rise to internal security problems, but the threat is less urgent because the refugee camps are scattered on islands far from major population centers. Indonesia's stated policy is to grant first asylum to refugees who reach an Indonesian island, although there have been reports of seaworthy boats being provisioned and towed out to sea. [*portion marking not declassified*]

20. In May 1979, Indonesia agreed to establish a refugee processing center on Galang Island in the Riau group south of Singapore. Construction has since moved slowly, but Indonesia is transferring refugees from camps scattered on other islands, especially the Anambas group, to Galang. By mid-October, only two camps in the Anambas were still open, all other refugees having been successfully transferred to Galang. [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *The Philippines*

21. The Philippines continues to grant first asylum to all refugees reaching its shores. Furthermore, the Philippine Government announced at the Geneva meetings in July that it would establish a refugee processing center for 50,000 people. [*portion marking not declassified*]

22. Imelda Marcos, wife of the President, is responsible for the establishment of the center in her capacity as Minister for Human Settlement and is taking a close interest in the project. The center was originally planned for construction on the island of Palawan, but this site was deemed unfeasible because of high malaria incidence and construction and logistic difficulties. The center will now be built on the Bataan Peninsula. Construction has been delayed by problems of financial accountability and funding. There is as yet no firm completion date. [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *Singapore*

23. Singapore consistently takes a hard line on refugees and has never offered first asylum. It cooperates effectively, however, in the transit of refugees through its territory if it receives cast-iron guarantees of acceptance by countries of permanent resettlement. [*portion marking not declassified*]

*Current Chinese Policy*

24. In principle, the Beijing government continues its policy of permitting refugees from Vietnam to enter China, although relatively few appear to be doing so. Beijing claims to have accepted 250,000 refugees from Vietnam, most of whom crossed over the border by land. In July and August, the Chinese claimed that about 10,000 Vietnamese refugees per month were entering China. After Vietnam reduced the flow of refugees, however, China became silent on the number of new refugees and the latest Chinese refugee figure remains at around 250,000 persons. [*portion marking not declassified*]

25. China may have allowed some of these refugees to "escape" from their resettlement camps and make their way to Hong Kong, claiming to have come directly from Vietnam; Hong Kong authorities conclude that as many as 20 percent of the "boat" people who landed in Hong Kong this year had originally been resettled in China. In September, however, Beijing issued directives to the southern provinces to stop assisting the onward flow of refugees to Hong Kong and has already taken back some 700 persons. [*portion marking not declassified*]

26. China has invited the UNHCR to observe the resettlement of Vietnamese refugees and has requested UNHCR funds to help pay for refugee assistance. The Chinese have not yet presented a firm figure for this support, but it is expected to run to the tens of millions of dollars. Beijing has ignored proposals to create a holding area in China where refugees could wait for processing of their applications to countries of permanent settlement. [*portion marking not declassified*]

*Refugee Populations in Countries of First Asylum as of 30 September 1979*

27. The total refugee population in countries of first asylum almost doubled in the first six months of 1979 and reached a peak of about 370,000 persons at the end of July. During August and September, the arrival rate was dramatically reduced and more than offset by the rate of departures for permanent resettlement. The total refugee camp population decreased by 23,000 (6 percent of the peak July population), leaving 347,000 refugees still to be resettled. Malaysia and Indonesia experienced the greatest reduction, accounting for more than 70 percent of the refugees departing for resettlement. Thailand and Hong Kong together provided only a quarter of the refugees leaving for resettlement, even though their combined refugee population constituted two-thirds of the total. Singapore, the Philippines, Japan, Macao, and Korea each experienced slight increases in their refugee populations, but the total increase was less than 3,000 persons. [*portion marking not declassified*]

28. Thailand continues to be the country with the largest number of refugees. As of 30 September, its camps contained almost half of all

registered refugees, and, as each day goes by, refugees from Kampuchea swell the numbers. Hong Kong's camps held almost one-fifth of the refugee population, while Malaysian and Indonesian camps combined accounted for less than 30 percent of the total. The share of other countries amounted to only 4 percent. (See table 2.) [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *Thailand*

29. Thailand's registered refugee population of 170,300—that is, before the current influx from Kampuchea—is primarily (95 percent) made up of people arriving over land. Ninety percent of these registered land refugees have come from Laos and represent lowland Lao and highland Hmong (Meo) in roughly equal numbers. Registered Khmer refugees as of 30 September accounted for less than 10 percent of land refugees in camps, and Vietnamese only 1 percent, although the number of Vietnamese boat refugees increased by 287 persons (20 percent) during the period 31 July to 30 September. (See table 3.) [*portion marking not declassified*]

30. More than 5,300 land refugees left Thailand between 31 July and 30 September. Those departing were roughly half Lao and half Khmer. Thailand's boat refugee population decreased by almost 14 percent to 7,300 during the two-month period ending on 30 September. [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *Hong Kong*

31. Hong Kong's refugee population increased from less than 5,000 to over 66,000 between 1 January and 31 July 1979. Since then, it has decreased by around 1,000 persons—a reduction smaller in both absolute and proportional terms than that experienced by other major first-asylum countries. (See table 4.) [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *Malaysia*

32. Malaysia experienced the largest absolute reduction in refugee population among the major first-asylum countries during the two-month period ending on 30 September. Almost 85 percent of the decline can be attributed to departures from the camp on Bidong Island, but all camps had refugee departures except for the transit facility in Kuala Lumpur and the Kuantan camp. The net reduction amounted to 15 to 20 percent of the 31 July refugee population. (See table 5.) [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *Indonesia*

33. Figures for Indonesia have not been as reliable as those reported from other countries. This has been due in part to the arrival of refugees on remote islands and also to the moving of refugees from island to

island. We believe, however, that the refugee population during the two-month period ending 30 September decreased by between 9,000 to 12,000 persons. (See table 6.) [*portion marking not declassified*]

### *The Philippines*

34. Most of the 6,700 refugees in the Philippines are concentrated in three camps: 3,000 on Tara Island, 2,100 on Palawan Island, and 543 at Subic Bay. The remaining refugees are scattered in the Manila area. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Table 2  
Refugee Populations in Countries of First Asylum,  
30 September 1978–30 September 1979<sup>4</sup>

Country	30 Sep 79 <sup>5</sup>	31 Dec 78	Net Change 31 Dec 78–30 Sep 79		Net Change 31 Jul 79–30 Sep 79	
			Persons	Percent	Persons	Percent
Thailand	170,300	139,140	31,160	22.39	–5,346	–3.04
Land Refugees	(163,000)	(135,532)	(27,468)	(20.27)	(–4,174)	(–2.50)
Boat Refugees	(7,300)	(3,608)	(3,692)	(102.33)	(–1,172)	(–13.83)
Hong Kong	65,200	4,810	60,390	1,255.51	–1,451	–2.18
Malaysia	51,700	46,286	5,414	11.70	–9,859	–16.02
Indonesia	46,000	2,607	43,393	1,664.48	–9,026 <sup>6</sup>	–16.40 <sup>6</sup>
Philippines	6,600	2,265	4,335	191.39	806	13.91
Macao	3,500	NA <sup>7</sup>	3,500	—	234	7.16
Singapore	2,200	641	1,559	243.21	1,047	90.81
Japan	1,170	597	573	95.98	639	120.34
Korea	140	74	66	89.19	102	268.42
Others	520	7	513	7,328.57	–408	–43.97
Totals	347,330	196,427	150,903	76.82	–23,262	–6.28

[1 line not declassified]

<sup>4</sup> Figures in this table may not agree with those in individual country tables because of disparities in the mode and date of data collection. All figures should be viewed as reasonably accurate approximations, not as results obtained from precise headcounts. [Footnote in the original.]

<sup>5</sup> Rounded figures. [Footnote in the original.]

<sup>6</sup> The decrease in Indonesian camp populations during the 31 July–30 September period may reflect resolution of an uncertainty concerning the 31 July figures, which included an estimated 9,000 unregistered refugees. [Footnote in the original.]

<sup>7</sup> Data not available. [Footnote in the original.]

Table 3  
Thailand Land Refugee Camp Populations, 30 September 1979<sup>8</sup> (By  
Camp and Ethnic Group)

Camp	Camp Total	Percent of Land Refugees	Lao (lowland)	Lao (Hmong)	Khmer	Vietna- mese	Net Change	
							31 Jul–30 Sep 1979	
							Persons	Percent
Ban Vinai	38,330	23.69	4,460	33,870	0	0	–126	–0.33
Ubon	37,840	23.38	37,840	0	0	0	–230	–0.60
Nong Khai	34,080	21.06	31,100	2,680	300	0	–2,610	–7.11
Ban Nam Yao	13,420	8.29	765	12,655	0	0	54	0.40
Sob Thuang	10,360	6.40	100	10,260	0	0	–67	–0.64
Chiang Khong	6,750	4.17	930	5,820	0	0	–196	–2.82
Aranyaprathet	5,440	3.36	0	0	5,440	0	–586	–9.72
Trat	4,920	3.04	0	0	4,920	0	–259	–5.00
Chiang Kham	2,890	1.79	5	2,885	0	0	–28	–0.96
Surin	2,650	1.64	0	0	2,650	0	–1,195	–31.08
Sikhiu	1,730	1.07	50	0	20	1,660	497	40.31
Fak Tha	1,470	0.91	360	1,110	0	0	1	0.07
Kamput	950	0.59	0	0	950	0	–590	–38.31
Buriram	480	0.30	0	0	480	0	–171	–26.27
Transit Facility	510	0.31	0	0	510	0	152	42.46
Totals	161,820	100.00	75,610	69,280	15,270	1,660	–5,354	–3.20
Percent of Land Refugees	100	—	46.72	42.81	9.44	1.03	—	—

[1 line not declassified]

<sup>8</sup> Rounded figures. [Footnote in the original.]

Table 4  
Hong Kong Refugee Camp Populations,  
30 September 1979

Camp	30 Sep 1979	Percent of Refugee Population	Net Change 31 Jul–30 Sep 1979	
			Persons	Percent
Kai Tak North	14,380	21.88	–22	–0.15
Tuen Mun	13,366	20.33	13,366 <sup>9</sup>	— <sup>9</sup>
Sham Shui Po	8,582	13.06	1,482	20.87
Jubilee	7,378	11.23	911	14.09
Chi Ma Wan	6,597	10.04	–1,996	–23.23
Kai Tak East	6,231	9.48	–9,772	–61.06
Government Dockyard	3,197	4.86	–1,286	–28.69
In Prisons	2,807	4.27	1,983	240.66
Argyle IV	1,520	2.31	–1,190	–43.91
Cape Collinson	1,060	1.61	–19	–1.76
Ma Tau Wei	613	0.93	464	311.41
Not Registered	—	—	–4,841	–100.00
Totals	65,731	100.00	–920	–1.38

[1 line not declassified]

<sup>9</sup> Data for 31 July not available. [Footnote in the original.]



Table 5  
Malaysian Refugee Camp Populations, 30 September 1979

Camp	30 Sep 1979 <sup>10</sup>	Percent of Refugee Population	Net Change 31 Jul–30 Sep 1979	
			Persons	Percent
Pulau (island) Bidong	24,700	49.72	–10,029	–28.88
Transit Facility (Kuala Lumpur)	7,800	15.70	2,313	42.15
Kuantan	7,480	15.06	330	4.62
Pulau Tengah	6,500	13.08	–1,394	–17.66
Kota Baharu	1,970	3.96	–1,350	–40.66
Sarawak	800	1.61	–1,168	–59.35
Sabah	430	0.87	–105	–19.63
Pulau Natuna Besar	—	—	—	—
“Limbo” <sup>11</sup>	—	—	–476	–100.00
Totals	49,680	100.00	–11,879	–19.30

[1 line not declassified]

<sup>10</sup> Rounded figures. [Footnote in the original.]

<sup>11</sup> Refugees who arrived but may be pushed back out to sea. [Footnote in the original.]

Table 6  
Indonesia Refugee Camp Populations, 30 September 1979

Sites	30 Sep 1979	Percent of Refugee Population	Net Change 31 Jul–30 Sep 1979	
			Persons	Percent
Djemadja Island (2 camps)	27,713	63.89	927	3.46
Bintan Island (9 camps)	9,692	22.34	–2,399	–19.84
Galang Island	5,929	13.67	5,119	631.98
Natuna Islands	44	0.10	–857	–95.12
Tarempa Island	—	—	–5,227	–100.00
Rambutan (Jakarta)	—	—	–211	–100.00
Not Registered	—	—	–9,000 <sup>12</sup>	–100.00
Totals	43,378	100.00	–11,648	–21.17

[1 line not declassified]

<sup>12</sup> Estimated number of refugees present on 31 July, but not registered with the UNHCR. [Footnote in the original.]

**143. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the Department of State (Tarnoff) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 21, 1979

SUBJECT

Possible Use of a Pacific Island for Indochinese Refugees

There have been earlier proposals to use a South Pacific island (in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands or elsewhere) as a transshipment point or for resettlement of Indochina refugees. Although the idea of using a tropical island for these purposes is appealing at first glance there are a number of factors which make these proposals impractical.

*TTPI*

Although the population of the Trust Territory is relatively small (approx 120,000) the total land area is also very small as are the individual islands. With a very weak resource base and declining U.S. subsidies after the Trusteeship ends it will be difficult for the area to support its own population which is growing very rapidly. Permanent resettlement of any significant number of refugees would magnify these problems. The use of one or more of the islands for temporary refuge at international or U.S. expense would be more practical in principle but would confront important political obstacles.

The United States administers the Trust Territory under the UN Trusteeship Agreement.<sup>2</sup> Our current negotiations with the Micronesians have as their goal termination of the UN Trusteeship by 1981. The principles governing the negotiations call for a status of free association under which the Micronesians will be fully self-governing and in control of foreign policy subject only to their defense relationship with the U.S. Meanwhile, any decision to use the territory of any of the four Micronesian political entities for refugees (temporarily or permanently) would require the approval of their elected legislatures. Such approval would almost certainly not be granted for permanent resettlement and is very unlikely for temporary refugee camps.

To act without such approval, or in the face of explicit disapproval, would lay the United States open to the charge of acting contrary to

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Global Issues, Bloomfield Subject File, Box 19, Indochinese, 7–12/79. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter XII, Articles 75–85 of the United Nations Charter. U.S. trusteeship of the TTPI ended in 1986.

the terms of the Trusteeship Agreement which includes an obligation for the United States to promote the welfare of the native population and to promote self-determination. It would also have an unfavorable impact on the political status negotiations which would not be in keeping with our general strategic interests in that area. In light of the seriousness of the refugee situation, the Department of State will approach the Micronesian governments through the High Commissioner to see if any of the four political entities would be agreeable to providing an island site to be used as a temporary refugee processing center.

We must of course recognize that if we accepted refugees into territory under U.S. jurisdiction, even on a transient basis, many countries would assume that these refugees would in the end be admitted into the United States, and would not themselves accept them.

#### *The U.S. Territories*

The U.S. territories in the Pacific (Guam and American Samoa) have population problems and would also find it extremely difficult to absorb permanent resettlement of refugees.

In recent years political discontent has grown because of what many Guamanians feel is a high-handed attitude of the Federal Government in making decisions which impact directly upon the Guamanians without prior consultations or approval. Although Guam has been used as a temporary holding center for Vietnamese refugees it is almost certain that the Guam Government would reject any proposal to hold refugees on the island for an extended period or to permanently resettle Indochinese refugees on Guam. Because of the limited land available there has been considerable pressure on the U.S. military to reduce land-use requirements.

The geography of American Samoa (most of the land-area is mountainous) has forced the concentration of the population onto the limited amount of flat inhabitable land between the mountains and the sea. There is little room available for an even moderately large refugee camp.

Again, if we accepted refugees even as transients in Guam or Samoa, other governments would probably lose any interest in receiving them.

#### *Independent Pacific Nations*

The independent island nations of the South Pacific are developing countries and require outside financial assistance in order to survive. An exception is Nauru which is self-sufficient because of phosphate mining. However, Nauru will in the future be forced to resettle its own population as a result of extensive mining operations which are rendering the island uninhabitable.

The smaller Pacific Island nations all have real development problems (e.g., small land mass, inadequate infrastructure, subsistence economies, and the threat of over-population, etc.). In the countries with larger land areas (Fiji, PNG, New Hebrides, Solomons, and New Caledonia) there is a delicate political balance among ethnic groups, rival tribal and regional groups, white settlers and indigenous population. The introduction into these societies of a potentially destabilizing element in the form of another ethnic group would be seen by the local governments as likely to upset the fragile balance.

The Deputy Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea (PNG) voiced the concerns of many of the Pacific nations when he discussed the refugee problem with Secretary Vance on September 25.<sup>3</sup> In explaining why PNG agreed to make a financial contribution but not to accept any refugees, he explained that the Government of Papua New Guinea did not want to create for itself a Fiji-like problem—that is, a situation in which people (in this case Indians) whose skills were greater than those of the local population were brought in from the outside by Fiji's then colonial rulers and took over the country's economy.

**Peter Tarnoff**

*Executive Secretary*

---

<sup>3</sup> A summary of the meeting between Vance and Foreign Minister Olewale in New York during the UN General Assembly session is in telegram Secto 8018 to Port Moresby, October 1. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790441–0448)

#### 144. Telegram From the Embassy in Malaysia to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Kuala Lumpur, December 15, 1979, 0450Z

16956. Subject: ASEAN Foreign Ministers Joint Statement.

1. Following is text of December 14 ASEAN Foreign Ministers joint statement as provided by MFA December 15. Comments follow in septel.<sup>2</sup>

2. Begin text:

##### ASEAN Joint Statement

1. The Foreign Ministers of ASEAN countries held an information meeting in Kuala Lumpur on 14th December, 1979. They exchanged views on developments in Kampuchea and along the Thai/Kampuchean border and discussed ASEAN's efforts to contribute towards the implementation of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution No. 34/22 on the "Situation in Kampuchea" of 14th November, 1979.<sup>3</sup> They also exchanged views on ASEAN cooperation and on other matters of common concern including the problem of Indochinese refugees/displaced persons.

2. The ASEAN Foreign Ministers expressed their grave concern over the growing seriousness of the conflict in Kampuchea particularly the situation along the Thai/Kampuchean border, which was marked by increasing armed incursions of foreign forces and cross-border shellings into Thai territory, thereby heightening tension with the possibility of escalation and widening of the area of conflict. The continued fighting along and near the Thai/Kampuchean border has caused a massive influx of over 120,000 Kampucheans into Thailand with another 600,000 poised along the border to enter Thai territory. It has also resulted in the uprooting of some 30,000 Thai villagers from their traditional places of domicile along the border. The Foreign Ministers agreed that the situation along the Thai/Kampuchean border constitutes a serious threat to the peace, security and stability of the Southeast Asian region as a whole.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Box 69, Foreign Countries—Thailand (1979). Unclassified; Immediate. Sent for information to Bangkok, Beijing, Canberra, Jakarta, London, Manila, Moscow, New Delhi, Rangoon, Singapore, Tokyo, Wellington, the Mission in Geneva, USNATO, USUN, Hong Kong, and CINCPAC also for POLAD.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> For the text of UN General Assembly Resolution 34/22, see *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1979, pp. 306–307.

3. The Foreign Ministers called for appropriate effective measures to reduce the tension and to prevent any future escalation and spill-over as well as the possible widening of the area of conflict. Increased international presence in the area would have a beneficial effect on the situation along the border. In that connection, the Foreign Ministers agreed to support Thailand's request to the United Nations Secretary-General to send a team of observers to Thailand and increase the number of United Nations relief personnel along the Thai side of the border with Kampuchea.

4. The Foreign Ministers further expressed their full support of the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General and of the international community to render urgent relief assistance to all the needy civilian population affected by the Kampuchean conflict. They expressed concern over numerous reports that relief supplies are not reaching the intended recipients. They requested the United Nations Secretary-General to further seek ways and means to effectively distribute such relief assistance to all needy Kampuchean civilians on an urgent and non-discriminatory basis. They appealed for the fullest cooperation of all parties concerned to achieve this end.

5. They reaffirmed their joint statement of 12th January, 1979 issued in Bangkok<sup>4</sup> and agreed to work actively with the United Nations Secretary-General in the search for a peaceful solution to the Kampuchean conflict. They reiterated their strong support for the United Nations resolution on Kampuchea which provides the framework for a comprehensive solution of the Kampuchean problem and which, in particular, called for the cessation of hostilities and for a political solution of the conflict on the basis of the withdrawal of foreign forces from Kampuchea, self-determination of the Kampuchean people, and non-interference in the internal affairs of states in Southeast Asia.

6. The Foreign Ministers also resolved to intensify their efforts towards a peaceful solution of the Kampuchean conflict which would ensure the restoration of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Kampuchea. To this end they called upon the Secretary-General to take concrete steps towards the early implementation of the United Nations General Assembly resolution including the convening of an international conference on Kampuchea.

7. The Foreign Ministers further agreed to continue consultations with concerned countries towards achieving a political solution of the Kampuchean conflict. In this connection, the Foreign Ministers

---

<sup>4</sup> The text of the communiqué on Cambodia was transmitted in telegram 1370 from Bangkok, January 13. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790017-0845)

requested the Foreign Minister of Malaysia to visit Hanoi in his capacity as Chairman of the ASEAN Standing Committee, and to indicate that ASEAN is prepared to have a dialogue with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

8. The Foreign Ministers emphasized that they have always had reservations about Pol Pot and have made this clear in their statements. The Foreign Ministers stated that they will continue to recognise the Government of Democratic Kampuchea whose credentials were accepted by the United Nations General Assembly at its recent thirty-fourth session. To do otherwise would only be to put the stamp of approval on the act of foreign military intervention and the imposition of a regime which is sustained by foreign military forces. It would also hamper efforts to seek a lasting political solution to the Kampuchean problem. In this context, the Foreign Ministers were encouraged by the recent forthright statements by the Governments of Australia and New Zealand to continue to recognize Democratic Kampuchea.

9. The Foreign Ministers emphasised that in calling for a political solution in Kampuchea, they were motivated solely by their desire to ensure that all countries in the region of Southeast [Asia] can enjoy peace and stability, based on the respect for the principles of peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in the internal affairs of other states and freedom from subversion or coercion by outside powers. They stressed that, far from taking sides with any party to, or major power involved in, the conflict, it is their desired goal to secure South-east Asia as a region free from interference by outside powers or from involvement in great power rivalry.

10. The Foreign Ministers agreed that the problem of refugees coming overland into Thailand has become more serious as a result of the continued fighting in Kampuchea. The four ASEAN Foreign Ministers welcomed the efforts being made by the Government of Thailand in coping with this problem in line with its "open-door" policy based on humanitarian grounds. They also expressed their conviction that the land cases be enabled to return to their homeland as soon as possible. They called on the international community including the United Nations and its agencies to continue to render every possible assistance to the Government of Thailand to alleviate the problem. They further urged the resettlement countries and other countries in a position to do so to increase the number and speed of their intake of the land cases.

11. On the problem of the Vietnamese boat people, the Foreign Ministers noted that Vietnam is cooperating in tackling the problem at source. They stressed the hope that Vietnam would continue to cooperate in the resolution of the problem. The Foreign Ministers also expressed their appreciation for the contributions made so far by



donor/resettlement countries and the efforts of the UNHCR in alleviating this problem. With a view to a speedy solution and in order that ASEAN countries will not be saddled with a residual problem, the Foreign Ministers further urged resettlement countries to step up their intake of Indochinese refugees/illegal immigrants from ASEAN countries.

12. The Foreign Ministers and the delegations of Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand expressed their sincere appreciation to the people and Government of Malaysia for the warm hospitality accorded them and for the excellent arrangements made for the meeting. The meeting was held in the traditional spirit of ASEAN cordiality and solidarity.

Wisma Putra  
Kuala Lumpur  
14th December, 1979  
End text.

Miller

---

#### 145. Paper Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>

GC M 80–10004

Washington, January 4, 1980

##### VIETNAM: Prospects for Renewed Refugee Outflow Through Mid-1980

1. Available evidence suggests Hanoi probably plans to continue its policy of pushing out people regarded as unwanted, but there is no evidence suggesting that small-boat emigration over the next three months will approach the mid-1979 record levels. Statistical analysis suggests the second quarter of 1980 may see a sharp rise in boat departures. *[portion marking not declassified]*

2. The primary target of Hanoi's policy of pushing out unwanted people is Vietnam's ethnic Chinese population; a lesser target is the country's dissenting ethnic Vietnamese population. Most of the Chinese

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Molander, Box 80, Refugees (Indochinese), 7–10/79. Confidential. Prepared in the Geography Division, Office of Geographic and Cartographic Research of the National Foreign Assessment Center.

still in the country—estimated to be 500,000 to 1,000,000—live in the Cho Lon section of Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon). Few remain elsewhere in southern Vietnam; northern Vietnam is believed to be essentially depopulated of its estimated 280,000 Chinese. Recent reporting indicates that Chinese in southern Vietnam continue to be targeted for expulsion: some were reported to have been excluded from the October 1979 national census, and many boats reported to be ready for refugee use are owned by ethnic Chinese. Since most Chinese have had their enterprises nationalized and their property confiscated, most live off savings. As these dwindle, the incentive grows to leave Vietnam. *[portion marking not declassified]*

3. Some disaffected Vietnamese—as well as some Chinese—have been permitted to leave Vietnam under an “orderly departure” program. This was started by Hanoi as a concession to international pressures in the wake of the Geneva Conference last July. The program is barely alive, however; over the past five months only about 1,800 people have used it to leave Vietnam. The number will rise only if the Vietnamese permit it, and so far they have shown little enthusiasm. *[portion marking not declassified]*

4. The sharp decline in boat case arrivals in Southeast Asian countries following the Geneva Conference clearly shows that Hanoi can control refugee departures. Hanoi stands to gain by permitting authorized departures: it rids itself of politically dissident Vietnamese and an unwanted ethnic Chinese minority. There is also an economic incentive in that each departing refugee leaves behind his personal assets. *[portion marking not declassified]*

5. Since the likelihood remains that Hanoi will continue to push out refugees by boat, an examination of past boat case arrival data may indicate possible future trends. The following table summarizes boat refugee arrivals in Southeast Asia over the past 3 years:

*Indochinese Boat Refugee Arrivals in Southeast Asian Countries, 1977–79*  
*[portion marking not declassified]*

	<i>First Quarter</i>	<i>Second Quarter</i>	<i>Third Quarter</i>	<i>Fourth Quarter</i>
1977:	1,400	4,500	5,100	6,200
1978:	5,200	15,300	18,200	49,200
1979:	30,300	130,000	38,700	7,900

For 1978 and 1979 first quarter arrivals were each less than the total for the preceding quarter. More significant is the fact that in each

year the second quarter arrivals have been consistently—and sharply—higher than first quarter arrivals. Part of the explanation is probably in the monsoon wind pattern. Most second quarter arrivals in Thailand and Malaysia come during April and May, before the southwest monsoon presents a headwind to boats heading southwestward from Vietnam toward Thailand and Malaysia. Political considerations may also have affected the data. Vietnam was actively at odds with Kampuchea in 1978 and with both Kampuchea and China in 1979; Hanoi could have chosen to rid itself of a nettlesome internal problem as it dealt with the two adversaries. [*portion marking not declassified*]

6. Although Vietnam seems to be going ahead with preparations to push out more refugees, we have no hard evidence that such preparations will result in a large outflow of refugees. If the statistical pattern of the past several years continues into 1980, then boat refugee arrivals in Southeast Asia over the next three months are likely to be less than 8,000. If the second quarter arrival trend continues, then refugee arrivals in Southeast Asia for April, May, and June 1980 could be about triple the first quarter arrival total. [*portion marking not declassified*]

---

**146. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassies in Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, and Indonesia<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, July 1, 1980, 2039Z

174009. Subject: Secretary's Meeting With ASEAN Foreign Ministers.

1. (S–Entire text).

2. Summary: Secretary's June 28 public remarks<sup>2</sup> during two hour session with ASEAN Foreign Ministers were well received and ASEAN praised U.S. for contributions to region as well as to individual ASEAN countries. All the Foreign Ministers stressed the importance with which their governments regard the issue of DK seating at the UN. Secretary said US had not made final decision on this issue. The high degree

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Sullivan Subject File, Box 69, ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, 6–7/80. Secret; Immediate; Exdis.

<sup>2</sup> Muskie was in Kuala Lumpur June 27–29. His public remarks and press briefing are printed in Department of State *Bulletin*, August 1980, pp. 43–45.

of attention to DK seating issue did not, however, affect the overall congeniality of the meeting. End Summary.

3. Opening of public portion of session by Philippines Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Tarentino focused largely on economic issues and desire of ASEAN to have greater support from U.S. in a wide variety of programs. While expressing gratitude for U.S. signing of agricultural planning center, Tarentino urged the U.S. to accelerate and expand the range of economic activities for development cooperation. Tarentino particularly called on U.S. to contribute to international dialogue on economic issues during upcoming UNGA.

4. On the political side, Tarentino urged the U.S. to continue focus on the problem of Vietnamese actions in Kampuchea, equating the situation in Afghanistan and Kampuchea<sup>3</sup> as both the product of foreign occupation. The Philippines' spokesman reiterated ASEAN's decision to support the DK, urging that the U.S. support principles of international law and the UN Charter rather than concern itself with individuals. He concluded with a statement that failure to support the DK in the UN would severely weaken regional security.

5. Following the Secretary's prepared statement (septel), Marshal Sitthi, on behalf of ASEAN, and the Secretary signed the agreement for the agricultural planning center. Sitthi afterwards commented that U.S. had established new principle of cooperation with ASEANs by not pushing its own ideas but rather listening to the interests of ASEAN.

6. With the closing of the public portion of the session, the ASEANs launched quickly and briskly into the question of DK seating at the UN. Malaysian Foreign Minister Rithauddeen stressed the importance of upholding principles in support of DK saying that we cannot stop recognizing DK rights in the UN without accepting the principles that superior powers can impose their will on inferior powers. He called on the U.S. to discuss the DK seating issue more openly with our non-Asian friends and allies, making the point that it was a world-wide problem of peace and stability and that it has the same import as the situation in Afghanistan. He argued it was clear that the policies of the Soviet Union were directly supportive of Vietnam and that Hanoi could not maintain its war without Soviet support.

7. In commenting briefly on other issues, Rithauddeen expressed appreciation for U.S. support for the movement of refugees from Malaysia and for the decision to support Kuala Lumpur as the site of the Rubber Council headquarters. He also urged that the U.S. assist in the

---

<sup>3</sup> The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan began on December 24, 1979. See *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Documents 244-246. Vietnamese incursions across the Cambodian border began on June 23. See Documents 90 and 91.

conclusion of a tin agreement which would protect producers' prices and consumers' source of supply.

8. Singapore Foreign Minister Dhanabalan re-emphasized the Soviet's role behind Hanoi's attack on and occupation of Kampuchea. He requested verbal U.S. support for the Thai policy of repatriation of Khmer "refugees," noting that this principle is as important as the principle of first asylum. He stated that additional support would give credibility to Thai efforts. Dhanabalan then requested U.S. support for ASEAN's two joint statements.<sup>4</sup> Indicating that he could understand that the U.S. was not able to openly pronounce its position on the DK seating issue, backing the ASEAN communiques would permit oblique support for the position. He also asked about the substance of U.S. demarches to the Soviets and the Vietnamese on the recent border incidents.

9. Secretary Muskie described the meeting with Ambassador Dobrynin Washington<sup>5</sup> and asked Ambassador Abramowitz to detail the substance of his meeting with Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach.<sup>6</sup> The Secretary indicated that there was perhaps not enough public attention to the principle of voluntary repatriation but stressed that the U.S. considered from the beginning that it was an important principle and certainly part of our entire refugee program. He noted that the U.S. has spent millions of dollars supporting all aspects of the refugee program, including voluntary repatriation.

10. Returning to the question of DK seating, the Secretary stressed the real dilemmas for the U.S. in the issue. While ASEANs had resolved their dilemma about whom to support, the U.S. had not. He described the proposition put forward by the ASEANs as a "lawyer's argument" which perhaps had merit with the courts but which did not prove very convincing with public opinion. He pointed out that last year the decision to support the DK seat was made two days before the vote and that public opinion had little time to react. The Secretary remarked that it would be premature to decide this issue without full consultations, and that consultations with ASEAN were an exceptionally important part of the dialogue. The Secretary emphasized he did not want to suggest this issue was an area of disagreement but that the U.S. needed more time to consider its position. He reiterated U.S. commitment to a free Kampuchea and one which did not have foreign forces

---

<sup>4</sup> Presumably the statements issued at the end of the June 28–30, 1979, ASEAN Ministerial meeting in Bali (telegram 16 from Bali, June 30; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790314–0350) and the December 14, ASEAN Foreign Ministers meeting (see Document 144).

<sup>5</sup> No memorandum of conversation of this meeting has been found.

<sup>6</sup> See Document 92.

present. Promising continued consultations before and at the UNGA in September, the Secretary concluded by stating he would reinforce ASEAN's call for action by the Secretary General during his meeting with the SYG next week.<sup>7</sup>

11. Returning to the DK issue, Foreign Minister Mochtar argued that the alternative to Pol Pot was perhaps even worse on human rights grounds since it was possible to substantiate the fact that Vietnamese were selectively distributing food and were allowing certain elements to starve to death. Mr. Mochtar expressed reservations about the relief program inside Cambodia. The Secretary rejected the suggestion that diversions were a justification for reducing assistance inside Cambodia since the alternative would be to allow people to starve and that would mean still more refugees fleeing to Thailand. Philippines Representative Tarentino argued that it was important to point out to the public that it was the Soviet Union which was behind the Vietnamese and opposing the DK. Deputy Prime Minister Rajaratnam argued that it was important to continue to recognize the DK since it was the only fighting force against Hanoi and the Soviet Union and because it was the legitimate regime in Phnom Penh when the invasion took place.

12. Secretary Muskie asked the ASEANs to carry the discussion beyond the DK seating question and explain their concept of a political solution and how it could be achieved. Marshal Sithi stated that while the ASEANs supported the DK that did not have to mean support for Pol Pot. He saw Pol Pot as a personality of the past, noting his replacement by Khieu Samphan and a recent letter from DK Foreign Minister Ieng Sary which asked for Thai support for the creation of a national patriotic front in Kampuchea. In the letter Ieng Sary purportedly promised to submit to internationally supervised elections to choose a new leader for Kampuchea. Sithi noted that Ieng Sary wanted to put Sihanouk up in front and others like Son Sann and perhaps even Heng Samrin supporters under him. All were acceptable so long as they opposed Vietnamese occupation. He noted that the Vietnamese and the Soviets did not like this united front. Sithi also referred to Thai and Singaporean intentions to invite Sihanouk to the region to help in playing a role with the refugees as part of their search for a political solution.

13. Foreign Minister Rithauddeen then stressed the legitimacy principle arguing that at the time of the invasion the DK was the legitimate ruler of Kampuchea and that as the "owner of the house" he should not be thrown out in favor of those who invaded the house forcibly. He stated that he had proposed to Nguyen Co Thach during his recent

---

<sup>7</sup> Not further identified.

visit to Kuala Lumpur that a political solution be achieved by combining all of the elements in Kampuchea—Sihanouk, the Khmer Rouge, and Heng Samrin—but Thach had not been responsive.

14. Mochtar stated he felt that many were falling into a Vietnamese trap by continually referring to Pol Pot when they really meant the DK. Pol Pot was an actor in the past and any continued reference to him brought out the images of genocide. He urged that we refer instead to the DK since that was the present and the future for Kampuchea. He stated that at the appropriate time Pol Pot would probably disappear from the picture but that working out a solution would take time.

15. Foreign Minister Rajaratnam supported this point arguing that ASEAN had a political solution and that was support of the DK. ASEAN hoped that the DK over time could be expanded into a representative government acceptable to the Khmer people. He specifically called on the Secretary to acknowledge ASEAN's primary interest in the stability of its region and acceptance of the solution that ASEAN thought best fit its needs. He stressed that the decision to support the DK was not taken lightly and that if ASEAN made a mistake it would have to live with it. ASEAN's vital interests are at stake. He asked Secretary to convey the strength of ASEAN's feelings to those who would be involved in making the U.S. decision. Again looking beyond the present, he referred to a meeting in Geneva with the Secretary General of Son Sann's Khmer movement and their discussion of a united front. Rajaratnam argued that as the situation developed, new leaders would emerge. He mentioned an earlier proposal on creating "safe-havens" for the Khmer refugees where people to lead Kampuchea could be trained since the DK and the military forces were incapable of running a nation.

16. As the session concluded, Assistant Secretary Holbrooke noted that ASEAN's references to a long-term solution, perhaps taking 10 to 15 years, posed additional problems. The U.S. has been paying the preponderance of the bills for refugees/relief and for military security assistance to the ASEAN nations. He stressed there are limits to the U.S. budget and the willingness of the American people to continue to tolerate these costs. Secretary Muskie noted that we agree with the ASEANs in values and principles, and that we needed to share differing views and exchange ideas in order to reach consensus and agreement. He stated that we would approach the issue on DK seating with the desire to be as helpful as we can and with a better appreciation of the issue after the opportunities to review the issue with the ASEANs both collectively and in bilateral sessions.

**Muskie**

# 147. Telegram From the Embassy in Singapore to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Singapore, August 5, 1980, 0842Z

8182. RP/OAR for Cushing and Schill. From Office for Refugees in Indonesia and Singapore. Subject: Mercy Ship Cap Anamur: GOS Policy. Ref: State 20209.<sup>2</sup>

1. Mercy ship Cap Anamur arrived at Singapore August 4 with 294 refugees picked up at sea during the ship's ninth rescue voyage.

2. GOS has informed UNHCR that no German-guaranteed cases will be permitted ashore at the present time, but any cases the U.S., Canada and Australia should choose to guarantee may disembark and be taken to the Hawkins Road camp. When and if the Hawkins Road camp population declines to below 2,000 (it is currently about 2,500), GOS will resume acceptance of FRG guarantees for Cap Anamur refugees.

3. The West German Embassy in Singapore has informed us that the Philippine Government has agreed to accept refugees from the Cap Anamur,<sup>3</sup> but that the ship refuses to go to Manila because of poor bunkering and supply facilities. GOS has agreed to permit the refugees currently aboard the Cap Anamur to be transferred directly from the ship to the airport, thereby allowing the FRG the option to fly them directly from Singapore to either West Germany or the Philippines. The Germans have chosen the latter.

4. GOS policy has been consistent throughout period of refugee arrivals, and we see no change in policy as indicated reftel.

Smith

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Molander, Box 80, Refugees (Indochinese), 8-10/80. Confidential. Sent for information to the Mission in Geneva, Bangkok for Songkhla, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta, Manila, Hong Kong, London, Oslo, Bonn, Copenhagen, USUN, CINCPAC, and SECDEF.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram 200869 to London, July 29, the Department repeated the text of telegram 3994 from Singapore, July 24, which noted that while the West German Indochinese resettlement quota had been raised, the *Cap Anamur* refugees would fill the remaining slots. Reunifications would be restricted to family members already in the Federal Republic of Germany. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800363-1128)



**148. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, December 30, 1980, 0924Z

61499. Subj: Motivations of Vietnamese Boat Refugees. Ref: Bangkok 60186.<sup>2</sup>

The following message on Vietnamese refugees is from AmConsul Songkhla. Also transmitted is a comment and different perspective on the problem from the Embassy's refugee section. Both are introduced by an Embassy comment.

**A. Embassy Introduction**

There are no sure answers to the question of what motivates the Vietnamese to flee their homeland for resettlement abroad. In most cases a complex set of factors are involved—some on the “push” side and others on the “pull” side. Views differ on the relative weight that should be attached to these two sides of the refugee equation. The Songkhla analysis presented below gives greater weight to the “pull” side. Though some will disagree with this finding, the report represents an effort to analyze the present refugee flow based on interviews at the Songkhla camp. In recounting the dreadful risks associated with the flight by boat, the report hints at the root cause of the problem—conditions and policies within Vietnam which produce sufficient unhappiness and desperation to lead large numbers of people to risk robbery, rape and death in a search for a new beginning. Also attached is a comment on the whole problem as the refugee section sees it over time. Whatever the various motivations of the boat refugees and our analysis of the composition of the flow, the central issue is that U.S. and third country resettlement programs remain the only way of preserving temporary asylum.

**B. Text of Songkhla Message**

1. Vietnamese refugee arrivals in southern Thailand over the past three months have been at approximately the same levels as a year ago with no indication of a slackening. Conversations with recently arrived refugees at the Songkhla camp confirm that many more Vietnamese are preparing to leave by boat for a new life in the West at their first opportunity. To make that journey, Vietnamese must undergo

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800614–0612. Limited Official Use. Sent for information to Hong Kong, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Singapore, Chiang Mai, Songkhla, and Udorn.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 60186 from Bangkok, December 18, reported on the encounter of the USS *Robison* with Vietnamese boat refugees. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800602–0657)

the hazardous boat crossing via the Gulf of Thailand to Songkhla or any other destination. Such a voyage means almost certain robbery, rape or worse at the hands of the hundreds of fishermen-pirates who prey upon Vietnamese refugees. Nature's own risks compound the danger, as many boats and lives are lost to the sea itself. Despite these known risks, the flow of refugees seems destined to continue at its current level. Indeed, those closely associated with the refugee problem have told me they anticipate the refugee flow continuing at high levels for several years into the future. Given the importance of the Indo-chinese refugee program to U.S. foreign policy, it is essential to understand why this outpouring of Vietnamese boat refugees continues. To probe refugee motivation, I have spoken extensively with Vietnamese boat refugees, American and foreign government officials working with the refugees, members of private voluntary agencies closely associated with refugee assistance and resettlement, and with representatives of international organizations. The result of this examination is a snapshot view of the current Vietnamese boat arrivals in southern Thailand. As such it should not be used as a basis for extrapolation to other groups and/or time periods.

2. The motivations of those leaving Vietnam and coming to southern Thailand can be as varied and complex as the individuals themselves, making categorizations difficult. Perhaps this was not so in the immediate aftermath of the Vietnam war, when fears of the new rulers of the south provided a clear impetus to the mass exodus of those associated with the old regime or its American allies. While the chaos in South Vietnam has not subsided entirely, it does seem to have reached a level where we can now look somewhat more discerningly at the question of motivation. In so doing, one finds the spectrum of motivation ranges from those who are truly fleeing from obvious and intense political persecution at the hands of the new Vietnamese Government to those who simply want to leave for what they perceive as a more prosperous life in the United States. Between these two extremes there remain many refugees whose motives are mixed and less readily identifiable. With the above caveats in mind, certain general conclusions can be drawn about the relative strengths of specific considerations which lead Vietnamese to become boat refugees.

3. At one end of the spectrum, there are what can only be described as political refugees. Those among recent arrivals affiliated with the former government's now discredited civil or military bureaucracy indeed have no future in their native country. They have been systematically deprived of their political, economic and social rights with little chance that these lost human rights can be recouped. Many of those in this category who reach Songkhla have only recently been released

from “reeducation camps” or escaped from “new economic zones”.<sup>3</sup> Others are family members of those who cannot leave such places or have died in them, and who have been so tarred by that family association that they have no future in their own homeland. For these people there is little alternative but to escape Vietnam and seek a new life. In years past, these people may well have represented a majority of those coming out. Today, however, they are a definite minority of those arriving in Songkhla camp—at most twenty percent.

4. At another end of the spectrum are those refugees who are most accurately described as economic emigrants, leaving Vietnam for the same reasons that have impelled immigrants towards America for generations. Economic conditions in Vietnam are, by all accounts from refugees, harsh and deteriorating rather than stabilizing. Under such circumstances it should not be surprising that at least one-half of all newly arrived refugees in Songkhla give as their primary motive for leaving Vietnam the desire to seek a better economic life for themselves and their children in the United States. When initially questioned, most of these refugees state that they left Vietnam because they hate “Communism” and want to live in “freedom”. Closer questioning, however, as to what anti-Communism and freedom mean for these refugees reveals that they are actually talking about economic betterment. They reveal no indication of having been singled out for discriminatory treatment in any manner. People in this category were invariably employed in Vietnam, usually as unskilled or semi-skilled labor, and were making a living with adequate food and consumer goods available. They complain, however, about high prices and the need to deal frequently on the black market where such goods are expensive. Their clear motivation is to reach the United States, have better jobs, make more money, buy more consumer goods, and live better than in Vietnam. Were these people less certain of resettlement in the U.S., or if their economic prospects in Vietnam were significantly better, they would have remained at home rather than risk the crossing to Songkhla.

5. For those remaining thirty percent or so refugees, motivations are somewhat more complex and difficult to sort out exactly. For example, ethnic background complicates the question. For the ethnic Chinese who make up about ten percent of current Songkhla arrivals, one might plausibly argue that they are victims of officially sanctioned economic discrimination, and that by expressing a desire for economic betterment they are in fact fleeing an associated political injustice. Tempering this view, however, is the fact that the Chinese themselves, invariably express their own motives in economic terms unless they were part of

---

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 3, Document 46.

the very few Chinese associated with the old regime. Another complicating factor in determining motivation is age. At least half of all draft age young men fleeing Vietnam appear to be doing so, at least in large part, to avoid military conscription and an unpopular war in Cambodia. Another motivation is certainly family reunification. Nearly all of the refugees claim to have relatives of varying degrees of closeness in the United States. In many cases fleeing Vietnam is a matter of spouses or children seeking to reunite with those who have gone before to the United States. Certainly the family motivation is strong in such cases, tempering the underlying economic motivation which these refugees also express. Obviously there are numerous other factors which dilute or modify what might otherwise be classified solely as economic motivation.

6. For those fleeing clear political persecution, that which they flee is in itself probably sufficient cause to take nearly any risk to escape. But what about the others? Can economic motivation in itself provide a strong enough impetus to risk apprehension by Vietnamese security forces, piracy, rape and drowning at sea to seek a better life in the West? Perhaps by itself, such an economic motivation does not. To the economic impetus, however, one must add certain factors and perceptions of the would-be refugees. The most important of these is the almost certain knowledge that they will be resettled in the United States. They know the size of our yearly refugee admissions quota as well as details of the category system to determine eligibility. Moreover, they know how to work the system to their best advantage. If by some stroke of bad fortune they are unable to get to the U.S., they know that some other Western country will take them instead. Closely related to this first perception is confidence that they will make it safely to Thailand as their first stop. They recognize that they will probably be robbed or raped, but such misfortune is simply calculated—as is the boat passage fee—as part of the costs of getting to the United States. And, once in Thailand, their stay in Songkhla will be brief due to rapid and efficient processing by U.S. agencies. The normal stay in Songkhla camp is now approximately two months, a fact well-known to would-be refugees.

7. Nearly every refugee reaching Songkhla at this time has a relative already in the United States. Approximately half of those relatives are newly arrived refugees themselves, having arrived in the U.S. within the past three months to one year. Clearly what is happening is a phenomenon whereby one family member will escape from Vietnam and seek admission to the United States, not even asking for resettlement elsewhere for fear of being accepted. Once resettled in the U.S., the first member notifies his relatives still in Vietnam that they can then make their escape. Following family members can then leave

confident that they will fall into a high enough category to be eligible for quick resettlement in the United States. In short, when the potential refugee is contemplating leaving Vietnam, he knows that he will be pirated, that his women will be raped, and that there is some chance he will lose his life at sea. Yet balancing this knowledge is the belief that at the end of his voyage there is almost guaranteed resettlement in the United States. These perceptions provide a powerful impetus for any dissatisfied Vietnamese to leave their native country, whatever their other motives. The vortex effect is obvious. Family members leave Vietnam, reach the U.S., send money and good news, thereby encouraging more family members to leave. They, in turn, are related to still other potential immigrants, their numbers increasing geometrically much like recipients of a chain letter. Gibson.<sup>4</sup>

C. Refugee Section Comment:

1. Boat refugees are leaving Vietnam for a variety of reasons. We continue to see a significant proportion of political refugees, some fresh out of prison or re-education. Others, including members of the middle-class, former civil and military personnel, students and the Chinese flee because they see an utterly hopeless future. Such individuals constitute 3/4 of the U.S./boat refugee caseload in Thailand. Some might term such refugees “economic” but to the extent that they are from segments of society being systematically and intentionally defined out of the new Communist system, they are victims of the political policies of the SRV.

—There is a smaller proportion of people of more ordinary background who may have had the opportunity for some marginal niche in the Communist economic system, and who may more closely fit the “economic” label, but even these people are desperate enough to risk the boat trip.

2. Enough is generally known about the extraordinary dangers and terrors of being a boat refugee so that we will not dwell on it. The prospect of rape for women refugees is omnipresent and the sailing conditions of some boats are simply incredible.

3. The statistics cited in AmConsul Songkhla message apparently relate to observations about the overall boat refugee population. More precise statistics are available for that portion of refugees accepted by the U.S. program and shed a bit more light on the flow which is not predominantly lower class, and includes a large percentage who do not have U.S. relatives:

—Former professionals, middle class, students and government officials—75 percent (about a third of whom are Chinese)

---

<sup>4</sup> Richard M. Gibson, Consul at Songkhla.

—Those with close relatives in U.S. (through siblings)—about 20 percent

—Those with distant relatives in U.S.—about 40 percent

—Former farmers, fishermen, laborers—about 20 percent.

4. Without doubt the U.S. and third country resettlement programs do have a magnetic effect. Yet dissatisfaction and hopelessness are so pervasive in Vietnam that many refugees would continue to flee even if it meant an indefinite stay in refugee camps. This would not be a totally unacceptable outcome, but the problem is that without resettlement offtake the temporary asylum countries would soon close their doors.

Our belief (shared by most of those who screen and interview the refugees) that many refugees would opt to leave Vietnam even for an indefinite stay in the refugee camps, sharply distinguishes the boat refugee flow from a migrant stream. In other words, even in the absence of “pull factors,” “push factors” would continue to drive many Vietnamese on to refugee boats.

**Abramowitz**

---

#### 149. Paper Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>

PA 81-10002

Washington, January 1, 1981

##### Regionalism in Southeast Asia: The Growth of ASEAN

*[portion marking not declassified]*

##### *Overview*

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)—consisting of Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, and Thailand—was founded in 1967 as an economic, social, and cultural organization, but its main achievements have been political and diplomatic. Initially, it devoted its energies to preventing bilateral squabbles from escalating into serious conflict; in the process member states developed the common objective of preserving ASEAN even at the cost of leaving some

---

<sup>1</sup>Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 82T00150R: Production Case Files, Box 3, Folder: Regionalism in Southeast Asia: The Growth of ASEAN. Secret; *[handling restriction not declassified]*. Prepared in the National Foreign Assessment Center. A map of the ASEAN states is not printed.

problems unresolved. In 1975 the emergence of Vietnam as a potential threat to regional stability, combined with ASEAN's perception of declining US interest in the area, gave the association the momentum and cohesion it previously lacked. As a result, its leaders began to try to exert direct influence on policy and events affecting the region. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The association's political successes, however, rest on a weak foundation. The ASEAN method of decisionmaking through gradual consensus has enhanced unity but resulted in inaction in some areas. The difficulties in translating policies established at summit meetings into coordinated and effective joint efforts are most obvious in the economic arena. *[portion marking not declassified]*

ASEAN's common philosophy of economic development has enhanced close economic cooperation, but—except for Singapore—the dependency of its member states on commodity and labor-intensive industry exports makes for competition. Efforts to develop joint economic projects founder because short-term national benefits still take precedence over potential long-term regional gains. Elaborate structures for economic interaction thus produce no substantive cooperation. In part, the economic successes of the individual member states during the 1970s work against cooperation by making it less crucial to short-term development. Growing cooperation in the private sector in recent years, however, could hold the key to greater regional economic integration. *[portion marking not declassified]*

ASEAN's image as an influential grouping has been enhanced since the mid-1970s by the series of dialogues established with major trading partners. These began in 1972 with the ASEAN-EC dialogue and now include most states with important economic interests in the region. Through these discussions, ASEAN seeks to end tariff restrictions against its manufactured goods, promote greater trade, and encourage foreign private investment. Although efforts to obtain liberal tariff concessions have been disappointing, the dialogues have promoted investment and trade generally and have made ASEAN's trading partners much more sensitive to regional economic concerns and often to political ones as well. *[portion marking not declassified]*

In recent years, growing foreign policy cooperation among the ASEAN states has made the organization an effective interest bloc in international political forums. This was recently demonstrated by its response to the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea in late 1978.<sup>2</sup> The invasion has also heightened security concerns among the ASEAN states and encouraged greater cooperation among them. Although

---

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 2, Document 40.



ASEAN leaders continue to reject a formal multilateral defense grouping, bilateral and occasionally trilateral cooperation in military training and intelligence has intensified and led to discussions of standardization and joint production arrangements for military equipment. ASEAN states, however, continue relying on the West, particularly the United States, for defense against potential external threats. *[portion marking not declassified]*

ASEAN states are ambivalent toward the United States. On the one hand they wish to avoid too close identification with one of the superpowers; on the other, they believe US economic and security cooperation is crucial to regional development and stability. Some of them believe the United States is not doing as much as it should or could to meet regional economic and political wishes. The ASEAN states want Washington to consult with them before making key foreign policy decisions that will affect the region. *[portion marking not declassified]*

ASEAN's continued success will depend on many factors, some of which are beyond the control of member states. During the 1980s the leadership in many member states will pass to a new generation. It is not certain that these leaders will be as committed to the regional concept as are the present ones who helped create ASEAN. The association needs to intensify the sense of regional identity among its peoples. Increasing contacts among the political, economic, and military elites of the five states create a sense of common interests at the leadership level, but this has not spread to the public at large, which in many cases does not yet have a firm national, much less a supranational, sense of identity. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Continued domestic stability of the member states is also crucial to regionalism; the appearance in any of them of serious opposition groups based on an inward-looking nationalism or radical economic philosophies could destroy the basis for cooperation in a regional framework. Outside events and threats could also play their part. Serious differences among member states over the role of China in the region, increased activism of local Muslim groups in response to currents from the Middle East, or efforts by Vietnam to drive a wedge between members will continue to test the commitment of member states to the privacy of regional unity over national fears. *[portion marking not declassified]*

But unity and regional stability can only be assured by expanding the commonality of political interests to encompass economic, social, and cultural bonds. An act of political will is required to overcome the inherent conflict between national and regional interests. *[portion marking not declassified]*

[Omitted here is the table of contents.]



*The Context of Regionalism*

*A Slow Beginning.* Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, and Thailand founded the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1967 to promote regional economic, social, cultural, and technical cooperation. The driving force behind its formation, however, was political—the need to cope with the problems and conflicts that emerged in the 1960s between non-Communist Southeast Asian countries. The founders believed ASEAN could unite the region through negotiation and compromise, thus enhancing peace and stability. Except for Thailand, member states had achieved independence from colonial rule since the end of World War II and, unsure about how to deal with external uncertainties, hoped that a regional grouping would give them collective strength. [*portion marking not declassified*]

ASEAN achieved little measurable success in its first eight years, largely because of bilateral disputes between members, and was dubbed “The Foreign Ministers’ Club.” ASEAN’s most significant achievements in these early years were preventive. The mediating structure that ASEAN provided prevented serious bilateral problems—many inherited from earlier years—from erupting into open conflict. The animosity between Singapore and Malaysia (following Singapore’s ouster from the Federation of Malaysia in 1965) and that between Malaysia and Indonesia (caused by former President Sukarno’s bellicosity in response to Malaysia’s formation in 1963) were largely dissipated. Although other bilateral territorial and ethnic problems still plague ASEAN, the existence of the organization has kept them from becoming serious challenges to regional cooperation. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Two interrelated problems continue to impair relations between Malaysia and the Philippines. The Philippine Government, using historical and tenuous linkages based on alleged overlordship by the now-defunct Sultanate of Sulu, claims territory in the Malaysian state of Sabah, formerly the British colony of North Borneo. Although Philippine President Marcos assured Malaysian leaders in 1977 that he was willing to settle the issue, he has done nothing, and the 1973 Philippine Constitution still claims Sabah as national territory. In the 1960s the Malaysian Government, in retaliation for Manila’s revival of the claim, began actively aiding Muslim insurgents in the southern Philippines, acting as a conduit for assistance and providing training facilities and safehaven for the rebels. Although this official support has ended, Kuala Lumpur maintains links with the insurgents, who apparently have bases and supply points in Sabah. Indonesia has tried to mediate the problem in the interests of ASEAN unity and, although unable to solve the dispute, has prevented it from becoming more serious. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Similar ethnic and religious strains exist between Malaysia and Thailand. Several hundred thousand ethnic Malay Muslims live in southern Thailand and have strong bonds to the Malays of northern Malaysia. They have a long history of opposition to Bangkok, and small Muslim secessionist groups are using sporadic violence to contest Thai rule. The Malaysian Government so far has carefully refrained from overt involvement, but Thailand rightly suspects that some Malay Muslim groups in Malaysia support and protect the secessionists. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Friction also arises between Thailand and Malaysia because 2,000 to 3,000 guerrillas of the Communist Party of Malaya have sanctuaries in southern Thailand. Malaysia complains that Thailand does not try hard enough to oust these guerrillas and yet constrains Malaysian forces from doing the job. Thai military leaders, who consider the Communists in the south a low security priority, are reluctant to allow Malaysian forces to operate there regularly because their presence might encourage Thai Muslim separatists. [*portion marking not declassified*]

*The Impetus of Indochina.* Although founded as an economic and social organization, ASEAN has achieved prominence through political and diplomatic cooperation. ASEAN's unity has derived largely from its shared political goals and fears, within a basic framework of anti-Communism, and in reaction to the growing Communist influence in Indochina. The course of the war in Indochina and the desire to insulate the region from superpower rivalries provided the stimulus for greater political consultation and adoption of a common front in international forums. In November 1971, the ASEAN states issued their first joint political statement—a call for creation of a Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality in Southeast Asia to be guaranteed by the great powers. The statement called for the ultimate removal of all foreign military bases from the region, and for local states to preserve their independence through economic development and improved political institutions. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The emergence in 1975 of Vietnam as a regional power and a potential security threat, concern about US withdrawal from the region, and, most recently, the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea and the resulting threat to Thailand have given ASEAN the momentum and cohesion it previously lacked. The first ASEAN heads-of-state meeting occurred in 1976,<sup>3</sup> almost a decade after the association's founding, and a second was held the following year.<sup>4</sup> At the first summit, the

<sup>3</sup> February 23–24, 1976, in Bali.

<sup>4</sup> August 4–5, 1977, in Kuala Lumpur.

members agreed to a Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia and issued a Declaration of ASEAN Concord that explicitly recognized the paramountcy of political cooperation. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The new political unity enabled ASEAN to present a united and consistent stand during visits to the area in 1978 of leaders from China, the USSR, Vietnam, and Kampuchea—all of whom pressed their cases in the growing rivalry among the Communist states over Indochina. The Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea in December 1978, followed by the Chinese invasion of Vietnam in February 1979, again impelled ASEAN to seek a firm unified position in the face of new threats to regional security. ASEAN has been able to convince most other Third World states to respect its position in opposition to Vietnam's actions in Indochina, and ASEAN members have lobbied effectively in the UN General Assembly for ASEAN resolutions on the region, despite opposition from the Soviets and Vietnamese. Thus far, ASEAN has maintained this effective and unified pressure despite differences of opinion among its member states about the nature of the long-term threat to the region and how to meet it. [*portion marking not declassified*]

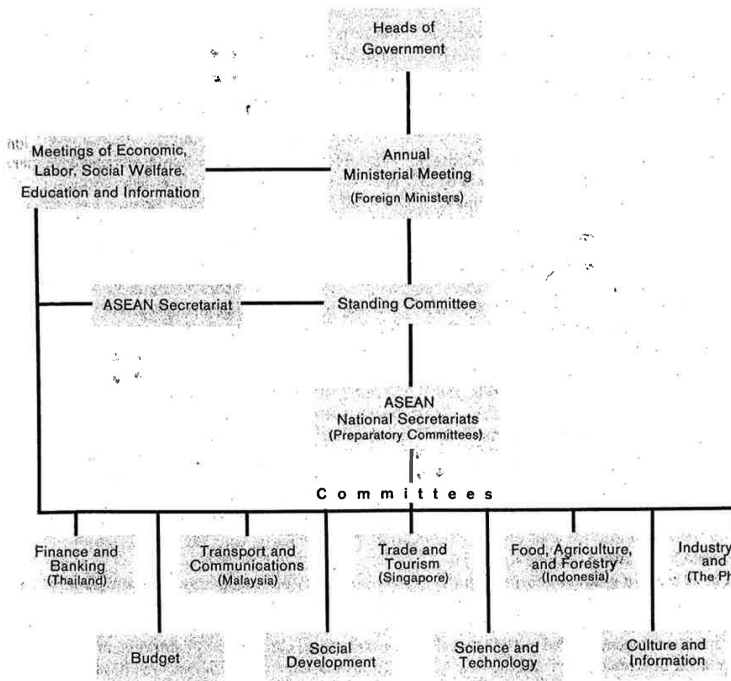
*Structural Shortcomings.* Despite the multiplicity of contacts both between members and with nonmember states, ASEAN has yet to create a coherent supranational bureaucracy capable of reacting to the increasingly wide range of demands. The method of arriving at decisions through gradual consensus has enhanced unity, but the diffusion of power that results has led to a lack of recognizable decisionmaking authority for ASEAN-wide bureaucratic structures. Committees and other units set up to tackle problems sometimes exist only on paper or are unable to function. Hierarchical interrelationships between the various meetings, committees, and secretariats remain undefined and, in many cases, the subject of conflict. The great degree of overlap and lack of coordination between all of these levels leads to inertia and procrastination. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Structurally, ASEAN is officially divided into decisionmaking and implementing bodies (figure 1). The heads-of-state meeting, although formally the highest authority, rarely makes policy but rather provides leadership and sets the tone for unity. The annual ministerial meeting of foreign ministers is responsible, on paper, for "the formulation of policy guidelines and coordination of activities," but, in fact, ASEAN has yet to reconcile this seemingly sweeping charter with the authority of the other ministerial meetings—economic, labor, social welfare, education, and information. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The Standing Committee, which is responsible to the foreign ministers meeting, is the final stage of the ASEAN decisionmaking process. It is a floating group chaired by the foreign minister of the country

Figure 1

## Organizational Structure of ASEAN



[portion marking not declassified]

that hosts the next foreign ministers meeting and includes the resident ambassadors of the other four member countries as members. It ostensibly is responsible for the conduct of ASEAN affairs until the next foreign ministers meeting, for budgetary allocation, and for economic cooperation with nonmembers. It also acts as the communication channel between member countries. [portion marking not declassified]

The major shortcoming of this system is that in practice the work of the Standing Committee overlaps and often conflicts with that of ASEAN's central Secretariat. The ASEAN Secretariat—based in Jakarta and chaired by a rotational secretary general—theoretically has the mandate for coordinating and implementing joint ASEAN activities, but in practice has insufficient authority to do its job. [portion marking not declassified]

Each member state also has its own national secretariat, headed by a director general, to handle ASEAN-related affairs. The secretariat

is supposed to coordinate ASEAN decisions at the national level, but the director general has veto power over any joint project proposed in ASEAN forums. The national secretariats apparently will soon be transformed into so-called preparatory committees whose task will be to prepare the way for Standing Committee meetings. [*portion marking not declassified*]

ASEAN also has nine permanent committees operating under the auspices of the Economic Ministerial Meeting. Five are divided among the members—Thailand is responsible for finance and banking; Malaysia for transport and communications; Singapore for trade and tourism; Indonesia for food, agriculture, and forestry; and the Philippines for industry, minerals, and energy. The remaining four are not linked to any specific ASEAN member. The economic committees have spawned a number of subcommittees, which meet several times a year. Their chains of command frequently are crossed because of conflicting responsibilities. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Members of ASEAN are aware of these structural problems and have begun a gradual reform program, spearheaded by pressure from the economic ministers and with agreement from the heads-of-state meeting. The economic ministers recommended in 1977 that the ASEAN Secretariat be strengthened and the ASEAN machinery be revised so that they—and presumably other ministerial meetings—report directly to the heads-of-state summits. This would end the present system by which the annual foreign ministers meeting reviews the decisions of the other ministerial meetings. The proposed reorganization would entail abolition of the Standing Committee and strengthening of the ASEAN Secretariat. So far no decision has been made because the foreign ministers oppose this curtailment of their authority. [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *Economic and Social Cooperation*

However significant its political accomplishments, ASEAN needs greater economic cohesion and its people must develop a broadly shared sense of common interests if the organization is to endure over the long haul. Structures and formats have been established to help forge greater economic and social unity, but ASEAN is still a long way from achieving significant progress in either field. [*portion marking not declassified*]

*Joint Economic Programs.* Joint economic development is crucial to ASEAN's long-term success. During the past decade, however, each member has achieved impressive individual economic progress in comparison with many other developing countries, and this has become a disincentive to intra-ASEAN economic cooperation. The members have made some progress recently toward creating an appropriate structural

framework for economic integration, but formidable obstacles remain. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Member states are increasingly aware of the economic benefits to be gained from speaking with one voice and of the enormous economic potential represented by a regional market of 236 million people. They also believe that intra-ASEAN economic cooperation would make them less vulnerable to the increasing protectionism of developed countries because it would reduce their dependence on external markets. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The similarity of economic systems and development philosophies helps provide a foundation on which to build economic cooperation. Each member uses a free market model controlled by central planning that ideally ensures economic efficiency in allocating resources. The leaders of all ASEAN countries believe firmly that public order and stability are prerequisites for economic development, and they emphasize the interrelationship between socioeconomic progress and political stability. *[portion marking not declassified]*

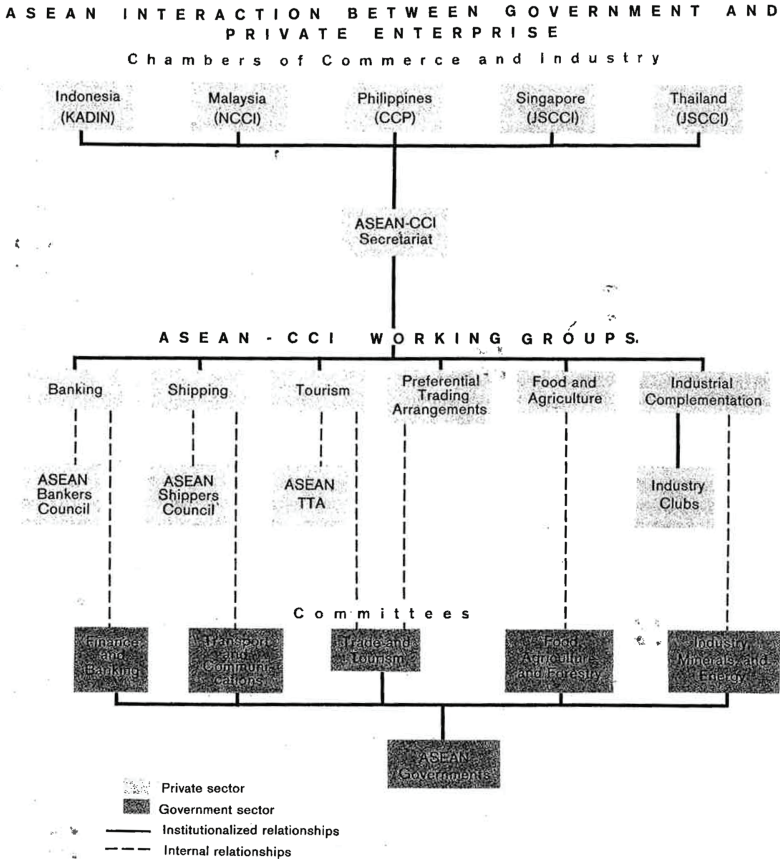
National interests, however, often work against the impetus for regional cooperation. Pressure from domestic sectional interests for protective and preferential treatment causes most ASEAN states to assign greater priority to achieving short-term benefits for their own economies than to the potential long-range gain from regional economic integration. As the Malaysian Finance Minister has pointed out, ASEAN will need "economic statesmanship, purposeful long-term planning, and greater political will" to overcome this obstacle. Some leaders suggest signing a formal economic treaty to provide a legal framework that would link together—and simultaneously resolve conflicts between—national and regional development. Any attempt to force compliance with economic directives, however, would run counter to the ASEAN concept of consensus and thus might cause new strains. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Similarity in the economic bases of member states, which with the exception of Singapore depend on the export of a few primary commodities, often leads to competition rather than complementarity. In at least one area, however, the long-established emphasis—again with the exception of Singapore—each country places on developing agriculture could provide a basis for intraregional trade. Cooperation could lead to more efficient production methods, enhance regional specialization and complementarity, reduce competition and repetition, reduce unplanned migration to urban areas by providing work in rural areas, increase productivity through better nutrition, and diminish the need for food imports from outside ASEAN paid for with scarce foreign currency reserves. The ASEAN agricultural ministers agreed at their February 1980 meeting to create an Agricultural Devel-



Figure 2

Government and Private Enterprise in ASEAN



[portion marking not declassified]

opment Planning Center to exchange knowledge and experience, harmonize planning, and act as a regional data bank. They also have established a soil and land resources utilization program through a Food, Agriculture, and Forestry Committee. Greater involvement of multinational agrobusiness firms, if properly monitored, could stimulate agricultural cooperation; such multinational investment is already important to developing the export of pineapples, bananas, seafood, and poultry. [portion marking not declassified]

The private sector may play a major role in stimulating economic integration in those areas in which ASEAN has a genuine potential for developing efficient production (figure 2). Numerous private sector committees and industry clubs have made promising progress. The

ASEAN Banking Council, for example, wants to establish both an ASEAN Financial Corporation and a Bankers Acceptance Market to provide cheaper financing for intraregional trade and to act as a conduit for overseas investment funds. The ASEAN Chamber of Commerce and Industry persistently lobbies for an ASEAN-wide tariff classification and for tariff cuts; the Federation of ASEAN Shipowners Association is trying to develop intra-ASEAN shipping; and the ASEAN Automotive Industry Club has started to implement an officially approved exchange of locally produced complementary automotive components. After much deliberation and criticism, ASEAN has finally moved to coordinate its official activities with the private sector, especially with the ASEAN Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which is now permitted to attend certain ASEAN deliberative meetings. *[portion marking not declassified]*

ASEAN has taken the first cautious steps toward joint economic ventures, although the political and economic obstacles are sizable. Such cooperation necessarily entails some loss of sovereignty, and constraints on domestic production. Moreover, the various economic infrastructures differ greatly in efficiency and technological level—with Singapore the most advanced by far. The individual economies also are geared bilaterally to industrialized countries such as the EC, Japan, and the United States. Intra-ASEAN trade in 1977 was only some 16 percent of the total trade of all five countries. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The 1976 Bali summit set up committees to promote cooperation in trade, industry, agriculture, and energy. In 1977, ASEAN instituted a system of common tariffs called the Preferential Trading Arrangements, but so far the long list of items has been inconsequential relative to overall trade. The preferential arrangements have not succeeded in promoting ASEAN economic cooperation. Indeed, the attempts at cooperation illustrate a basic failing of ASEAN: its leaders accept broad concepts at their various summit meetings, but efforts to implement them soon lead to disagreements on details because of nationalist pressures, bureaucratic rigidity, and the frequently limited economic gains to be derived from such schemes. *[portion marking not declassified]*

*[portion marking not declassified]*

ASEAN industrial cooperation is a case study of the problems involved. Individually, all ASEAN countries are trying to industrialize, and most have advanced beyond import substitution toward export production. All find it difficult to obtain external markets, but they have not yet fully developed a regional market. The Committee on Industry, Minerals, and Energy, one of the many committees spawned by the Bali summit, has tried to promote an ASEAN industrial complementation scheme but with little success. Individual countries have



been unwilling to commit resources to the scheme because they fear a possible loss of efficiency and restrictions on productivity. Furthermore, domestic pressures require protection for key manufacturing industries, because of persisting uncertainty over the viability of these enterprises. Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines, for example, are all constructing their own aluminum smelters, thus setting the stage for future competition. These simultaneous undertakings are an even more conspicuous failure to cooperate or coordinate because they are public sector ventures. The bureaucracy of the Committee itself retards progress because it regulates and controls rather than promotes and encourages industrial complementarity. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Singapore, which alone of the five countries has reached a capital-intensive, middle-technology stage of industrialization, is particularly unhappy at the slow rate of progress. Singapore's superior efficiency gives it an obvious edge over the others (which inhibits cooperation), but Singapore is willing to reduce its role to allow the rest to develop their labor intensive program. At the ASEAN economic ministers meeting in April 1980, Singapore proposed a "five minus one formula" to accelerate industrial cooperation; it would permit agreement even if one ASEAN country did not wish to participate in a particular proposal. This was politely disregarded by the others, who believe, perhaps with justification, that it would undermine unity. [*portion marking not declassified*]

*Maritime Affairs.* According to a Southeast Asian saying, "the land divides, the water unites," but modern economic considerations are making the seas of Southeast Asia a potentially divisive issue. Over the past decade, ASEAN countries, like littoral states elsewhere in the world, have intensified their interest in Law of the Sea issues such as rights to fishing grounds, offshore oil, and seabed minerals. A complexity of archipelagoes, narrow international straits, fringe islands, and deeply indented coastlines, plus the fact that no point in the South China Sea is more than 200 miles from land, makes the entire area subject to overlapping national claims. Individual states have not yet fully formulated their maritime claims. In the process, they do not consider themselves automatically bound by international law as defined by the West, but have yet to agree on guidelines of their own for negotiations. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Malaysia issued a map in late 1979 unilaterally delineating new maritime boundaries, which drew immediate and strong reactions from its neighbors. Indonesia protested Malaysia's claim to two islands off the coast of Sabah and a sea area off Sarawak. Jakarta hopes to reach a compromise relying on a 1976 Indonesia-Malaysia memorandum of understanding, in which Malaysia accepted Indonesia's archipelagic concept in return for recognition of Malaysia's right to unrestrained

air and sea passage between east and west Malaysia. Singapore protested the inclusion on the Malaysian map of a small uninhabited island with a lighthouse that has been administered by Singapore for 150 years. Manila protested Malaysia's inclusion of part of an island group and sea area southwest of Sabah that the Philippines also claims. [*portion marking not declassified*]

In 1980, both Thailand and Singapore announced extension of their respective territorial waters to 12 miles and creation of a 200-mile economic resources zone. Malaysia's continental shelf proclamation in 1966 claimed sovereignty over an area also claimed by Thailand, but in 1979 the two entered a 50-year agreement for joint offshore oil exploration, with profits to be shared equally. This arrangement, if successful, could set the pattern for the resolution of future maritime resource problems within ASEAN. [*portion marking not declassified*]

There is no end in sight to disputes over the potentially oil-rich area around the Spratly and Paracel Islands in the South China Sea; China, Taiwan, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Malaysia, all claim some part of the area by virtue of conflicting historical and geographical precedents. Malaysia and the Philippines, Malaysia and Vietnam, and Indonesia and Vietnam have rival claims to certain islands and reefs. The lack of mutually acceptable guidelines will make these difficult to settle. So far none of the parties involved has been willing to use force to dislodge another, but in view of regional tensions this remains a possibility. [*portion marking not declassified*]

*Sociocultural Cooperation.* The countries that now form ASEAN had little contact with each other during the colonial period in Southeast Asia. Except for Thailand, their external relations were an extension of the colonial relationship with the metropolitan centers. Since independence, Southeast Asian regionalism has progressed rapidly from a mere geographical concept to a sense of common identity, at least among the elites. This sense of regionalism, however, needs a mass base of popular acceptance to play a significant role in ASEAN integration. So far, few Southeast Asians see themselves as part of a greater regional whole; indeed, for many the identification with a nation state is not yet fully developed. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Social and cultural cooperation within an ASEAN framework can enhance the growth of regionalism. The 1978 foreign ministers meeting called for an integrated strategy for sociocultural development. ASEAN has tried several different formats to encourage such cooperation, including a cultural fund and committees for social development, culture and information, and the mass media. Several joint programs have already been established to:

- Combat increasing drug abuse and trafficking.
- Provide mutual assistance in cases of natural disaster.

- Cooperate in social work, archaeology, museum activities, arts and crafts, and mass communications.
- Exchange news items through government-controlled agencies, and publish ASEAN journals.
- Create an ASEAN satellite network by mid-1982, based on the Indonesia Palapa satellite.
- Plan an English-language ASEAN university. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization, formed in 1977 and composed of leading parliamentarians from each country intends to form a permanent secretariat to study the possibility of establishing an ASEAN parliament. Such an assembly, which could take years to create, would be a vehicle for establishing common institutions—in education, communications, and justice—around which ASEAN regionalism could focus. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Formidable obstacles must be overcome if ASEAN is to create a true regional identity. The colonial powers, for instance, fostered religious divisions by introducing Christianity to compete with established local beliefs and reinforced other ethnic differences in pursuit of a divide-and-rule policy. The independent governments that succeeded colonial rule are relatively new and still much concerned about preserving national autonomy and territorial integrity. Indonesia, Malaysia, and, to a lesser extent, Singapore have not yet succeeded in creating strong national identities out of a hodgepodge of cultural and ethnic diversity. ASEAN's attempt to forge a supranational regional identity will thus be slow, and—by encouraging people to identify with others outside their own nation state—could even be counterproductive to the creation of national consciousness over the short term. [*portion marking not declassified*]

### *The ASEAN Dialogues*

The various dialogues set up between ASEAN and its major trading partners have reinforced its image as an influential grouping and reduced to manageable levels the conflict inherent in economic intercourse between the producers and consumers of primary commodities. These dialogues generally have given ASEAN's chief trading partners a greater appreciation of its members' aspirations and fostered sincere negotiations about restructuring primary commodity markets, establishing a fair system of pricing and tariffs, creating a Common Fund and buffer stocks to prevent price fluctuations, rescheduling certain debt repayments, transferring technology, and maintaining private investment. Participation in the dialogues has stimulated self-confidence among the ASEAN states about their ability to handle development and has increased the willingness of potential foreign investors

to do business with ASEAN. On a broader scale, the dialogues have reinforced ASEAN's reputation as a moderating influence in the North-South dialogue by fostering negotiation and compromise rather than confrontation. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The inevitable evolution of the economies of the ASEAN states will affect ASEAN's relations with its partners in the developed world. The ASEAN states formerly depended on sales of primary commodities unhampered by tariff restrictions, but they are beginning increasingly to rely on the sale of cheap manufactured goods in highly competitive markets partially closed by protectionist tariffs. The production of export-oriented manufactures offers new opportunities but opens new risks of economic conflict, not only with developed states but also with other developing countries with similar economic ambitions. *[portion marking not declassified]*

*Japan.* The dialogue with Japan is conducted primarily through the ASEAN-Japan Forum, first formed in March 1977. In addition, the Japanese Prime Minister and other Cabinet ministers regularly attend ASEAN heads of state meetings. ASEAN's relations with Japan, however, are ambivalent. On the one hand, the Southeast Asians recognize that long-term interdependence is inevitable, because Japan is one of their chief trading partners, a main source of financing and expertise for regional projects, and a potential major market for the region's products. On the other hand, some ASEAN leaders feel that the benefits from ASEAN-Japan economic cooperation are too one-sidedly in Japan's favor. Southeast Asian attitudes are colored by World War II experiences and by the often ruthless way some Japanese companies conduct business. Many see Japan *[less than 1 line not declassified]* foreign policy driven by Japanese business interests. *[portion marking not declassified]*

ASEAN's misgivings were reinforced by the experience with the Fukuda doctrine, outlined by the former Prime Minister at the 1977 heads of state summit. Fukuda, who was attempting to change Japan's image as an exploiter of ASEAN's resources, defined Japanese interaction with ASEAN as resting on three pillars:

- Japan is not a military power and will never again become a threat.
- Relations between Japan and ASEAN are improving rapidly because of increased mutual confidence.
- Japan is willing to be an equal—not dominant—partner in the relationship, but it will not form an exclusivist bloc with ASEAN because of Japan's worldwide interests. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The Fukuda doctrine was intended to ensure a stable and prosperous market for Japanese goods, as well as safe transit for Japanese

shipping. Fukuda announced that Japan would lend ASEAN \$1 billion on concessional terms to promote intra-ASEAN industrial cooperation on five regional projects. Since then, however, there has been minimal progress. ASEAN has been unable to resolve which country would take the lead in what project. At the same time, ASEAN was dismayed to find that Japan had established a timetable for implementing the projects, including feasibility studies, and attached to the loan financing terms that were contrary to ASEAN policy. ASEAN members saw these arrangements as a ploy to give Japanese suppliers the advantage in bidding on contracts; ASEAN is now seeking alternative financing from the European Community. [*portion marking not declassified*]

ASEAN continues to press Japan to liberalize its trade tariffs to afford greater access for manufactured and semimanufactured goods, although Japan is constrained from doing so by powerful domestic interests. Furthermore, ASEAN now fears that increasing Japanese cooperation with China could adversely affect its attempts to improve political and economic relations with Tokyo. [*portion marking not declassified*]

These disagreements probably will be reconciled in time because Japan too increasingly recognizes that its relations with ASEAN must have a political as well as an economic framework. The Afghanistan and Indochina situations caused Japan to reappraise its world and regional roles, and to modify its previous omnidirectional foreign policy that had been motivated by the desire to maintain good relations with everyone in order to facilitate trade. Tokyo now believes it must make better use of its economic power to integrate its political and economic foreign policies in a way that will strengthen its friends among the developing countries. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Japan thus now takes ASEAN more seriously as a regional organization. Prime Minister Suzuki recently stated that Asia is Japan's top priority, and ASEAN is gratified at Japan's increasing willingness to work in tandem with ASEAN. A tangible result of this is Tokyo's decision to abandon its former neutrality in the Indochina situation and support the ASEAN position. [*portion marking not declassified*]

*Australia.* ASEAN's institutional relations with Australia, handled through the ASEAN-Australia Forum, date from 1974. Australia reoriented its foreign policy that year to give it an Asian emphasis. Recognizing the enormous importance of ASEAN's strategic location and natural resources, Australia was the first country to offer ASEAN aid on a regional basis. ASEAN wants Australia to lower its trade barriers for manufactured goods from Southeast Asia on the grounds that reciprocal trade rather than increased aid is essential for good relations. Another difficulty in the relationship is the fact that Australia is also a commodity exporter and therefore a competitor. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Over time, Australia has adjusted its approach, perhaps in response to ASEAN pressures. In 1977, Canberra focused on aid, promising money, skills, and other resources to further joint ASEAN development programs; now Canberra has agreed to promote ASEAN exports to Australia and encourage Australian investment in ASEAN. ASEAN private sector groups have convinced Australian businessmen to form an ASEAN-Australian Business Council. It remains to be seen whether Australia will follow up on these proposals and demonstrate its commitment to a reciprocal long-term economic relationship; ASEAN recognizes that Canberra cannot foster the expansion of ASEAN's exports at the expense of Australia's own burgeoning industry. *[portion marking not declassified]*

*New Zealand.* ASEAN has consulted regularly with New Zealand since 1975. The volume of trade between them is not large, but ASEAN believes that New Zealand can provide additional investment and market opportunities. New Zealand so far has not agreed to ASEAN requests for tariff liberalization. A small country with limited resources, New Zealand wishes to reserve most of its developmental assistance for the South Pacific, to enable it to play a major role in that area. *[portion marking not declassified]*

*Canada.* ASEAN consultations with Canada were formalized in 1977, when Canada agreed to provide assistance in such areas as satellite communications and scientific research. Canada has not yet responded to pleas for liberalized tariffs on ASEAN goods, however, and some ASEAN officials have complained about Ottawa's reduced interest in ASEAN. In June 1980, Canada reaffirmed that relations with ASEAN were a fundamental part of its foreign policy and exchanged a memorandum of understanding with ASEAN for the first joint project. The two sides also announced that additional programs were being planned. *[portion marking not declassified]*

*The European Community.* The formal ASEAN-EC relationship dates from the establishment in 1972 of the Special Coordination Committee of ASEAN for liaison with the EC. The catalyst was British admission to the EC, which caused concern that ASEAN would lose the preferences in British markets derived from Malaysia's and Singapore's membership in the Commonwealth. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Because the ASEAN-EC dialogue involves so many countries—five and nine respectively—it is conducted through numerous committees within the framework of a Joint Study Group formed in 1974 and renamed the Joint Cooperation Committee in 1980. ASEAN-EC relations are the most complicated of all the dialogues because each side represents a group, and all decisions made at the bureaucratic level must be ratified by individual governments with varied self-interests. *[portion marking not declassified]*



Nonetheless, the dialogue has made considerable progress. A Non-preferential Framework Cooperation Agreement was signed in March 1980, to be implemented by the Joint Cooperation Committee assisted by an EC delegation based in Bangkok. The agreement confers most-favored-nation status on the signatories under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, making ASEAN the largest beneficiary of the EC's General System of Preferences. It also provides for development and diversification of trade, elimination of trade barriers, economic development, multilateral solutions to trade problems, and access to and processing of raw materials. Despite its far-reaching implications, the agreement merely establishes enabling provisions for future economic relations. Two contentious issues must be resolved first—discriminatory trade barriers in the EC and the EC's desire to obtain protection for its investments. [*portion marking not declassified*]

ASEAN has achieved a greater political understanding with the EC than with its other dialogue partners. The EC, because of its own experience and its belief that its existence has preserved stability in Western Europe, consistently emphasizes in its dealings with the Third World that regional integration is a means of ensuring political stability. EC officials thus believe they must buttress economic relations with political encouragement. The strong joint statement issued after the ASEAN-EC foreign ministers meeting in June 1980, attacking the Soviets and the Vietnamese for the invasions of Afghanistan and Kampuchea, is a prime example of this. [*portion marking not declassified*]

*India.* ASEAN and India took formal steps in May 1980 to begin talks on economic cooperation, the first such dialogue between ASEAN and a developing country. The action was based on political as well as economic motives. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Because of ASEAN's zone of peace proposal for Southeast Asia, India sees ASEAN as a potential supporter of its own goal to exclude major powers from the Indian Ocean. India also is interested in forging ties with the influential Indian minorities in Malaysia and Singapore. Although it would encourage them to be good citizens of their adopted countries, India probably also hopes it can persuade them to remit more money to India. India, whose trade with ASEAN is small, is seeking to boost its trade by providing heavy machinery—railroad stock, power stations, agricultural equipment—and technical expertise for ASEAN development projects. [*portion marking not declassified*]

ASEAN also had a political motive for instituting the dialogue—the need to persuade India to support ASEAN's position in the Kampuchean conflict. In addition, Malaysia and Indonesia may see India as balance against growing Chinese influence in the area. In economic terms, ASEAN considers increased trade with India as a way to diversify markets. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Political issues already have disrupted the dialogue process. The Indian Foreign Minister declined an invitation to attend the discussions that followed the ASEAN foreign ministers meeting in June because the meeting seemed intended to blame Vietnam for the Kampuchean situation. In July, India announced it would extend full diplomatic recognition to the pro-Vietnamese Heng Samrin regime in Kampuchea as promised by Prime Minister Gandhi during her election campaign. ASEAN states had lobbied intensively with India to postpone recognition, and they reacted sharply, putting off further talks in the ASEAN-India dialogue. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Despite persisting concern over India's apparent pro-Soviet stance, ASEAN probably wants good relations with India. It recognizes that India still plays a moderating role in international forums and that in this and other ways New Delhi could become a natural political and economic ally. *[portion marking not declassified]*

*The United States.* ASEAN has mixed feelings toward the United States. On the one hand, many ASEAN leaders consider the United States the embodiment of all that prevents developing countries from realizing their hopes of a new international economic order with more equitable distribution of wealth between the developed and developing states. They see their countries dominated by the West's economic system and are dismayed by the protectionist sentiment arising in the developed world just when their own infant industries are beginning to take root. Because the United States exercises world leadership, ASEAN expects Washington will set the tone—one way or another—on this major issue in North-South relations. In the political arena, ASEAN leaders wish to avoid the appearance of political collusion with the United States lest this tarnish their nonaligned credentials with other Third World nations. *[portion marking not declassified]*

On the other hand, most ASEAN countries appreciate that the United States represents their best hopes for political and economic security. Nevertheless, they view relations with Washington in their totality rather than in their political, strategic, and economic parts. They consider regional security, for instance, as a function not only of external threats but of the domestic political stability of the various ASEAN states. Thus ASEAN wants an integrated economic and political commitment from the United States that will encourage regional stability. Their expectations of what the United States can do for them may be too high, however, for they fail to understand that the situation has changed since the 1950s and 1960s, when the United States could and would commit vast resources to further its foreign interests. They may thus be unreasonably disappointed when demands are not met. *[portion marking not declassified]*

ASEAN is unhappy because Washington took longer than other key trading partners to establish and implement an economic dialogue;



formal discussions did not start until September 1977,<sup>5</sup> although the dialogue now is fully active. Some ASEAN leaders also sense that US support, although stated in the strongest terms, is more political than economic. They are looking for Washington to translate this political support into concrete economic assistance and cooperation. In particular, ASEAN is seeking:

- Increased access for ASEAN products to US markets.
- Systematic encouragement of US-ASEAN trade; Japan, the EC, and Australia, for example, all sponsor and partially finance centers for ASEAN trade promotion in their countries.
- Greater encouragement for private sector investment in ASEAN, similar to the industrial cooperation conferences sponsored for ASEAN by the EC and Australia.
- Concessional financing for regional ASEAN projects.
- Initiative in designing regional development projects; ASEAN's other dialogue partners are ahead of the United States in this form of economic cooperation. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Because US policy decisions often have a broader and more direct impact on Southeast Asia than those of other dialogue partners, ASEAN leaders feel strongly that Washington should hold prior discussions with them before making important policy decisions that might affect the region. With their growing strength as regional collective, ASEAN leaders expect to be treated as equal partners. Observing the symbolic niceties of ASEAN-US discourse could be as important to good relations as political, economic, and military assistance and thus could minimize the effect of any adverse US actions. [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *Cooperation on Foreign Policy*

The increasing ability of ASEAN to develop a common approach on important international issues often makes it an effective interest bloc within Third World, UN, and other multilateral forums. Nonetheless, differing perspectives and self-interests—often the same kinds of issues that tend to divide ASEAN internally—still affect the way the association conducts its relations with countries with which it does not have a formal dialogue. Similar ethnic and historic experiences make Malaysia and Indonesia, for example, natural partners both within ASEAN and their relations with nonmember states. Both have long been active in Third World and nonaligned forums. Thailand, Singapore, and the Philippines, on the other hand, do not have a strong identification with the Third World and its causes. [*portion marking not declassified*]

---

<sup>5</sup> September 8–10, 1977, in Manila. See footnote 5, Document 196.

Malaysia and Indonesia have large Muslim populations, which leads to a natural link with fellow Islamic nations. In international forums they geneally vote with the Islamic bloc on matters of Islamic interest and would be in a quandary if these conflicted with the interests of a fellow ASEAN state—such as a showdown between Islamic countries and Manila over the Muslim insurgency in the southern Philippines. On the other hand, Malaysia and Indonesia are also in a position to mediate between the Islamic countries and other ASEAN states on Islamic matters and have, for example, prevented the Islamic countries from adopting radical positions in the Philippines case. [*portion marking not declassified*]

In recent years ASEAN has become aware of how a coordinated approach dramatically enhances its collective bargaining ability. Its members now meet regularly to coordinate their position prior to meetings of such forums as the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the developing countries' UN caucus—the Group of 77, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the international rubber and tin groups. The responsibility for handling key foreign contacts has been informally divided among the members, with Thailand taking the lead on the United Nations, Malaysia on Australia and the Middle East, Indonesia on Japan and the EC, Singapore on New Zealand, and the Philippines on the United States and Canada. [*portion marking not declassified*]

*Indochina.* The effort to maintain a common front against Vietnam is both an example of ASEAN effectiveness at its best and a case study of its internal divisions. Vietnam's long-term intentions toward ASEAN are unclear, and its attitude sometimes contradictory, but it probably sees a strong ASEAN as a major obstacle to its ambitions for greater regional influence. Vietnam is well aware of the differences within ASEAN and continues to try to exploit them. In 1975, Vietnam bitterly attacked ASEAN as a neocolonial, US-backed successor to the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization and chastised some of its members for their participation in the Vietnam war. At the same time, Hanoi tried to establish cordial bilateral relations with the other ASEAN countries. Hanoi took a softer propaganda line during Pham Van Dong's visits to the ASEAN capitals in 1978, but recently it has returned to an oppositionist approach, blaming ASEAN for continued tensions in the region. [*portion marking not declassified*]

At present, ASEAN-Indochina relations are at a stalemate. Vietnam seems confident it will consolidate its position in Kampuchea and Laos whatever the costs, and ASEAN—despite the misgivings of Malaysia and Indonesia—toughened its stance after the Vietnamese incursion into Thailand on 23 June 1980. The region will face-long-lasting instability if the ASEAN-Vietnam confrontation continues unresolved. A

change in policy, however, depends on Thailand. If Bangkok, as the frontline state, were willing to accept a solution, even one that involved only cosmetic concessions by Hanoi, other members of ASEAN probably would defer to Thai wishes. Malaysia and Indonesia probably would be the most enthusiastic supporters of compromise; Singapore would be likely to oppose it but with only limited effect; and the Philippines would reluctantly acquiesce, provided a consensus was reached. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Strains within ASEAN over Indochina policy stem largely from differences over the nature of the security threat to the region. Malaysia and Indonesia, which have large and potentially subversive Chinese minorities, view China as the primary long-term threat. This by no means diminishes their concern about a Soviet-backed Vietnam—a concern that was heightened by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Malaysia and Indonesia believe, however, that China's method of dealing with Kampuchea—with which Thailand agrees—enhances the position of the Soviet Union in the region. They fear that Vietnam will grant permanent military facilities to the Soviets in exchange for aid in confronting the Chinese. Some Malaysian and Indonesian leaders believe a Vietnamese-dominated Indochina would serve as a buffer against Chinese expansionism. Privately they have already conceded Vietnamese hegemony and would prefer to reach a face-saving accommodation with Hanoi, before its victory in Kampuchea becomes absolute. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Thailand, Singapore, and the Philippines, on the other hand, are less fearful of China. Thailand and the Philippines do not have large unassimilated Chinese minorities, and Singapore has an ethnic Chinese majority. All three believe the Soviets and their Vietnamese client pose the main long-range threat. Singapore and Manila feel particularly threatened by the Soviet capability to interdict Asian sea lanes. *[portion marking not declassified]*

*China.* If a collective ASEAN dialogue with China ever evolves, it will come cautiously and hesitantly. Singapore and Indonesia do not yet have normal diplomatic relations with Beijing. Four issues color ASEAN's relations with China:

- Beijing's insistence on maintaining "fraternal relations" with and giving verbal support to Communist parties in ASEAN countries. China tries unsuccessfully to reassure ASEAN that such support is on only a party-to-party and not state-to-state basis and claims that to renounce these parties would invite the Soviets or Vietnamese to try to fill the void.

- China's determination to "bleed" Vietnam, which some ASEAN leaders feel will ultimately draw them into a wider superpower conflict.

- The Chinese minorities in ASEAN countries and concern about Beijing's possible involvement with them. Although China has re-

nounced its former insistence on *jus sanguinis* over *jus soli*, Southeast Asians fear that China still considers all overseas Chinese to be its responsibility—if not its citizens.<sup>6</sup>

- The growing US-China relationship, which the ASEAN member states fear could lead the United States to try to limit Soviet expansionism by acquiescing in an arrangement conceding Southeast Asia to China's sphere of influence. [portion marking not declassified]

China, which during the Cultural Revolution denounced ASEAN as an "anti-Communist alliance," has become pro-ASEAN in its foreign policy. If China's leaders continue to support its current modernization plans and its foreign relations remain pragmatic, ASEAN may be prepared to enter a broader relationship, including economic cooperation. This could pose difficulties because ASEAN, although welcoming the political benefits of a more stable relationship, fears potential economic competition from China in areas such as export-oriented light industrial products, the export of skilled and semiskilled labor to other countries, and the acquisition of capital, aid, and technology from Japan and the United States. [portion marking not declassified]

Another factor inhibiting closer ties with China is the connections most ASEAN states have with Taiwan. Singapore, for instance, sends members of its armed forces to Taiwan for training. ASEAN states would be reluctant to sever these ties, and even though Beijing at present turns a blind eye to such relations if conducted discreetly, it strongly opposes them. [portion marking not declassified]

*The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.* The ASEAN states maintain cool but correct relations with the Soviets and East Europeans. Most trade consists of purchases of primary commodities by the Soviets and their allies from Southeast Asia, and the balance of trade is heavily in ASEAN's favor. The Soviet side produces little of interest to ASEAN importers, but as ASEAN industrialization proceeds and its agriculture becomes more mechanized, the Soviets could become alternative sources of technology and equipment. So far ASEAN countries have politely rebuffed Soviet aid overtures. [portion marking not declassified]

The Soviets do not assign a high priority to relations with ASEAN. Moreover, Moscow's support for Vietnam in its Kampuchea policy makes closer relations difficult. The USSR almost certainly would try to exploit any evidence of a serious split in ASEAN along pro- and anti-Chinese lines. The Soviets have little if any potential to encourage domestic insurgency or subversion under present circumstances;

---

<sup>6</sup> *Jus sanguinis* is a rule of common law determining allegiance or citizenship by the citizenship of the parents, while *jus soli* determines allegiance or citizenship by place of birth. [portion marking not declassified] [Footnote in the original.]

there is only one pro-Soviet Communist party in an ASEAN country—the Philippines—and it is small and ineffective. [*portion marking not declassified*]

*The Middle East.* The world energy shortage has significantly affected ASEAN's relations with the Middle East and, in turn, with the developed world. The Middle East Muslim states have transformed their economic wealth into political power, and developing countries such as those in ASEAN, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, find it difficult to act in the UN and elsewhere contrary to Middle East sensitivities. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Singapore, for example, recently voted—against the wishes of Washington—to grant the Palestine Liberation Organization observer status at the IBRD and IMF. Singapore's special circumstances as the third largest refining center in the world, using oil chiefly from the Middle East, might have made support for the US position a costly gesture. Similarly, Bangkok was upset at US pressure on Thailand over the same issue. All ASEAN states prefer to keep a low profile on contentious issues between the United States and Middle Eastern countries, but if forced to choose would reluctantly either abstain or vote against Washington. [*portion marking not declassified*]

A decade ago, ASEAN's trade with the Middle East was inconsequential. Oil price rises in the 1970s, however, changed this pattern, and today over 10 percent of the total value of ASEAN's imports come from the Middle East—almost entirely crude petroleum and petroleum products. Only around 2 percent of ASEAN's exports, however, flow back to the Middle East. ASEAN wants increased and more favorable economic relations but so far has initiated no collective discussions with Middle Eastern states. ASEAN countries seek to channel some of the vast financial surpluses of the oil producers into aid and investment projects in Southeast Asia. The oil boom in the Middle East represents a potentially enormous consumer market for ASEAN food and manufactured items. The construction boom and demand for services of all kinds in the Middle East offer excellent opportunities for skilled and semiskilled labor from ASEAN countries, and indeed many Southeast Asians are already working in the Middle East. [*portion marking not declassified*]

ASEAN leaders also hope closer cooperation with Middle East states could help prevent the confrontational and often violent politics of the Muslim Middle East from spilling over into Southeast Asia, which also has a large Muslim population. If rival Middle Eastern countries, such as Saudi Arabia and Libya, begin vying for influence among Southeast Asia's Muslims, ASEAN unity and stability could be affected. [*portion marking not declassified*]

*The Pacific Basin Concept.* The idea of a Pacific basin community uniting North and South American and Asian states through economic

and possibly political cooperation is slowly gathering adherents, especially in Japan. Japanese Prime Ministers Ohira and Suzuki have promoted the concept as a way to maintain free trade. Other nations also are giving it thought as the economy of the Pacific region continues to expand. Some academics believe that the economic center of gravity in the world will shift to the Pacific by the end of this century or the beginning of the next and that growing interdependence will accompany this. Some believe a *de facto* trans-Pacific community already exists. Efforts to institutionalize this, however, are only in the talking stage and are complicated by questions over membership, especially the role of Communist countries, whether the community is to be government sponsored or private, and possible linkages with security issues. *[portion marking not declassified]*

ASEAN is lukewarm toward the concept because of several concerns. It fears that Japan and the United States would dominate the community and would seek to perpetuate ASEAN's subordinate role as a supplier of raw materials and market for manufactured goods, thus retarding ASEAN's modernization and industrialization plans. Discussions on the nature of the community could thus turn into a variation of the North-South dialogue. ASEAN is worried that the exclusion of Communist countries might be seen as alignment with the West, but that if the Communists are included difficulties would arise from the incompatibility of the different economic systems. Finally, and perhaps most important, a Pacific basin community might submerge ASEAN's own identity and threaten the basis for its unity. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Although ASEAN will continue to explore the proposals, the association argues that it can consider joining only after it has constructed a secure political and economic base of its own. ASEAN favors a gradual approach, possibly beginning with a triangular ASEAN-Japan-Australia relationship. In any event, it may be decades before the Pacific basin community becomes a reality, if at all. *[portion marking not declassified]*

#### *Promoting Regional Security*

ASEAN's concept of security is unique, depending less on armed strength than on regional resilience, that is, the "collective will to survive." It presupposes continued intra-ASEAN political and economic interdependence on an equal basis as distinct from dominance by one member. This innovative and indigenous concept reflects ASEAN's awareness of its basic military weakness. Over the long term, ASEAN hopes that its policy will not only be more acceptable and successful but also less dangerous than collective military action. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Despite repeated denials by members that ASEAN will become a mutual security organization, recent events have led to a reappraisal



of the outside threat and how to meet it. ASEAN states link the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan with the regional threat posed by the Soviet-backed Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea. As a result, member states have taken steps not only to forge and maintain a united stand in the face of the new threat but also to strengthen their individual armed forces. [*portion marking not declassified*]

ASEAN faces a dilemma. It realizes that it is only as strong as its weakest link and thus must continue to assign high priority to combating internal subversion and insurgency. On the other hand, ASEAN countries must take steps to meet the increased threat from outside. Most ASEAN states have organized their armed services to meet the internal threat, and it would require considerable reorganization and additional expenditures to counter external threats. [*portion marking not declassified*]

*Bilateral Cooperation.* Although each member makes its own internal security arrangements, there is some cooperation in areas of mutual concern. Thailand and Malaysia, for example, have taken joint action for over two decades against the guerrilla sanctuaries of the Communist Party of Malaya in the border area, an effort that has been only spasmodically successful. The scope of these operations is limited, however, by Thai fears of possible Malaysian involvement with Thai Muslims in the south and by Bangkok's unwillingness to commit Thai forces to an area it considers of low priority. Malaysian-Indonesian cooperation along the Sarawak-Kalimantan border against the remnants of Communist guerrillas in Sarawak has slackened in recent years as the threat has declined. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Other forms of cooperation have been less successful. Malaysia will not let Singapore's armed forces use its training facilities because it fears that Singapore's military buildup over the past decade is designed to defend it against Malaysia and Indonesia. Singaporean armed forces, therefore, must go to Taiwan, Brunei, and Thailand to train. Problems between Kuala Lumpur and Manila over the Muslim insurgency in the southern Philippines and Manila's claim to Sabah have precluded joint sea patrols and antismuggling agreements. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Despite differing perceptions of the threat, security cooperation against external enemies has increased rapidly, if quietly, since the onset of the Kampuchean conflict. All five countries in 1980 participated in a series of combined land, sea, and air exercises, training programs, intelligence exchanges, and limited cooperation on production and standardization of their military equipment. Cooperation, however, has been explicitly bilateral, or at most involving only three member states at a time to avoid the appearance of collusion as a military bloc. Nevertheless, ASEAN made contingency plans to aid Bangkok should Vietnam invade Thailand. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Continued military cooperation—even without an explicit defense agreement—would have several advantages. Defense expenditures generally constitute a major portion of the ASEAN members' budgets; any reduction in defense spending as the result of standardization of equipment, specialization of roles to eliminate duplication, and shared maintenance would free money for economic development. The increased range of contacts between military personnel would aid ASEAN unity by giving them a heightened sense of regional identity. *[portion marking not declassified]*

*Western Support.* Despite the increase in bilateral military cooperation among ASEAN states and the organization's avowed goal of neutrality, it continues to rely for protection chiefly on security guarantees from the West, principally the United States. It wants the United States to maintain and even increase its presence in the Pacific as a defense against possible Soviet or Vietnamese aggression. Malaysia, for example, was previously lukewarm about a US military presence but now favors strengthened security links with the United States. *[portion marking not declassified]*

There is nonetheless concern within ASEAN about relying on US support. Some ASEAN leaders are afraid that the strength of the US military and the capability of the US defense industry have declined in recent years, reducing the ability of Washington to project its power overseas. They doubt that the United States could protect them if an escalating conflict in Indochina coincided with US involvement in military action elsewhere. Thailand's attempt in early 1980 to revitalize the Manila Pact<sup>7</sup> thus received a tepid response from some ASEAN leaders, perhaps because they feared that it might give the Soviets a pretext to extend the Warsaw Pact<sup>8</sup> to Vietnam and ultimately to establish permanent military facilities there. *[portion marking not declassified]*

For these and other reasons, cooperation by ASEAN states with US military policies is likely to be limited and only on a bilateral basis. US policies, and the effectiveness of their implementation, will nonetheless influence ASEAN actions—for example, by making the association more willing to take strong political initiatives on relations with Vietnam if the United States has a credible defense policy. All ASEAN countries will seek to obtain increased military sales credits and training from the United States, and will interpret the US response to such requests as indicative of the level of Washington's commitment to the region. *[portion marking not declassified]*

---

<sup>7</sup> SEATO was also known as the Manila Pact. See footnote 2, Document 70.

<sup>8</sup> The Warsaw Pact was the collective defense treaty among the Soviet Union and the nations of the Soviet bloc, signed on May 14, 1955.



Cooperation with other Western states creates fewer problems. Malaysia and Singapore belong to the Five-Power Defense Arrangement, along with the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand.<sup>9</sup> In the past Malaysia was an unenthusiastic participant and believed the pact afforded little real protection. Changing security needs now have led Malaysia—and other ASEAN states—to view the agreement more positively. Because the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand are not superpowers, ASEAN is comfortable with a relationship that does not tarnish its nonaligned credentials and might even reduce the potential for interference by the superpowers in the area. [*portion marking not declassified*]

In September 1980, the Australian Prime Minister proposed rejuvenating the Five-Power agreement through a joint exercise in conventional warfare; the last such exercise took place in 1970 and stressed counterinsurgency tactics. Malaysia surprisingly agreed, and even suggested including Indonesia. Privately, Kuala Lumpur was enthusiastic, although publicly it said the proposed exercises “were not new and had little to do with the Sino-Soviet rivalry or the presence of superpowers in the region.” Whatever else it achieves, the joint exercise may help overcome the mutual suspicions that inhibit Malaysian and Singaporean defense relationships. In another action indicative of ASEAN’s increased interest in external defense relationships, Malaysia in September asked Australia to continue to station two squadrons of warplanes in Malaysia for “several more years.” [*portion marking not declassified*]

*Future Security.* At present, ASEAN’s security awareness is at a higher level than in the early 1970s. Any Soviet plans to establish a major military presence in Southeast Asia or any Vietnamese aggression against ASEAN states could overcome the unwillingness of several ASEAN leaders to establish a formal ASEAN defense grouping or to sign explicit defense arrangements with the West, especially the United States. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Differences among ASEAN states about security threats and how to deal with them, however, could lead to less rather than more cooperation. In particular, problems could arise from the growth of Chinese influence in the region brought about either by a greater Thai tilt toward China or by US encouragement to Beijing that it act as a counter to the Soviet presence in the area. Malaysia and Indonesia would be most concerned about such a development. Nevertheless, the Thai could well decide that greater cooperation with China offered the best protection against Vietnamese aggression, particularly given their doubts about

---

<sup>9</sup> Signed in 1971, the Five Power Defense Arrangement established the principle of consultation in the event of or threat of an armed attack on Malaysia or Singapore to determine what measures to take jointly or separately in response.

the reliability of US defense guarantees. Concern by Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur that the United States is prepared to concede Southeast Asia to China's sphere of influence as part of a secret agreement to oppose the Soviet Union could prompt them to renewed efforts to improve relations with Vietnam. They worry that China may reassert its role as the protector of overseas Chinese, who play a major role in their economies, and lead Beijing to interfere in their domestic affairs. [*portion marking not declassified*]

A proposal to the United States by an ASEAN member, such as Singapore or the Philippines, to establish a formal NATO-type defense arrangement or additional US military bases might create problems among some of the other member states. Although such a proposal probably would be made only in response to an increased threat from the USSR or Vietnam, Malaysia and Indonesia in particular would fear an adverse reaction from their Third World friends to any security arrangement perceived as dominated by the United States. [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *ASEAN in the 1980s*

ASEAN is a unique international organization developing according to its own pattern. Its continued growth depends on transforming national economic, political, and security interests into regional ones. Both internal and external factors, many beyond the members' control, will determine ASEAN's future prospects. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The ability of each member to maintain its own national identity and unity will play a part in regional integration; indeed, ASEAN will remain only as strong as its weakest member. To be effective, regionalism must be based on positive nationalism and a high level of political maturity in each country. Severe domestic unrest that alienates large numbers of people from their government will inevitably adversely affect regional unity. Many ASEAN countries are beset by domestic uncertainty because of demographic pressure, unemployment, migration to the urban areas, a growing gap between rich and poor, uneven growth rates between regions, and ethnic animosities reinforced by the rise of militant Islam. At present, these stresses are within manageable limits, but the future is less clear. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The development of ASEAN in the second half of the decade will hinge in large part on the way each member resolves succession problems caused by institutional rigidity and generational change. Since the founding of ASEAN, there has been remarkable continuity in the ruling regimes of four of the five members, and even in the fifth, Thailand, the political elite has been constant despite government

upheavals. The leaders of the next generation may not be motivated by the same values as the current ones. Some may promote external ties—to the Middle East for example—that could upset intra-ASEAN relations. Similarly, the emergence of a nativistic, anti-Western nationalism would adversely affect ASEAN unity, as well as its relations with states outside the region. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Growing interaction among all levels of the civil and military bureaucracies of member states could help cushion the potentially adverse impact of succession crises on ASEAN unity. These contacts, whether within an ASEAN or a bilateral framework, help new generation politicians and officials to understand each other's problems and thus nourish the concept of regional identity. [*portion marking not declassified*]

ASEAN's external relations in the 1980s may be based less on its own initiatives than on the need to react to outside circumstances over which it has little control. Above all, ASEAN must achieve a *modus vivendi* with its Communist neighbors in Indochina or risk being drawn into a widening conflict. ASEAN has a larger population and is richer in economic resources, while Vietnam has military strength and authoritarian discipline. ASEAN must find a way to translate its "collective political will" into a rough balance of power, or detente, with Indochina. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Greater economic integration among ASEAN states also depends in part on outside countries, especially those participating in the ASEAN dialogues. For example, ASEAN economic integration would be furthered if its major trading partners shifted from a bilateral to a regional perspective in dealing with Southeast Asia. In the future, ASEAN will encourage projects that complement rather than supplant indigenous capabilities and that benefit all ASEAN countries. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Intra-ASEAN economic development will be painfully slow over the next few years and at best will include growing intra-ASEAN trade liberalization and occasional industrial complementarity. ASEAN's economic projects with outside countries are likely to mature more quickly than intra-ASEAN schemes. Such external relationships, however, will be somewhat inhibited by the continuing conviction of ASEAN leaders that cooperation between ASEAN and other countries or international institutions should not undermine existing bilateral arrangements. [*portion marking not declassified*]

For the next few years, the need to cement existing bonds and establish a secure sense of regional identity among the founding members of ASEAN will outweigh any arguments in favor of increased membership. ASEAN members first seriously discussed possible expansion of the organization in 1975. The debate centered on the

admission of the Indochina states, which was part of the ASEAN proposal for a Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality in Southeast Asia. Ideological and economic incompatibilities would have precluded the addition of the Indochinese countries, however, even if the issue of Vietnamese aggression had not arisen. Nevertheless, the question of future expansion of membership to include other countries in the immediate area continues to be widely debated. Special political, economic, and cultural relationships are being established between ASEAN and Burma, Brunei, Papua New Guinea, and, less closely, Sri Lanka. Such ties eventually could pave the way for inclusion of some of these countries in ASEAN. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The success of ASEAN does not of itself guarantee stability in Southeast Asia, which depends essentially on domestic tranquility in individual countries and nonaggressive neighbors. Nevertheless, it helps create an environment that promotes stability and serves as an effective mediating structure for solving local problems without drawing in outside powers. This is especially important for the United States, which has close relations with each of the ASEAN states and would not wish to choose sides in bilateral squabbles. Continued ASEAN unity in the face of Vietnamese expansionism will help frustrate any attempt by Vietnam to expand its influence in the region. Finally, a united ASEAN, nonaligned but friendly to the West, serves US interests in other ways, among them by the association's willingness to act—within certain constraints—as a moderating influence in Third World forums. *[portion marking not declassified]*

# Thailand and Burma

## 150. Telegram From the Embassy in Burma to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Rangoon, February 14, 1977, 0845Z

447. For EA only. Subj: . . . And . . . Oh Yes, Burma in the Post Vietnam Era. Ref: State 25347.<sup>2</sup>

1. Fortunately, in the years since Bill Sullivan had the job,<sup>3</sup> attention spans of Burma Desk Officers seem to have lengthened (though we will still probably place fewer demands on time of the new Assistant Secretary than most of his other charges), so a brief message with a Burma focus may find readership. We deserve it, for we have a few microcosmic situations here that already have or may assume wider implications in the new few years.

2. Our relations with Burma illustrate the way in which, divested of an excessive and meddlesome concern over geopolitics and the security of others, and blessed with a minimum of high-level concern at the political level, the U.S. can pursue rational policies keyed to the national interest without sacrifice of principle or good will.

A. Our major current national interest to which relations with Burma are pertinent is narcotics control as long as the Golden Triangle<sup>4</sup> remains a major factor in the international narcotics traffic, and as long as cooperation with the GUB remains a relatively efficient means of attacking the problem. This interest will remain paramount. This Embassy has been at pains to keep it clear to the Burmese that our main interest is in narcotics control, and not in killing insurgents per se (though we may wish them well in their efforts to hold their union together, it is not our civil war).<sup>5</sup> If, as seems possible, we can help

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Miscellaneous Old Vietnam Political Records, 1968–1991, Lot 94D430, POL—US Policy on SEA in Post-Vietnam Period 1977. Secret; Stadis; Limdis. Sent for information to Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Jakarta, Manila, Tokyo, Vientiane, Beijing, and Hong Kong.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 103.

<sup>3</sup> William Sullivan served as Director of the Office of Burmese Affairs from August 1958 until September 1960.

<sup>4</sup> An area of Thailand, Laos, and Burma that produces large quantities of opium.

<sup>5</sup> Burma had been in a state of civil war since its independence in 1948. Ethnic factions in Burma turned to armed insurgency in an effort to gain control of the country and promote their rights. Since the coup in 1962, the military had controlled the country, but ethnic insurgencies continued to advocate for control and for their rights.

the GUB to focus more effort on such non-lethal control methods as herbicides, we should do so.

B. Largely a derivative of our dominant interest in narcotics control, our desire to see a more cooperative relationship between Burma and Thailand may come closer to fruition in the next few years, particularly if we remain willing to be clear-sighted (even "hard-nosed") as Ambassador Whitehouse has had occasion to be vis-a-vis the Thai in recent months. We have seen some forward motion.

C. In the long run our largest interest in Burma relates to its economic potential, but it may be a very long run. We have had good success in preserving a non-discriminatory share for Americans in such access to Burma's economy as its government will permit. Neither we nor the Burmese nor anyone else, for that matter, have had much success in raising the level of productivity to the point where equal access has much meaning. There is now hope—but not confidence—that the GUB may relax somewhat the rigidities of its naive and extreme socialist doctrine and adopt a more pragmatic policy. If it does so, and if Burma demonstrates a propensity to raise productivity in response to investment, we should consider offering bilateral aid. But we should look for tangible and quantifiable indicators of heightened productivity.

D. Burma's neutralism has been to a degree catatonic, and there is some hope—likewise still far from confidence—of a change. Burma could with luck become a kind of third force between Communist Indochina and ASEAN. Burma is developing a rather positive relationship with Vietnam, and, now that the cataclysmic events of 1975 have relieved the GUB of its almost paranoid fear of being sucked into the Indochina war, it is becoming less averse to some kind of relationship with ASEAN.

3. Popular goodwill toward the U.S. and American values is quite palpable, and favorable attitudes are evinced by most government officials—when no one is looking. Burma's experiences under its naive and extreme form of Socialism appear not to have made it more receptive to Communism, if anything the reverse. One of our policies is to promote goodwill, in good part through educational and cultural exchanges, a policy implement that has thoroughly demonstrated its worth in Burma.

4. The human rights situation in Burma illustrates the complexity of this problem, and the need for a relativistic approach to it. The GUB has a middling record in human rights—a lack of freedoms in some important respects, but no systematic governmental use of torture, for example. So far, we have been able to approach decisions (on armored car sales, etc.) on an ad hoc basis, asking for example, whether the cars were actually likely to be used in suppressing peaceful demonstrators.

But if the possibility of an AID program draws nearer, I think it might be helpful to us and to other missions in the region if we could rate the human rights situation in countries of the region on the only meaningful basis—a region-wide comparison of performance.

5. Finally, at the level of administrative policy, it is high time someone in the Department insisted on a region-wide approach to allocation of resources, to provide a matrix within which the values and priorities stated in individual country PARAs would acquire real significance and real utility in all the many fields to which the resources-allocation approach is applicable.

Osborn

---

**151. Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>**

ER M 77–10094

Washington, February 15, 1977

*Narcotics Assessment: Burma*

**SIGNIFICANCE:** Burma's average annual production of some 400 metric tons of raw opium is a major component of the illicit international trade in opium and opium derivatives. Most of this opium is produced in the mountainous terrain of northern and northeastern Burma by various hill tribes who rely upon it as their major cash crop and source of income. A large share of production—perhaps as much as 200 tons—is believed to be consumed in the producing areas.

In many areas the growers are under the control of various insurgent or trafficking organizations who determine how much opium poppy will be planted, supply inputs for its cultivation, and set opium purchase prices. Farmers sell their raw opium to merchants and trafficking groups who then organize caravans to transport it to the Thai border.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 92T00480R: Liaison Files (1976–1977), Box 6, Folder 192: Narcotics Assessment for Thailand and Burma. Secret; [handling restriction not declassified]. Prepared by the Director of the South Asia Office in the Directorate of Intelligence. Printed from a draft copy. According to a February 16 memorandum, attached but not printed, Peter Bourne Director of the White House Office of Drug Abuse, had requested assessments for both Burma and Thailand. See Document 152.



The major organizations involved in the raw opium traffic between the producing areas of Burma and the Thai border are the Shan United Army (SUA) and the 3rd and 5th Chinese Irregular Forces (CIF). These organizations are commanded by ethnic Chinese and are composed of a mixture of Chinese and various Burmese tribal groups. These groups provide heavily armed escorts for the opium caravans and use modern means of communication—walkie talkie equipment and cyphers—to avoid government anti-narcotics forces. Logistic support for opium caravans is provided from numerous bases and storage points located in the Shan State of Burma and along the Thai border. The principal headquarters for these trafficking groups are located in Thailand.

During 1976 a total of 130 metric tons of raw opium was transported to the Thai border as compared to 217 tons in 1975. Fifty-five percent of this total was handled by the three main trafficking organizations noted above. Most of the opium was converted into finished narcotics, primarily No. 3 and No. 4 heroin, by numerous refineries located in the border area. These refineries are generally small in scale and can be readily moved in a short period of time. Many are owned and/or operated by the major trafficking organizations. The organizations also provide protection for privately owned refineries in the area.

Total heroin production statistics are not readily available, however, there are indications that production of heroin increased during 1976. Reported shipments of No. 4 heroin from border refineries totaled close to 3000 kilograms compared to 1500 kilograms in 1975. Thirty-eight percent of the No. 4 reportedly shipped from the border area was destined for consumer markets in Burma. Bangkok was the major consuming market for at least another 11 percent of the shipments. The remaining 1500 kilograms moved into international trafficking networks to meet demand elsewhere in Southeast Asia, Europe, and the US.

Reliable data on opium and opium derivative consumptions in Burma is not available. However, a commonly used estimate of the addict population is 130,000, of which some 40,000 are believed to be heroin addicts.

*PROBLEMS:* The main problem in Burma is the lack of government control in the principal opium producing areas. Much of this area is located in very rugged terrain at a great distance from Rangoon. The region is populated by various tribal groups who are unsympathetic to the central government. Many of these people openly support insurgencies against the government. Enforcement of anti-narcotics laws is dependent upon the ability of Rangoon to maintain a military and/or police presence in the area. However, because of the government's preoccupation with insurgents throughout the country, its military resources are insufficient to both police the narcotics traffic and combat



insurgents. This is particularly true with respect to the Burmese Communist Party (BCP) which controls a large portion of the most productive opium area east of the Salween River in the Northern Shan State. Over the past two years, the BCP has increasingly used the raw opium traffic to finance operations against the government. Most of the raw opium produced in areas under BCP control is marketed through traditional channels in the Shan State and eventually finds its way to the Thai border.

The Burmese government has had some success in its anti-narcotics efforts during the past year. It has mounted major operations against narcotics caravans and refining sites and has seized large quantities of narcotics. Much of this success is the result of use of US-supplied helicopters and associated equipment. During the 1975/76 poppy growing season the government embarked upon a poppy crop destruction campaign which resulted in the elimination of an estimated 7000 hectares of poppies, representing potential opium production of about 60 tons. Despite these successes it is quite apparent that sufficient narcotics have slipped through the net to meet both local and international requirements.

*PROSPECTS:* Maintaining the momentum against the illicit opium traffic depends upon the zeal and commitment of the Burmese government. However, the government has only limited resources. Government adherence to a neutral foreign policy inhibits its willingness to seek larger amounts of foreign assistance in the anti-narcotics effort. The Burmese will most likely continue to go it alone and to work within the limitations imposed by their own resources and those made available by international organizations, e.g. UNFDAC. In the absence of major domestic problems—a change of government or an upswing in the tempo of the BCP insurgency—the government should be able to maintain anti-narcotics operations at the same level as in 1976. Any expansion of BCP operations in the Shan State could cause a diversion of military resources away from anti-narcotics activities and neutralize the successes achieved so far. The crux of the problem of finding a permanent solution to narcotics trafficking is Burma's relationship with Thailand. [5 lines not declassified]

**152. Assessment Paper Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, February 15, 1977

*Narcotics Assessment: Thailand*

*SIGNIFICANCE:* Thailand is a major processing center and transshipment point for illicit opium and its by-products produced in the Golden Triangle.<sup>2</sup> Although a large portion of the narcotics transiting Thailand are destined for consumer markets within Asia, increasing supplies are finding their way into Europe where Chinese trafficking organizations have established new markets. At least 10 percent of the No. 4 heroin entering the US market is believed to be of Golden Triangle origin.

The upland areas of northwest Thailand produce about 50 tons of opium per year, nearly all of which is consumed by Thailand's large addict population. Although a 1959 law banned the growing of opium poppies in Thailand, political sensitivities toward the tribal cultivators and lack of government control in some growing areas has prevented the enforcement of the ban. Tribal groups in the upland areas are still dependent upon the opium poppy as their major cash crop. Crop substitution programs sponsored by the US and the United Nations have been instituted in several key villages but no significant decrease in poppy area has as yet been accomplished.

The raw opium which is produced in Burma is usually transported southward to the remote and generally under-policed areas on the Thai border. Most of this opium is processed at the numerous refineries which straddle the Thai-Burma border. Many of these refineries are owned or managed by the major trafficking organizations operating between Burma and Thailand, such as the Shan United Army (SUA) and the 3rd and 5th Chinese Irregular Forces (CIF). In addition to these organizations, there are smaller para-military and tribal groups engaged in the traffic which also use Thailand as their base of operations.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 92T00480R: Liaison Files (1976-1977), Box 6, Folder 192: Narcotics Assessment for Thailand and Burma. Secret; [handling restriction not declassified]. Prepared by the Director of the South Asia Office in the Directorate of Intelligence. Printed from a draft copy. See footnote 1, Document 151.

<sup>2</sup> The Golden Triangle includes the traditional opium growing areas straddling the Thai, Burmese, and Lao borders. [Footnote in the original.]

Thailand has historically been the corridor through which the bulk of opium and finished narcotics from the Golden Triangle have made their way into international markets. Powerful and far-flung smuggling organizations have operated for years throughout Thailand, moving narcotics from the Thailand-Burma border area through Bangkok, by both air and sea, or overland into Malaysia whence they are transshipped elsewhere. The narcotics are smuggled through Thailand by foot, private automobile, taxi, bus, trucks, trains, and aircraft. Bangkok is a major marketing center for narcotics which are often transshipped south through Hatyai to Malaysia and Singapore. Alternative routings include the use of points along the Gulf of Thailand for movement by trawler or freighter to Hong Kong and other destinations. Narcotics destined for international markets outside of Asia are often smuggled aboard commercial aircraft in Bangkok for Hong Kong, Europe, and North America.

A large portion of the heroin produced in the Golden Triangle is consumed within Southeast Asia. The addict population in Thailand has been estimated at between 175,000-300,000. Bangkok itself has become a major consumer market for No. 3 and No. 4 heroin. Estimated requirements for No. 4 heroin in that city alone are said to total 4600 kilograms annually.

*PROBLEMS:* While Thai laws are adequate for narcotics control purposes their enforcement has been mediocre. Corrupt practices among the police and the courts have seriously handicapped the enforcement efforts of honest officials. Prior to the advent of the Thanin government in late 1976 the Thai government had taken few steps to remedy these problems. The new Thai government appears to be much more aware of the problem and is making a serious effort toward correcting these deficiencies. Nevertheless, the magnitude of the narcotics traffic through Thailand limits the effectiveness of any new enforcement initiatives once the narcotics leave the border area. The volume of freight and passenger traffic which moves daily along the major north-south routes in Thailand makes interdiction very difficult unless precise information about a particular narcotics shipment is made available to the police.

Suppression of the narcotics traffic in Thailand is also impeded by the government's attitude toward the insurgent and trafficking groups which maintain their headquarters and bases in Thailand. Historically Thai governments have used these groups as para-military buffers against Burmese and Communist insurgencies in Thailand. The narcotics trafficking activities of these organizations have been generally condoned by the Thais in return for their military cooperation.

*PROSPECTS:* There have been noticeable if perhaps temporary improvements in the narcotics situation during the period since the

new Thai government assumed power. Most traffickers still appear to be assessing the new government's anti-narcotics policies and have reduced their operations. However, the success of Thai anti-narcotics efforts will depend in the long run upon the determination of that government to eliminate the bases used by the major trafficking organizations within Thailand. Efforts are reportedly being made to force the SUA from Thai soil. However, unless the Thai government also moves against the CIF and the other trafficking organizations based in Thailand, and coordinates its anti-narcotics efforts with those of the Burmese government, only a temporary respite can be expected.

---

**153. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, February 18, 1977, 0832Z

3874. Following sent fm Songkhla dtd 17 Feb 77 repeated for your info.

Qte. Unclass Songkhla 34. Subject: More Refugees Arrive in Songkhla.

1. After a lull in January, refugee boat arrivals have picked up this month.<sup>2</sup> Two most recent arrivals are boat of ten from Rach Gia which arrived Feb 10, and boat of nineteen from Phu Quoc which arrived Feb 14. Many of the refugees on the boat from Phu Quoc have relatives in the U.S.

2. Recent arrivals say that although fuel shortages and tighter shore patrols have cut down on the numbers of refugees able to escape, hundreds more are planning to try to make the attempt. They predicted an increase in attempted escapes beginning around Tet and continuing for about three months when the sea is at its calmest.

3. There are rumors circulating in the Songkhla camp that insurgents may attempt to cause some disturbance there during Tet. This

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770058-0517. Unclassified. Sent for information to the Mission in Geneva, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, and Singapore.

<sup>2</sup> Refugees began arriving in Thailand and other countries throughout Southeast Asia from Vietnam after 1975. Many of the refugees fled by boat, and as a result were often referred to as "boat people" or "boat refugees."

is probably generated by refugees themselves and seem unlikely. Camp is located directly across from the district police station.

4. Camp population is now at about 650. This is down from a high of almost 1000 due primarily to fact that Australians, French, and West Germans have taken sizeable numbers from Songkhla in the past month.

5. There has been no sign of WORP involvement in the camp in recent weeks. Signed. Unqte.

**Whitehouse**

---

**154. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, March 14, 1977, 0800Z

5459. For Assistant Secretary Holbrooke from Ambassador Whitehouse. Subj: Future of MAP for Thailand. Ref: (A) State 55153 (B) State 44414 (C) State 43000 (D) State 41170.<sup>2</sup>

1. I am satisfied that the termination of MAP to Thailand after FY-78 will not come as a major shock to the RTG. The Thai have been aware for some time, primarily through contacts between JUSMAGTHAI and the Thai armed forces, that grant military assistance was nearing an end. Termination at the end of FY-77, however, would be received with some concern because the Thai tend to view U.S. military assistance as an indicator of U.S. interest in SEA, in general, and Thailand in particular, and because they are aware that FY-78 MAP for Thailand already has been proposed. Terminating MAP to Thailand, whether after FY-78 or FY-77, would be accepted more easily by the Thai if it does not appear that Thailand is being singled out and specifically

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840084-5459. Secret; Priority; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 55153 to Jakarta, March 11, discussed MAP allocations for Thailand and Indonesia. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840077-2575) Telegram 44414 to multiple posts, February 28, instructed posts to inform host governments of the Presidential request levels for their security assistance. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770069-0212) Telegram 43000 to Jakarta and Bangkok, February 25, described discussions with the SFRC staff regarding security assistance. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770067-0862) Telegram 41170 to multiple posts, February 24, discussed military security assistance program levels. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770063-0639)

excluded from an ongoing worldwide program. That MAP is drawing to a close is, I am confident, understood by General Kriangsak and other senior military officers, as well as by Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials, although the Thai military still tend to believe that the U.S. should make some special concessions for Thailand.

2. As part of the preparation process, I have made a number of speeches in recent weeks to the usual fora—Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, etc.—and have used those occasions to scotch, in unequivocal terms, rumors concerning the return of U.S. military forces to Thailand, while reiterating the continuing friendship, interest and concern of the U.S. In an interview carried in the Thai press March 10, I was reported as saying the U.S. was reducing military and economic aid to Thailand and cutting down on foreign military sales. The article quoted other sources as reporting American military aid had been steadily reduced in the past three years. The article elsewhere recorded FY-77 security assistance levels (\$16 million MAP, \$30 million FMS credits) and stated “lower figures have been requested for Fiscal 1978 but it is not known what final figures will be approved by Congress.” The same article also mentioned the U.S. is phasing down military assistance throughout the world.

3. At this time, when the Thai are extremely uncertain about our intentions toward them, I believe we should avoid any special demarche on this subject. I and appropriate Mission officers in the normal conduct of our relations can and will explain the termination of grant military assistance after FY-78. With the groundwork that already has been laid, I feel we can bring the message across to the RTG without undue trauma to our relationship.

4. It seems to me that other factors are perhaps more critical than the continuation of MAP. As I indicated above, if MAP is discontinued round the world, the Thai will accept the termination here in that context; however, if it appears the Thai have been singled out for some reason or the other, this could be read only as a signal of our disinterest over their security. I believe it is safe to say that other ASEAN countries would reach the same conclusion. As you are aware from Ambassador Newsom’s recent exchange with President Suharto<sup>3</sup> and from analyses you elicited from U.S. Ambassadors in this part of the world, the security of Thailand is much on the minds of these governments and is considered the country in East Asia whose security is most directly threatened at this time.

---

<sup>3</sup> Telegram 3104 from Jakarta, March 10, described Newsom’s meeting with Suharto during which Suharto expressed concern about the vulnerability of Thailand to Communist insurgents. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840072-2568, N770002-0012)

5. In sum, I feel confident we can handle the termination of MAP problem with minimal difficulty, primarily because the Thai are fairly well prepared and because, I assume, it will not appear that Thailand is being specifically excluded from grant assistance programs which others are receiving. I do feel that so long as the MAP and FMS programs continue, Thailand should get some part of the pie.

6. The Thai are aware also that existing legislation calls for the termination of JUSMAGS after FY-77 except with the specific authorization of Congress. An early proposal to the Congress for continuation of JUSMAGTHAI would be reassuring to the RTG and help allay the concern over what policy the U.S. intends to pursue in this area.

7. Department may wish repeat this message to Jakarta for Ambassador Newsom.

**Whitehouse**

---

**155. Memorandum From the Director of the White House Office of Drug Abuse (Bourne) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 6, 1977

SUBJECT

Recommendations from my trip to Burma, Thailand and Laos

I have delayed sending this summary and report to you because of the volume of other materials I have sent you recently. However, the steps I am recommending here that we take in the "Golden Triangle" countries as a result of my trip there may be critical to the success of our worldwide heroin control program for the next four years.

The most important observation overall was the sincere new commitment by the leaders of Burma and Thailand to deal with opium trafficking and the clear resulting reduction in production levels.

*BURMA*—In part because of my previous visits to Burma I was extremely well received, and met with all the top leaders in the government except President Ne Win who was in Switzerland. They also took

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 5, Burma. Secret. Carter wrote at the top of the page, "Have letter texts cleared by Warren—no delay. J." Beneath this notation, an unknown hand wrote, "Done. PM. 6/15."

me by helicopter all over the country including a stop in Mitkyena where no American had been allowed to go for 15 years. In summary my findings included:

(a) There is clearly a total commitment from the top to deal with the narcotics problem. This is in part due to their mushrooming domestic addiction problem, but mainly because of the strong support for their efforts from the international community. Dealing successfully militarily with the traffickers would also result in neutralizing the Shan independence movement.

(b) Although all the opium caravans are being successfully identified they do have a serious transportation problem in moving enough troops quickly to attack the caravans guarded by 300–500 heavily armed guards.

(c) The Burmese are very concerned about the continuing sanctuary given to the trafficking groups, especially the 3rd and 5th Chinese Irregular Force under General Li, and the Shan United Army under Chang Chi Fu by Thailand and it is a continuing block to better Thai/Burmese coordination in the border region.

(d) The Burmese are now very willing to expand cooperation beyond the narcotics area.

(e) Burmese/U.S. relations have improved spectacularly during the three years I have been going there. Much of the credit should go to Ambassador David Osborne.

### *Recommendations*

1. We should strongly reinforce the Burmese commitment. A letter to President Ne Win (draft attached)<sup>2</sup> similar to what you did with the Mexicans would help a great deal.

2. We should proceed to provide them fixed wing aircraft probably four this year, so they can better interdict the opium caravans.

3. We should push the Thais and Burmese for closer cooperation especially in the border area.

4. We will provide them a consultant for six months to help them deal with their own addiction problem.

5. We should look for other areas of cooperation outside narcotics.

*THAILAND*—Again I was very well received and had extensive discussions with Prime Minister Thanin, his wife who is Danish and “strong man” General Kriangsak.

(a) As in Burma, there is now total commitment at the top in Thailand to deal with the narcotics problem. Thanin demonstrated this

---

<sup>2</sup> Not attached. Printed as Document 156.



to me repeatedly even though others in the government may be less enthusiastic.

(b) Corruption is still a serious problem despite Thanin's efforts to deal with it.

(c) The opium crop substitution program seems now to be on track, with coffee becoming a successful alternative crop for the tribes people.

(d) Thai law enforcement agencies have increased dramatically the amount of heroin seized.

(e) The Thai will not deny, for political reasons, sanctuary to the Burmese insurgent groups who are involved in trafficking. They are, however, willing to engage in low key cooperation with the Burmese in the border area [*less than 1 line not declassified*].

(f) Our biggest problem in Thailand is poor leadership in our own embassy.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Recommendations*

1. A supportive letter from you to Prime Minister Thanin, would strongly encourage him, and strengthen his efforts domestically.<sup>4</sup>

2. I will try to get a federation of U.S. coffee companies to support the crop substitution program.

3. We will encourage European nations with heroin problems to share with us the responsibility for keeping the pressure on the Thai government.

4. Keep pushing the Thais for close collaboration with the Burmese.

5. Reassess the leadership in our embassy in Bangkok. I am advising Dick Holbrooke on this issue.

LAOS—A brief visit with relations strained between our mission in Vientiane, and the new Laotian government. I established a good relationship with the Minister of Health, Dr. Khamblieng Pholsena. In summary:

(a) Health problems remain very severe. Help in dealing with unexploded ordnance, artificial limbs and orthopedic surgeons are needed. They also have a severe problem with malaria.

(b) There is no government wide policy for dealing with opium cultivation. There is clearly an element that wishes to get into commercial cultivation. Resolution of this issue will clearly take several months.

(c) The Laotian refugee problem remains severe. Camps I visited in Thailand have tens of thousands of Laotians who desperately need to be resettled.

---

<sup>3</sup> Carter highlighted point (f).

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 1, Document 156.

*Recommendations*

1. Continue an active dialogue with the Laotians around the health and human needs issue.
  2. Try to meet some of their health needs within congressional constraints.
  3. We must wait to allow the opium policy to evolve, making it clear that we oppose their entry into the commercial market.
  4. More attention needs to be paid to resettling the Laotian refugees.
- 

**156. Letter From President Carter to Burmese President Ne Win<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 15, 1977

Dear Mr. President:

I want to express my special thanks and admiration for the deep commitment you have made to deal with the narcotics problem.

Following his recent visit to your country, Dr. Peter Bourne has told me not only of your determination to deal with this problem, but also of the progress you have already made against both the cultivation and the trafficking of drugs.<sup>2</sup>

The entire world community joins in applauding your efforts.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 2, Burma, President U Ne Win, 6/77. No classification marking. Thai Prime Minister Thanin Kraiwichian received an identical letter. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 19, Thailand, Prime Minister Thanin Kraiwichian, 6/77)

<sup>2</sup> See Document 155.

**157. Backchannel Message From the Ambassador to Thailand (Whitehouse) to the Director of the White House Office of Drug Abuse (Bourne) and the Senior Adviser to the Secretary of State and Coordinator for International Narcotic Matters (Falco)<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, June 24, 1977, 0902Z

569. I am sure you are following closely, [*less than 1 line not declassified*] the joint Thai-Burmese operation targeted against narcotics refinery in Burma close to Thai border north of Mae Hong Son. While cooperation between the two countries seems good and forces of both countries are moving steadily towards target, the latest indications are that the traffickers are aware of approaching forces and are beginning to disperse and bury refined narcotics. Operation could wind up with occupation of abandoned refinery with most of narcotics gone.

We are pleased at the recent, detailed exchange of telegrams we have had with Washington on our proposed bonus program for seized narcotics,<sup>2</sup> but, as you know, a program has not rpt not yet been approved. On a one-shot basis, I propose that you arrange to allocate \$30,000 for bonus payments for any narcotics which may be seized in this present Thai-Burmese operation, to provide incentive to forces involved to locate narcotics which may be buried by the withdrawing SUA forces. Indications are that there may have been 100 kilos of heroin equivalent at refinery and thus I suggest a tentative allocation of \$30,000, using our proposed schedule of payments.

If you respond favorably, I plan to inform Thai BPP commander in Chiang Mai that we will pay \$300 per kilo of No. 4 heroin found by elements engaged in the current operation with payments in accordance with the schedule with which he is familiar. I am sure there will be a variety of friendly, Thai-Burmese contacts in course of this operation, and the word that we will pay \$300 per kilo seized in the course of current endeavors may encourage both Thai and Burmese to show

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Subject File, Box 7, Backchannel Messages, Far East, 1/77–5/78. Secret; Sensitive; Immediate. Printed from the copy that was received in the White House Situation Room.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 9765 from Bangkok, May 6, dealt with the Embassy's proposed narcotics bonus payments. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770160–0741) Telegram 133974 to Bangkok, June 9, provided the Department's response to the Embassy's proposal. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770207–0753) Telegram 13561 from Bangkok, June 22, provided the Narcotics Executive Committee response to the proposal. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770222–0341)

additional diligence in searching for buried narcotics and getting it to DEA office in Chiang Mai.

I would propose to have DEA office in Chiang Mai handle the payments, after verifying narcotics contents and weights with Thai police remaining in physical possession of the narcotics. If this one-shot operation does not work at all, we will not rpt not have spent anything. Level of the bonuses we have proposed is, of course, well below current market prices of narcotics, and this keeps us free of sliding into a kind of pre-emptive buy program, whose disadvantages we are all familiar with.

---

**158. Memorandum From Michael Armacost of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Aaron)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 21, 1977

SUBJECT

Thai Political Situation

You asked for comments on this report on the Thai political situation.<sup>2</sup>

—Obviously, the suggestion that military action might be taken between September 7–14 was not a particularly prescient guess.

—Coup rumors are not all that unusual in Bangkok, particularly in the August-September period when the annual promotion and reassignment list for the Army is being drawn up.

—It is clear that the Army has become increasingly unhappy with Prime Minister Thanin. His Cabinet has proven less malleable and less compatible than the military leadership anticipated. Thanin's inflexibility and his doctrinaire anti-communism have caused increasing friction with his more pragmatic colleagues in both the military and civilian

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Armacost Chron Files, Box 4, 9/15–23/77. Secret; Sensitive. Sent for information. Both Aaron and Dodson initialed the top right-hand corner of the page.

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to a September 1 paper produced in the Central Intelligence Agency on the Thai political situation, which documented rumors of a coup in early to mid-September. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 74, Thailand, 1/77–12/79)

bureaucracy. Diplomats are uneasy about the way he has slowed progress toward normal diplomatic relations with Hanoi while irritating Peking through visible dealings with the Taiwanese Government. There is also growing concern that Thanin is excessively intolerant of criticism and that the controls on the press, labor, and the universities are too severe.

—The aggressive and outspoken Minister of Interior, Samak Sundarawej, has emerged as a special anathema to the military. Yet all efforts to persuade Thanin to jettison Samak—or for that matter any member of his Cabinet—have failed.

—Though pressure from the Army to remove Thanin has been building for some months, several factors have combined to protect him. First, there appears to be no readily available civilian candidate who is willing to serve and is acceptable to both parties. Both Admiral Sa-ngat<sup>3</sup> and General Kriangsak have indicated their availability, but there is no firm evidence that the military has coalesced behind either one. Second, the Army remains loathe to return to military rule fearing it would strain relations with the United States and alienate the Thai public. Third, there is no national crisis at present that might be used to publicly justify the abrupt removal of the Prime Minister. Fourth, the King still appears reluctant to abandon Thanin, though doubts within the Royal Family about Thanin's effectiveness have increased.

—The flurry of coup rumors were essentially generated by Kriangsak's belief that he and General Yot<sup>4</sup> might be dropped from the active duty role in the October change-of-command list. The current tension may well subside when the new military chain of command is established. I suspect that Kriangsak will be promoted to Supreme Commander of Thai Armed Forces, and Yot will move up to Deputy Commander of the Royal Thai Army.

—Over the longer run, however, Thanin's chances for survival are increasingly fragile. His base of support in the Military Council has been eroded, and it appears the military lacks only a consensus on his successor to seriously demand his removal.

—Kriangsak has emerged as the most likely successor. He clearly is the most capable in the military hierarchy. But whether he can put it all together remains uncertain.

---

<sup>3</sup> Admiral Sa-Ngat Chalyou, a member of the National Policy Council, led the October 1976 coup.

<sup>4</sup> Lieutenant General Yot Thephasadin Na Ayutthaya, Deputy Commander of the Royal Thai Army and a member of the National Policy Council.

# 159. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Bangkok, October 10, 1977, 0656Z

23183. Subject: Talk With General Kriangsak. Ref: A. Secto 10021, B. Bangkok 22519, C. State 238364.<sup>2</sup>

1. In the course of a golf game with General Kriangsak on October 8, I carried out the Department's instructions and made all of the points suggested in Ref A.

2. Kriangsak said he fully understood our position and agreed with our point of view. Obviously any change in government should be brought about in a way which did minimum damage to Thailand's image abroad. Kriangsak said that while opposition to Prime Minister Thanin was widespread there was no rpt no support in any quarter for the Young Turks and the kind of military coup they might be inclined to launch. They had no program, no policy and no popular following. Under these circumstances he found it hard to see how they could do anything.

3. In the course of the morning we had chatted about the gas project in the Gulf of Siam and the just-cancelled visit to America of the Minister of Industry who was going to visit US Steel in connection with the potash/soda ash project in the northeast. Kriangsak then volunteered the thought that what Thailand needed was a good "manager." The best manager in the country was Kasem Chatikawanit of the electricity generating authority of Thailand. He said Kasem was the kind of person who should be the next Prime Minister. (Comment: As there has been considerable speculation over the likelihood that Kriangsak might well see himself in that role I found this a particularly interesting remark.)

4. Comment: As indicated above, Kriangsak fully understands our position and I am convinced that neither he nor any other political

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840084-2093. Secret; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram Secto 10021 from the Secretary's Delegation in New York, September 30, outlined U.S. policy on Thai internal politics and Indochina insurgencies. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840072-2591) Telegram 22519 from Bangkok, October 3, clarified U.S. policy regarding Thai internal politics. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840084-2095) Telegram 238364 to Bangkok, October 3, addressed planned demonstrations in Thailand. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840084-2172)

leaders in this country believe that we are involving ourselves in the Thai political scene.

Whitehouse

---

**160. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, October 21, 1977, 0701Z

25032. Subject: Thai Coup: Sequence of Events.

1. The sequence of events leading to the ouster of Prime Minister Thanin and his Cabinet unfolded following a meeting of the Prime Minister's Advisory Council (PMAC) on the morning of Oct. 20. At about noon the military was placed on full alert, and at 1630 the police force in Bangkok was ordered on alert.

2. By mid afternoon Thanin had convened a Cabinet meeting at Government House attended by most, but not all, of the Cabinet Ministers (Minister of Interior Samak was reportedly not present).

3. At approximately 1700 three truckloads of infantry troops and one tank took up positions in front of Government House. The PM and Cabinet were informed of their dismissal, and at 1800 Radio Thailand broadcast the official announcement that the Thai military, under the leadership of Adm. Sangat Chaloyu, had assumed control of the government.

4. Throughout the evening Radio Thailand carried a series of five announcements and seven orders issued by the new government leaders, calling themselves "the Revolutionary Party" (RP). The statements, designed to explain the group's action and to ensure public order and understanding, have been reported septel by FBIS Bangkok.<sup>2</sup>

5. In a show of solidarity, six key leaders of the RP, including Gen. Kriangsak, the military service commanders and the Director General of Police appeared on television at 2200 to inform the nation they had been granted an audience with the King and assured viewers the new

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770387-0439. Limited Official Use, Priority. Sent for information to CINCPAC for POLAD, DIA, Chiang Mai, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Rome for Holbrooke, Singapore, Songkhla, and Udorn.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

government would uphold the three principles of nation, religion, monarchy.

6. As reported earlier, the pace of life in Bangkok and upcountry remains virtually unchanged. Our Consuls in Chiang Mai and Songkhla report that events have had no rpt no noticeable impact there. Thai citizens were initially ordered not rpt not to leave the country, but this order was lifted after being in effect only a few hours, and few travelers were affected by it. The travel ban did not rpt not affect foreign travelers or international air service.

6. Former Prime Minister Thanin and all members of the former Cabinet are reported free and are not rpt not under arrest or custody. Government has ordered all ex-Ministers not rpt not to leave the country.

Comment: Events leading to dismissal of Thanin Cabinet transpired in orderly fashion and without bloodshed. The move appears to have had the full support of Thailand's top military leaders, and the situation as of noon October 21 appears stable. The composition of the Revolutionary Party is the same as that of the former Prime Minister's Advisory Council, with the exception that the late Gen. Arun Thawathasin (killed in the abortive March 26 coup)<sup>3</sup> was replaced by Director-General of Police Gen. Monchai Phankongchuen.

**Whitehouse**

---

<sup>3</sup> The Embassy reported on the attempted coup in telegrams 6577 and 6579 from Bangkok, March 26, and 6587 from Bangkok, March 27. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770104-0232, D770104-0285, and D770105-0240)



**161. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, October 28, 1977, 1001Z

26100. Subject: Atmospherics in Bangkok One Week After the Coup of Oct 20.

1. As of close of business Oct 28 political situation in Bangkok remained calm, but there is abundant evidence [*less than 1 line not declassified*] from other Embassies, and from the lack of much definitive movement that there are considerable differences among the Revolutionary Party leaders on the form and structure of the new Thai Government. The coup leaders have maintained an overt image of unity and direction, but behind the scenes maneuvering continues regarding the structure and leadership of the government. The situation is best described as fluid, with most factional activity turning on the efforts of the Royal Thai Army to ensure that it is the dominant influence in the life of the country.

2. Despite Oct 24 announcement of cumbersome civilian governmental structure (with Directors of Military Affairs and Civilian Affairs under Revolutionary Party Secretariat), military leadership does appear moving toward a normal Cabinet structure with mixed military/civilian composition. Indeed, a good part of the present maneuvering appears to relate to apportionment of positions in such a Cabinet.

3. Embassy is continuing to watch situation closely, but after a week of confusion following the Oct 20 coup the only clear development we can discern is that Kriangsak is increasingly likely to seek the Prime Ministership, rather than deal through a civilian Prime Minister, as we believe he was earlier inclined to do.

**Whitehouse**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770398–0122. Confidential. Sent for information to Chiang Mai, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, London for Holbrooke, Manila, Singapore, Songkhla, Udorn, Vientiane, DIA, and CINCPAC also for POLAD.

**162. Letter From President Carter to Thai Prime Minister  
Kriangsak<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 27, 1977

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

Thank you for your expression of good will toward the United States. You may be sure that I intend to maintain the friendship and close cooperation which have so long existed between our countries.

With the end of the Indochinese War, Southeast Asia entered an era full of promise and challenge. The steps you have taken toward more normal relations with the states of Indochina will help the region's chances for stability and peace. Thailand's continued strong support for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations also promises to spur economic development and regional progress.

Other decisions taken by your government during its first weeks show that the United States and Thailand share many important objectives. I applaud the steps you are taking to provide greater protection for the individual, to enhance popular participation in the political process, and to better the lot of the Thai people—especially the rural poor. Your statement to your country on Human Rights Day<sup>2</sup> shows you share my conviction that human rights must be a central element of both domestic and foreign policy.

Thailand's humane treatment of Indochinese refugees also attests to your country's mercy and compassion. The United States is continuing to help move refugees from Thailand for resettlement abroad, and we support the activities of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees—both in Thailand and elsewhere. I know the refugee problem is difficult for your country, but I hope you will continue your humanitarian approach in this distressing situation.

I welcome your efforts to wipe out narcotics production and trafficking, by both national and international means. We share a belief in the importance of this task.

I believe the periodic economic consultations my country has recently begun with the ASEAN nations will help us work together for regional economic growth.

Our economic assistance to Thailand is presently modest, since your relatively healthy economy makes major new United States pro-

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 50, Thailand: 1977–1978. No classification marking. Kriangsak was appointed Prime Minister on November 11.

<sup>2</sup> December 10.

grams seem to be unnecessary. As you continue your efforts to improve the lives of those most in need, however, there should be more chances for U.S.-Thai cooperation, both in the private sector and in rural development.

I hope my country will play an active role in working for peace and progress in Southeast Asia—and that I will be able to consult with you and your ASEAN colleagues as problems arise.

My best wishes for the New Year to you and your government—and to His Majesty, the King.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter

---

**163. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, February 10, 1978, 1002Z

4131. Subject: Prime Minister Kriangsak Invites President Carter to Visit Thailand.

1. The Embassy has received from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a copy of a letter dated 31 January from Prime Minister Kriangsak to President Carter which the Ministry say has been forwarded to the White House via Thai Embassy Washington. The letter responds to the President's letter of 27 December<sup>2</sup> and invites President and Mrs. Carter to visit Thailand. Text is as follows:

2. Begin text: Dear Mr. President: Please accept my sincere thanks for your letter of 27 December 1977, in which you were good enough to speak highly of my government's policy.

3. I could not agree more with your observation that the conclusion of the hostilities of the Indochina conflict has ushered in a new era for Southeast Asia. Although there seem to be bright prospects for friendly relations and cooperation for this region, I realize only too well that the tasks that lie ahead for Thailand and indeed, other countries in the area are most difficult and challenging. Knowing as I do your deep

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 50, Thailand: 1977–1978. Confidential; Exdis.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 162.

interest in foreign affairs, I am certain that you must by now be thoroughly acquainted with recent developments in Southeast Asia.

4. As my government desires nothing but peace and stability, I have set myself to work toward that direction from the very beginning since the assumption of my office as Prime Minister. And it is gratifying to note that my initiatives to seek normalization of relations with the Indochinese states, as called for by the joint communique of the ASEAN heads of government after their meeting in Kuala Lumpur in August of last year,<sup>3</sup> have begun to indicate encouraging results. Although each country must regard, as we in Thailand do, the maintenance of peace and stability, which are prerequisites to the preservation of independence and sovereignty as primarily its own responsibility, I hope you will share my view that these conditions can hardly be attained without wholehearted support and cooperation from all major powers.

5. In view of last year's drought and floods which have caused serious damages to our agricultural production, my government is at the same time trying its best to alleviate the plight of the people, particularly the rural poor. More importantly, the provision of a more equitable distribution of income ranks high in the list of my government's priorities. Hopefully, this measure will help remove the seeds of dissatisfaction among the people in sensitive areas.

6. Insofar as human rights in Thailand are concerned Miss Patricia Derian who recently visited Thailand<sup>4</sup> to obtain first-hand information on matters relating to this question must have already submitted a report to you. I only wish to add that in considering this question, perhaps other factors such as different cultures and the stages of socio-political development of individual countries should also be taken into account.

7. Being a developing country, the large and continuing influx of Indochinese refugees into Thailand is a great strain on our economy with its consequent adverse effect upon our efforts at national development. As next-door neighbour and out of humanitarian reasons, we have to shoulder much of the responsibility. While we are grateful for United States generous support in this respect, we feel that the overall assistance given to us thus far by various sources is still too short to meet our needs and we would welcome more cooperation and economic assistance from friendly sources, including your great country. My

---

<sup>3</sup> The ASEAN Summit took place August 4-5, 1977. See David A. Andelman, "5 Southeast Asian Nations Agree on Economic Cooperation in Area," *New York Times*, August 6, 1977, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Derian traveled to Southeast Asia in January. She visited Thailand January 16-19. See footnotes 8 and 9, Document 125.

government considers that this is an international problem that needs international solutions. I have stated this on many occasions, and I only wish to reiterate to you to urge other countries too, especially the developed ones, to follow your example.

8. We in Thailand still regard the United States as our erstwhile friend and ally, and will do everything we can to cooperate with you for our common interest and concern. I wish to reassure you that it is the firm intention of the Government of Thailand to maintain this special relationship with the United States. I believe Representative Lester Wolff who has been in Thailand many times is among the best to testify to you on our sincerity.

9. In this connection, I am convinced that a visit by the President of the United States to Thailand would not only enable you to feel for yourself the strong bonds of friendship we in Thailand have always had for the Government and people of the United States, but also serve to cement our already close relationship which we have mutually been enjoying over the years. Indeed, I believe that you would find the visit helpful in getting a better understanding of the overall situation in Thailand, and at the same time contribute to our mutual cooperation, both on the bilateral level and within the framework of ASEAN.

10. Therefore on behalf of the Government and people of Thailand and on my own behalf, it is my great pleasure to extend to you and Mrs. Carter a most cordial invitation to visit Thailand at your convenience. I look forward to receiving you and the First Lady in Bangkok in the not too distant future. Meanwhile, I extend to you my best wishes for your continued good health, happiness, and success. End text.

11. Note: Exdis caption is being used so that Dept. will be in control of distribution of text.

**Whitehouse**

**164. Letter From President Carter to Thai Prime Minister Kriangsak<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, February 21, 1978

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

Thank you for your letter of January 31, 1978.<sup>2</sup> I very much appreciate receiving your thoughts on the current situation in Thailand and Southeast Asia and the policies of your Government. Your references to the long-standing ties between our two countries which have led to our special friendship is most welcome.

I also wish to thank you for your gracious invitation to visit Thailand. Unfortunately, a large number of key domestic and foreign issues prevent me from accepting your invitation this year.

I have, though, asked Vice President Mondale to act as my personal representative in visiting several nations of the region, including Thailand.<sup>3</sup> His trip is a clear indication of the importance which we attach to Asia and the Pacific, and particularly to continuing and strengthening our close relations with special friends and allies. I am pleased that the dates he has suggested are convenient for you and am certain that he will be received by your Government and people with the same warmth and hospitality evidenced in your letter to me. He speaks for me and with my full confidence.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 50, Thailand: 1977–1978. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 163.

<sup>3</sup> Mondale visited Southeast Asia April 29–May 10. See Documents 129, 167, and 168.

**165. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, April 25, 1978, 1100Z

12048. Subject: Vice President Visit: Thai Refugee Situation.

1. We will be forwarding by septel<sup>2</sup> our statistical analysis of boat case situation in Thailand. In sum, refugee population in boat case camps in Songkhla and Laem Sing is again dramatically increasing to over 1000 in each. Further, total boat case refugee arrivals in Thailand to date in April have reached 713. April may possibly be record month for boat case arrivals exceeding October 1977 figure of 858.

2. As Dept is aware, PriMin Kriangsak's decision to reverse Thai policy of refusing boat cases was made over strong opposition of the Ministry of Interior operating levels as well as other elements in RTG. This decision to continue acceptance of boat case refugees was based essentially on USG approaches and in expectation that our upcoming programs would provide major relief. Despite continuing serious bureaucratic opposition to Kriangsak's decision regarding boat case refugees, to date we have had no evidence of turning away of boat case refugees from the two established camps since December 10. However, MOI resentment of Kriangsak's decision and our demarches leading to it remain strong and there are continuing pressures at RTG working levels to adopt a de facto policy of discouraging boat case arrivals. (Senior MOI officers still on occasion announce publicly that Thai policy is to send boat case refugees away, despite PriMin Kriangsak's decision and actual practice.)

3. RTG approach to land case refugees has always been more ambiguous. Essentially, RTG policy discouraging refugees from crossing the Mekong is implemented by governors and local officials in a widely varying manner. On at least three occasions, latest being March 27 incident in Chiang Rai area, local officials have apparently engaged in forceable repatriation of individual refugee groups, in effect turning them over to Lao authorities. More general pattern has ranged from acceptance of refugees by Nan Governor, and more recently the Nongkhai Governor, through verbal efforts to dissuade refugees from entering Thailand to coercive measures forcing refugees across Mekong, but

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Foreign Trip Files, Box 129, [Vice President's Visit to Asia: 4/29–5/10/78]: Thailand—Diplomatic Trip Cables [2/13–6/5/78]. Confidential; Priority; Exdis.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably telegram 12141 from Bangkok, April 27, which addressed the increase of boat refugee arrivals in Thailand. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780180–0059)

falling short of actually turning them over to Lao officials. Overall result of this policy has been a significant decline in number of land refugees entering Thailand. However monthly statistics show that fair numbers are in fact slipping across border. In particular case of Hmong fleeing from Vietnamese/Lao troops in Phu Bia area and crossing into Nongkhai, RTG is allowing their entry, despite initial negative attitudes of some local officials.

4. Despite tough stance on refugee arrivals, we are also receiving indication that Thai officialdom is studying seriously question of local settlement of at least some land refugees already in Thailand. UNHCR once more April 25 urged this, with lure of significant UNHCR program monies available this year. We expect that in one way or another, PriMin may wish to surface at least general outline of current Thai thinking on local settlement in his discussion with Vice President. Ambassador is scheduled to meet PriMin on April 28 and we may have better reading at that time.<sup>3</sup>

5. During visit Kriangsak and others may press hard on refugee question and expect Vice President to confirm our intentions regarding major on-going refugee acceptance program as well as our readiness to assist RTG in bearing refugee burden in Thailand. They hope for exposition of concrete USG projected actions to take sizeable number of refugees from both boat case and land camps. RTG obviously expect that our recently announced intention to admit 25,000 Indochinese refugees will permit a significant reduction in current refugee population in Thailand.<sup>4</sup> They may be also unrealistically hopeful that virtually all of that number will be from Thailand.

6. In this situation believe it highly important that at a minimum Attorney General's decision regarding new parole authority be made in advance of Vice President's arrival and that we be able to explain clearly what impact of new program for Thailand will be over next year. If Attorney General's decision is not made before visit, Thai may well get impression of continuing delay and drift on our part while their refugee population again begins to mount. This could have an extremely negative impact on Thai policy, particularly when RTG senior levels become aware of latest increase in boat case refugee arrivals. We fear that we are heading for major difficulties in coming months in any event, however hopefully combination of Attorney General's decision and Vice President's visit would strengthen Kriangsak's deter-

---

<sup>3</sup> Telegram 12328 from Bangkok, April 28, summarized the meeting. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780183-0705)

<sup>4</sup> Derian announced the new program on April 12. See footnote 10, Document 125.



mination to keep to his more humanitarian approach to refugee acceptance.

7. Action Recommended: Early decision by Attorney General on new Indochinese parole program to be announced before Vice President's arrival in Bangkok.<sup>5</sup>

**Whitehouse**

---

<sup>5</sup> See footnote 4, Document 126.

---

**166. Letter From President Carter to Thai Prime Minister  
Kriangsak<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 27, 1978

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

I am delighted that Vice President Mondale is visiting Thailand and several of its neighbors. The Vice President speaks authoritatively for me, and I want you to know that I attach the utmost importance to his trip. It affirms the continuity of our interest in Southeast Asia.

In his discussions with you, the Vice President will be seeking to understand the concerns, goals, and policies of your Government. He will, in turn, present to you our own thoughts on how the United States can best contribute to the peace and vitality of the region. I look forward to hearing from him your views on interests of mutual concern.

I look forward to meeting you personally, and would like to extend to you an invitation for a visit to Washington in 1979.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Overseas Assignments—Trip Files, 1977–80, Mondale Papers, Box 21, Vice President's Visit to the Pacific, 4/29/78–5/11/78: Thailand (5/4/78–5/5/78)—President's Letter to PM Kriangsak. No classification marking.

## 167. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Embassy in Indonesia<sup>1</sup>

Bangkok, May 6, 1978, 0840Z

13013. Subject: Vice President's Trip to Thailand: May 4 Meeting With Prime Minister Kriangsak.

Following is uncleared memcon for approval by Vice President's party:

1. Vice President and his party had two-hour substantive meeting with Prime Minister Kriangsak and senior officers of RTG. Among others present on Thai side were Deputy Prime Minister Sunthon Hongladarom, Foreign Minister Uppadit Pachariyangkun, Defense Minister General Lek Naeomali, Industry Minister Kasem Chatikawanit, and Air Marshal Sit Sawettasila, National Security Council Secretary General. Discussion covered USG policy in East Asia, RTG view of regional development, Kriangsak's trip to Peking, security matters including military assistance and FMS credit, refugees, narcotics and range of specific economic matters.

2. After initial welcoming comments, the Vice President conveyed to Prime Minister his appreciation for the kind and warm reception. He also gave Prime Minister personal letter from President<sup>2</sup> and conveyed President's personal invitation to the Prime Minister for a visit to Washington in early 1979. Vice President indicated how much we valued such a high-level meeting and importance of President getting to know Prime Minister Kriangsak personally. Kriangsak quickly responded indicating his delight in accepting invitation.

3. Overview: In discussing regional matters, Kriangsak gave long, rambling exposition, stressing importance of Thailand to the security, not only for Southeast Asia and East Asia as a whole, but also the U.S. Kriangsak noted importance of Manila Pact<sup>3</sup> and USG mutual defense treaties with ROK, ROC and ANZUS.

4. Kriangsak said that if U.S. does not weigh its treaty obligations seriously with each of these countries, inevitably speculation will spread as to whether USG is reliable. Kriangsak said that the USG has helped the free nations in area with military and economic assistance in the past and today these countries are facing the same enemy. He

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780193-0911. Confidential; Priority; Exdis. Sent for information to the Department of State.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 166.

<sup>3</sup> The Manila Pact, formally the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty, signed September 8, 1954, established SEATO. (6 UST 81; TIAS 3170)

expressed the view that it would be advisable for the USG to “re-arm” these free nations, discreetly, if not openly. He specifically requested that USG not sell modern equipment nor provide advanced technology to Vietnam and PRC. He said Communist countries have been sent enough equipment “directly.” In addition, these Communist countries are getting equipment from Japan, Germany and other countries. Thailand would not like to see the PRC and Vietnam stronger. Rather, the U.S. should focus on the defense of the ROK and Japan and the political and economic stability of Southeast Asia.

5. Kriangsak asked that the USG use its influence on Japan to be more forthcoming in providing economic and technical assistance to Thailand and ASEAN. He said that Thailand has received “lots of promises,” as well as many survey teams from Japan, however, the Japanese are “very short on delivery.”

6. In response the Vice President noted that when he was asked by the press why he came to Thailand, he stated his purpose was to reaffirm our commitment to the security of the region and to this country. We are a Pacific nation and we intend to fulfill our role in the area. It was in Thailand that we entered into our first agreement in Asia and we intend to meet our obligations. The Vice President noted that in Manila we have made significant progress in negotiations and we expect to preserve the bases and air fields ensuring that both friend and foe understand that our presence in the area is certain and firm. With regard to technology transfer, the Vice President noted that we do have legislation controlling such sales and there are no military sales to the PRC.

7. Continuing, the Vice President noted that, with regard to military assistance, he wanted to assure the RTG that we will respond affirmatively to its request for the F-5E airplanes. We are prepared to sell them if the RTG wishes to procure these aircraft. We hope that this decision on our part will be of assistance to the RTG. The Vice President indicated that we have affirmed our treaty commitments, including ANZUS and the Manila Pact. Further, we have requested Congress for \$30 million for FMS credits in '79 and we will do our best to increase this level in the out years.

8. With regard to Japan, the Vice President pointed out a series of actions we have taken to secure greater Japanese involvement in the area. The Japanese have increased their defense spending, they have made a larger contribution to ADB, and they have made their first substantial contribution to the UNHCR. Citing Prime Minister Kriangsak's own military service in Korea, the Vice President said that the House International Relations Committee just approved our \$800 million equipment transfer request. In addition, our air strength in Korea has been increased, and we are slowing the ground forces withdrawal rate.

9. Military Assistance: Prime Minister Kriangsak expressed appreciation for the military assistance which the U.S. has provided in the past. However, he stressed the importance of higher levels of FMS credit and pointed out that the current FMS level was "not enough." Kriangsak said that the RTG is now forced to spend significant amounts of its own money for equipment procured abroad. To relieve this burden, it needs much more FMS credits. Further, he said the USG procurement under FMS was "too slow" and the amounts we are now providing are not enough to procure all of their needed equipment from the U.S. Consequently, the RTG has had to find other channels in Europe for equipment procurement where the prices and terms are better. Kriangsak said all of the RTG's present equipment is U.S. and the RTG would like to standardize its weapons system.

10. He then turned to Defense Minister Lek for his comments. Lek touched on concern over the impression of withdrawal of "Free World involvement" in Southeast Asia and the consequences to Thailand of being caught in the rivalry between the USSR and PRC. Lek brought up the Nixon Doctrine and its possible impact on the Manila Pact. Holbrooke noted that since so much has happened since, it would not be useful to engage in an extended discussion of the Nixon Doctrine. Lek then noted that RTG would like, if possible, to have reinstitution of MAP grant "reconsidered." However, recognizing negative congressional attitudes, Lek said RTG hopes that "as first step" U.S. would increase FMS credit. Lek noted that much of Thai military equipment was obsolete, with increasing difficulties in getting spare parts. He hoped that USG would permit the Thai to identify and procure the type of equipment which it needs now to modernize the Thai forces. In closing, Lek also requested USG consideration of prolonging terms of payment for FMS credit sales, as well as giving outright to the RTG the Integrated Communications System (ICS) which was turned over to Supreme Command at time of U.S. military withdrawal. Ambassador Whitehouse suggested that the question of keeping the ICS system functioning properly to meet RTG needs might be discussed separately in ongoing discussions with the Embassy.

11. Vice President Mondale explained that our global arms transfer policy will not prevent us from being a reliable arms supplier. With regard to procurement under FMS credit, we will be glad to examine specific Thai requests. However, the Vice President pointed out that with regard to MAP grant assistance, he must be "discouraging." If he did otherwise, it would be a disservice. The Congress has been very clear on this issue and wants to bring grant assistance programs to an end. He asked Mr. Abramowitz to comment on the question of FMS terms. Abramowitz said that we would look again at the question of terms but he could not be encouraging on that score. As the RTG

knows, our terms are usually based on world-wide policy criteria and it is not likely we would be able to do much about them.

12. In summing up, the Vice President indicated we did not attempt to set the RTG priorities and that we, for our part, will consider specific requests made by the RTG. Kriangsak indicated that he would only reinforce Defense Minister Lek's request for softer terms, better prices and shorter delivery time. The Vice President indicated he would be happy to explore these questions. Kriangsak went on to note that RTG is endeavoring to achieve self reliance but this takes time. Thailand has no defense industry and needs to procure from other countries the equipment needed to modernize its armed forces. This includes sophisticated weapons since its neighbors already have MIG-21s and other modern equipment.

13. Economic Assistance: Prime Minister Kriangsak expressed appreciation for U.S. economic assistance efforts noting the serious difficulties facing the RTG, including inflation and unemployment. The RTG is taking measures to improve the economic situation. Since the U.S. has a favorable trade balance the RTG would "welcome" the U.S. accepting more exports from Thailand.

14. The Vice President noted that we have increased our economic assistance [garble-level?] to Thailand. When the new administration came into office it reviewed overall aid policy. We saw it was going in the wrong direction, phasing out. We decided to give greater assistance to Thailand recognizing that the previous year levels were inadequate. We decided to reverse this trend and although the dollar levels are not high they do demonstrate a turning around of our aid program for Thailand. Additionally, our new legislation on OPIC also strengthens our ability to assist economically. Beyond that we are fighting off strong protectionist trends in our own country. On GSP, we have decided not to attempt to change the legislation now for fear that any new legislation would be a step backward. We also have had useful discussions with the ASEAN group on MTN.

15. US-ASEAN Dialogue: The Vice President noted our deep interest in a high-level US-ASEAN dialogue in Washington this August.<sup>4</sup> To accord with its importance, we believe it should be at the Ministerial level. We believe that such a high-level meeting would be able to make significant progress and would be a major recognition of our support for ASEAN and our wish to help in its development. FonMin Uppadit responded, briefly describing current status of ASEAN consideration of this. FonMin indicated that at ASEAN June 14–16 meeting ASEAN Ministers would make final decision on question of Ministerial partici-

---

<sup>4</sup> August 3–4. See Document 131.

pation. Vice President underscored our view that developing a dialogue with ASEAN at the highest levels is the most profitable course holding the greatest prospect for success. Prime Minister Kriangsak asked whether it would be convenient to hold the Ministerial in June after the ASEAN meeting in Bangkok. FonMin Uppadit interjected pointing to difficulties of getting all Foreign Ministers at one place together at the same time. He asked whether it would be possible to schedule the Ministerial meeting at UNGA when all the Foreign Ministers would be in New York. The Vice President indicated we could possibly consider this but there will be many Foreign Ministers in New York during the UNGA and it would be very difficult to get either the focus or attention which we believe the dialogue warrants. Prime Minister Kriangsak indicated that the August date would be all right from his point of view. He said the RTG would secure other ASEAN views and inform us after the June ASEAN consultations in Bangkok.

16. Returning to subject of Japan, Prime Minister Kriangsak noted USG trade deficit, suggested that USG press the Japanese harder to reduce it and then try to buy more from Thailand. The Vice President indicated that if Thailand had any recommendations on what to try on the Japanese we would be delighted to hear them. We have pressed the Japanese steadily to reduce the trade deficit. We have also stressed the importance to the Japanese and other major countries of sharing the burden so that less developed countries would not pay the penalty. These have been very difficult discussions but progress has been made.

17. The Prime Minister also noted the RTG's concern regarding the disposal of tin from our stockpile. Mr. Heginbotham explained that there are several bills on this before Congress. However we could assure the RTG that there will be coordination with other countries and that it is not our intention to disrupt the tin market.

18. Refugees: Turning to the refugee situation the Prime Minister summarized the situation. He noted that there are over 100,000 refugees now in Thailand with the number of boat cases increasing daily. The Thais saw no easing of the flow of refugees in the future since Vietnamese have moved to more restrictive measures in the Delta and with the Chinese in Saigon. Thailand does not have space to accept all these refugees. Vice President Mondale requested Air Marshal Sit to give a brief summary of the refugee situation. According to Sit, over the longer term the RTG does believe that the boat people will continue to arrive in increased numbers. Because of Vietnamese repressive measures, a large number of Cholon Chinese are fleeing. There is increased repression in Laos and Cambodia leading to a continued flow of refugees out of those countries. The RTG estimates that the refugee population in Thailand will increase monthly at about the rate of 2,000 persons. The RTG has been waiting for the U.S. to proceed with a long-range

program to assist it and relieve the burden now falling on Thailand. The RTG also hopes the U.S. will ask other countries to take more refugees.

19. In responding, the Vice President indicated he is pleased to say that the Attorney General has informed Congress of our intention to proceed with our 25,000 person parole program for Indochinese. About 20,000 of these will come from Thailand.<sup>5</sup>

20. The Prime Minister expressed his warmest appreciation. He asked also that the USG approach other countries to increase their acceptance of refugees. The Vice President noted that the Japanese, for the first time, were going to take some refugees and he called attention to the French, Canadian and other country programs.

21. More generally, the Vice President explained that we see the refugee situation as one of the most heartbreaking problems facing the world. In our opinion, Thailand has been forthcoming and humane in its handling of this problem and we will press other countries to do more. We will do everything we can to increase the flow. The Vice President said that INS intends to assign two INS officers to Bangkok and we are working to increase UNHCR funding. We would also be ready to provide funds for an overall long-term approach for those refugees who have to stay in Thailand. Further, we would be willing to take the leadership among the developed countries to assist this long-term settlement in Thailand and contribute substantially ourselves. Vice President noted that we would be prepared to provide \$2 million to help the Thai in initial planning if that would be of assistance. He noted that he knows of no other problem which so tests all humanity.

22. The Vice President brought up the question of reports of forced repatriation. He noted our opposition and how poorly received such actions were. Kriangsak responded that he could assure the Vice President that he has given two orders, one covering land cases and the other boat cases, instructing that they are not to be pushed back. The orders are to receive everyone whether both boat cases or land people.

23. Prime Minister Kriangsak then went on to make the following points. First, he said that he was glad to know that the Vice President agreed that the refugees were not a Thai problem or U.S. problem alone. Secondly, for humanitarian reasons and “true to the Thai cultural tradition” Thailand would permit the entry of refugees. Thirdly, if any of the refugees are to return to their own lands it will be voluntary, Thailand will not push them back.

24. Kriangsak pointed out that Thailand does not regard boat cases as refugees. However, provided that Embassies (sic) give assurances that those who arrive will be sent abroad over some period of time,

---

<sup>5</sup> See footnote 4, Document 126.



Thailand had agreed to accept the boat cases. Kriangsak again expressed his appreciation for our help and his hope that U.S. assistance could be forthcoming. He also asked whether the U.S. and other ASEAN countries could ask the Indochinese Communist states to guarantee the safe return to their countries of refugees who wish to do so.

25. Prime Minister Kriangsak suggested that the USG ask all other developed countries to take more refugees as the U.S. has done. If there is not a greater added flow it will take many years for the refugee problem to disappear. The Vice President indicated that we were in complete agreement on this matter and that he would follow the Prime Minister's advice. He will urge a quick study of the problem and a consortium of developed nations to assist all refugees.

26. Mr. Holbrooke asked if many refugees were ethnic Chinese. Air Marshal Sit noted that in the Songkhla boat camp about 70 percent were Chinese. Holbrooke indicated that at the highest levels we have expressed to the Government of Taiwan the need to take more ethnic Chinese refugees. While not publicizing the matter, we have brought pressure on the Taiwanese to be more forthcoming. He noted that in relation to its responsibility, Taiwan has done poorly.

27. Narcotics Situation: Prime Minister turned to the narcotics problem. He said this problem can not be dealt with by one country alone. After decades of efforts to combat trafficking and narcotics, the situation is worse, the number of addicts is increasing and it is important that there be greater cooperation in the enforcement efforts as well as other measures to suppress narcotics trafficking.

28. Kriangsak said that on the enforcement side, the RTG needs support for its plan to set aside 4-5 platoons to be dedicated only to narcotics work. The platoons would be moveable from one narcotics area to another and kept ready for action at all times. They would have to be flexible and air-transportable so that they could be dropped anywhere. This would be a big deterrent. However, Thailand needs some more helicopters. Thailand also needs U.S. support on crop substitution. Kriangsak said he would like to have taken the Vice President to the north to show him what Thailand has done in this area. Coffee and fruit and other crops are now growing.

29. The Vice President said that the Prime Minister's comments were very encouraging and we share his deep concern about drugs. For our part, we have been very encouraged by Thai efforts in the narcotics area. The President has been deeply appreciative as well and in many different environments has noted his appreciation for Thailand's efforts.

30. The Vice President said he was particularly heartened to hear that the crop substitution program was going well. He said that we are prepared to receive any specific Thai requests on crop substitution



but of course we will have to review the specific requirements. However we want to be helpful and we will continue to support Thai efforts in this area.

31. On the helicopter question, Ambassador Whitehouse pointed out that we do believe that the seven existing helicopters are sufficient for the present pattern of activity. He suggested that both sides should continue to discuss our varying views on the need for additional helicopters. The Prime Minister said that if the RTG does not have sufficient equipment, the traffickers would know this and the deterrent value would be lost.

32. In summing up, the Vice President said that we would study and give attention to RTG requests in the crop substitution and enforcement areas as well as other measures of strengthening broader cooperation.

33. Indochina: Kriangsak briefly noted recent Thai actions towards the Indochinese states, including normalization with Vietnam and the likely Ieng Sary visit in the near future. He said that while the RTG is not convinced that Vietnam's long-term intentions are really in support of peace and security in the area, the RTG would try to do whatever it could to maintain and strengthen peaceful relations. Prime Minister Kriangsak asked for our comments on the Thai policy towards Indochina. The Vice President expressed our admiration for the skill and creativity with which the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Uppadit have managed their relations with the Indochinese states. He said that we recognize that the problems are very difficult but we wished the RTG the best of success.

34. In addressing the status of our own relations with the Indochinese states, Holbrooke described the Mansfield Mission<sup>6</sup> which led to the President's decision to initiate discussions with Vietnam. However, the Vietnamese responded with demands for aid. That is unacceptable to both the administration and the Congress. Consequently, there has been no progress towards normalization. However, in our contacts with the Vietnamese we have repeatedly expressed our hope that they will play a peaceful role in the area and have categorically denied that the U.S. is using Thailand as a base against the Indochinese states. We have told the Vietnamese that whatever happens along the border does not concern us and have rejected any charges of our involvement. On Cambodia, the President has given a strong statement of our views of the situation in that unhappy country<sup>7</sup> and we will continue to speak out.

---

<sup>6</sup> Presumably reference is to the Woodcock Commission, of which Mansfield was a member. See Document 8.

<sup>7</sup> For Carter's April 21 statement on human rights in Cambodia, see *Public Papers: Carter, 1978*, Book I, pp. 767–768.

35. China: Prime Minister Kriangsak then moved to his visit to China.<sup>8</sup> He cited the extremely warm and friendly reception he received. He said the visit strengthened Thai-Chinese relations and the PRC expressed its support for Thailand's domestic and foreign policies. On the insurgency, the Chinese indicated they could not "announce" any lessening of their support for the Thai Communist Party. However, the Chinese indicated they understood that the RTG would take whatever actions it deemed necessary within its borders to control the insurgency.

36. Kriangsak said that the Thai asked for Chinese help in easing the Cambodian border situation. The Chinese indicated they would try to help but have "not quite been successful." Teng Hsiao Peng accepted on behalf of himself and Hua Kuo-feng invitations to visit Thailand and the Chinese invited the Royal family to visit. The Chinese indicated to Kriangsak that they support both ASEAN and the Zone of Peace and Prosperity. Kriangsak asked if he could announce this to the world and the Chinese said yes. The Chinese also indicated that they did want to normalize relations with Singapore and Indochina but were willing to wait until the atmosphere was right.

37. In discussing the USSR, the Chinese said the Soviet objective was to destroy China and establish hegemony throughout the world. The Chinese were also worried about Soviet encroachment in Southeast Asia as well as Vietnam and its plans with regard to Indochinese Federation.

38. On China-US relations, the Chinese indicated that they hoped for early normalization but indicated they can wait.<sup>9</sup> When Kriangsak brought up Korea, the Chinese indicated that eventual reunification was something Koreans themselves should decide with no outside involvement. While U.S. forces continue to remain in Korea, the Chinese believe it would be difficult to unify. Kriangsak said he brought up the possibility of South Korea establishing relations with PRC. The Chinese answered that would be "very difficult."

39. On Japan, Kriangsak asked why the Japanese did not sign a normalization treaty. The Chinese said the Japanese were afraid of the Soviets. Overall, Kriangsak said the results of his China visit were very good. He asked our assessment of normalization prospects and Soviet attitudes.

40. The Vice President indicated our appreciation for the briefing and praised the Prime Minister's success in China.

---

<sup>8</sup> March 29–April 4.

<sup>9</sup> The United States normalized relations with the People's Republic of China on January 1, 1979.

41. The Vice President noted that Mr. Brzezinski would be going to Peking. The purpose of the visit is not normalization in the near term but undoubtedly that subject would come up. Mr. Holbrooke asked whether there was any subject of particular interest that Thai might want Mr. Brzezinski to raise. (Kriangsak did not directly respond to this.) The Vice President indicated that we do favor normalization and were glad the Thai had done so. Establishing normal relations is very important in opening communications and in dealing with problem areas. Our appraisal of the USSR reaction is that it is very anxious, given the amount of propaganda and the attention it devotes to the border problems and the Brezhnev visit to the area. All of this points to continuing animosity between the two powers but that should not affect our own efforts for normalization.

42. Manila Treaty-Rusk/Thanat Communique: The Prime Minister asked for the U.S. position on the Manila Treaty and the Rusk/Thanat communique.<sup>10</sup> The Vice President asked Mr. Holbrooke to address this question. Mr. Holbrooke said that the administration reaffirms its commitment under the Manila Pact and understands its bilateral obligations to Thailand under the treaty.

43. Economic Issues: Deputy Prime Minister Sunthon requested that the USG continue to use its influence with Iran and Saudi Arabia to prevent increases in oil prices. The Vice President pointed out that we have and will continue to do so. We have been pressing for price restraint. We recognize the fourfold increase in oil prices had had a major adverse economic impact. A major part of our problem is that we have had no comprehensive energy policy. We have been importing too much oil. With recent congressional developments we hope there will be an energy package soon. The administration believes we must have this to be credible in our dealings with others. We also are looking seriously into alternative sources of energy. In that regard he called attention to the natural gas development in Thailand which he thought would have a major economic impact. He was particularly encouraged by the significant involvement of American firms in this development which will be of such economic importance to Thailand.

44. Industry Minister Kasem spoke briefly on the question of energy. He noted first that the gas negotiations seem to be finally nearing their end. He hoped negotiations could be wound up within this month. He also indicated that Thailand was interested in solar/wing studies as an alternative source of energy but did not want to duplicate any of the work already done in the U.S. He hoped some

---

<sup>10</sup> The Rusk-Thanat joint statement, signed March 6, 1962, pledged U.S. support for Thailand's defense. See Department of State *Bulletin*, March 26, 1962, pp. 498–499.

technology transfer pilot projects could be instituted. The Vice President said we would be happy to send a team to work with the Thai on this. The second major area of importance was water projects for energy generation. Originally the Thai had hoped that the Mekong River project would be useful. However, this involves four countries and is obviously too slow.<sup>11</sup> New thinking is required in this area. Mr. Heginbotham indicated he would be happy to discuss this further while the party is in town.

45. The Vice President referred to the LANDSAT program. Kriangsak said that he had been very helpful. The Vice President said we would be happy to continue to offer the LANDSAT services.

46. Request Embassy be informed of any changes in memcon and when memcon approved.

**Whitehouse**

---

<sup>11</sup> See footnote 2, Document 58.

---

**168. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, May 9, 1978, 0832Z

13197. Subject: Vice President's Visit to Thailand.

1. We believe that the basic US objectives of the Vice President's visit were fulfilled and that the Thai consider that the visit satisfied their essential interests. The reaffirmation of US interest in Southeast Asia, one of the principal themes of the visit, admirably satisfied both Thai and US objectives.

2. Overall, it has been clear that US withdrawal from Indochina, followed by a sharp reduction in US presence and programs in Thailand left in its wake grave and lingering doubts among the Thai leadership about US constancy toward Thailand and Southeast Asia, official USG

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Foreign Trip Files, Box 129, [Vice President's Trip to Asia: 4/29-5/10/78]: Thailand—Diplomatic Trip Cables [2/13-6/5/78]. Confidential. Sent for information to Canberra, Jakarta, Manila, Wellington, and CINCPAC.

pronouncements to the contrary notwithstanding. The Vice President's assurances that the US attaches particular importance to US-Thai relations, his reaffirmation of US intentions to play an active role in Asia and the Pacific and his reiteration that the US will honor its commitment under the Manila Pact were welcome music to the Thai. We believe that these statements, coming from the Vice President on behalf of the President, have gone far to remove suspicions that earlier statements about our commitments and intentions in the area were more window dressing than substance. This clearly was the most important objective of the visit here, and one which was, in our preliminary judgment, largely achieved. The announced approval of the sale of another squadron of F-5E aircraft lends credence to the more general statements regarding US commitments under the Manila Pact. The Vice President's statement to Prime Minister Kriangsak that the US will be a reliable supplier of military equipment needed by the Thai will also go far to reassure the RTG.

3. The refugee question was the most troublesome bilateral issue to be discussed. We believe that here, too, the Vice President's visit proved very reassuring to the Thai. They are confident now that the matter is sympathetically understood at the highest level of the USG. The Vice President's remarks in this regard should serve to attenuate at least temporarily some of the internal pressures on PM Kriangsak to take a harder line on refugees.

4. The President's invitation to PM Kriangsak to visit the US was welcome news and should strengthen Kriangsak's hand somewhat in the Thai political context. The Vice President's visit, along with the President's invitation, constitute, in Kriangsak's eyes, USG endorsement of his foreign and domestic policy initiatives.

5. The only somewhat sour note following a Vice Presidential visit which was in every way a resounding success has been the continuing publicity being given to what appeared at the time to be a minor misunderstanding over the electronic frisking of journalists attending the Vice President's press conference. Some Thai journalists alleged that this was an insult and refused to attend the conference but the issue appeared to have been harmoniously resolved. Unhappily, since the Vice President's departure, the Thai press has continued to harp on this episode as well as on what they perceive as discrimination against them during the visit to the refugee center where US reporters who were organized into a press pool were seen accompanying the Vice President while some Thai reporters who were not in the Thai pool were excluded. In our view the shrill criticisms of the Thai press are exaggerated and unjustified. We believe that they stem fundamentally from a sense that the very large Secret Service presence in the Vice President's party was overly conspicuous and this in some way implied a Thai inability to provide adequate security.

6. In commenting on foregoing, we do not wish to give it exaggerated significance. As indicated above, from a broader perspective the visit was a highly successful one that achieved the basic objectives for which it was designed.

Whitehouse

---

## 169. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, June 27, 1978, 11:15 a.m.–noon

### SUBJECT

US-Thailand Relations

### PARTICIPANTS

David Aaron, Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Robert Gates, NSC Staff

Air Marshal Siddhi Sabetsila of Thailand

[*name not declassified*], Chief of the East Asian Division/DDO, Central

Intelligence Agency

### *Intelligence*

In response to a question from Mr. Aaron concerning the focus of his visit, Marshal Siddhi said that he was particularly interested in learning about the American intelligence reorganization<sup>2</sup> because the Thai services were undergoing the same process. Mr. Aaron said that in some respects our reorganization is continuing. The Executive Branch has largely made its decisions but is still working out legislation with the Congress—and their preconceptions do not necessarily accord with the Administration in some respects. He noted, however, that the atmosphere concerning intelligence was beginning to settle down somewhat. [*name not declassified*] expressed agreement with this and observed that Thailand faces the same dilemma as we, that is, how to get accurate information together and to the policy makers.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Subject File, Box 33, Memcons, Aaron, David, 2/77–12/78. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House.

<sup>2</sup> For documentation on U.S. intelligence reorganization, see the chapter on intelligence policy and reform in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XXXVIII, Organization and Management of Foreign Policy.

*Situation in Thailand*

Marshall Siddhi said that there had not been much change in Bangkok since the Vice President's visit. A draft constitution is under consideration, internal security is satisfactory, and the investment climate is good. An agreement has been reached with the Union Oil Company for a project in Thailand and the Thai Government hopes this will encourage more investments. There have been some problems with labor, which is seeking civilian pay increases commensurate with recent military pay increases. Marshal Siddhi said that the government will not permit strikes or unrest.

On international affairs, Marshal Siddhi said that relations are working out with Laos and Vietnam, adding that Vietnamese good behavior possibly is due to their problems with China. He said that Vietnam had proposed a trade agreement, which Thailand has signed, and that a Thai trade mission will soon be going to Vietnam. With respect to Cambodia, the Thais have offered to begin bilateral talks. Mr. Aaron observed that with all the countries in the area apparently competing in ways beneficial to Thai interests, Thai influence has been maximized—a healthy development. Marshal Siddhi indicated that the Vietnamese had told the Thais of their interest in a good bilateral relationship despite diplomatic attacks at the Colombo Conference.<sup>3</sup> He added that the Vietnamese have now agreed to support Thai peace and neutrality.

*The Vice President's Trip*

Mr. Aaron asked whether there were any lasting effects of the Vice President's trip. Marshal Siddhi said that the trip had a very good effect despite press stories. He then expressed his government's unhappiness with the press, particularly leftist newspapers that had been attacking Cabinet Ministers. He stated that the government was considering closing such papers. Mr. Aaron said that he too thought the visit had been very successful. He then expressed the hope that the government of Thailand would not take action against its press. In this connection, he noted that moves toward a democratic system in Thailand had been very encouraging to the United States. Marshal Siddhi observed that his Prime Minister had said that it would be good for Thailand to close the leftist newspapers. Mr. Aaron responded that we look forward to the Prime Minister's visit to the United States, but cautioned Marshal Siddhi that US press coverage of that visit would certainly be affected negatively if Thai papers were closed down by the government.

---

<sup>3</sup> Presumably reference is to the 26th meeting of the Colombo Plan Consultative Committee in Kathmandu November 28–December 7, 1977.

### *Refugees*

Mr. Aaron said that the Administration had finally gotten a commitment for refugee parole authority. He asked whether the current situation in Vietnam had changed the refugee picture. Marshal Siddhi said that Thailand was being "very nearly open-armed" to the refugees and that more were coming. The "Boat people" are now coming in at a rate of about 2,000 per month and there are now more than 100,000 in Thailand. He added that this represents a heavy burden and expressed the hope that the United States would take more refugees and encourage other countries to do likewise. Mr. Aaron responded that the Administration was working on the problem, adding that some progress had been made in Indonesia and Australia during the Vice President's visit. [name not declassified] commented that many of the "Boat people" are now Chinese, to which Mr. Aaron replied that this makes the problem even more difficult for the US. He asked Marshal Siddhi whether Thailand had talked to the PRC about this. The latter said no.

### *Brzezinski Trip to China*

Mr. Aaron then reviewed briefly the results of Dr. Brzezinski's trip to the PRC.<sup>4</sup> He noted that the PRC is as concerned about Vietnam as it is about the USSR. Peking sees the two countries as allies and feels uncomfortable in this situation. The Chinese leaders clearly were preoccupied with Southeast Asia. They urged the US to take a more constructive attitude towards the Cambodians, and expressed the view that the US human rights campaign on Cambodia had helped Vietnam. Mr. Aaron added that, in departure from the past, the Chinese had dwelt on Soviet shortcomings and weaknesses—a change in the Chinese attitude. They indicated their intention to take a more ambitious diplomatic posture vis-a-vis the Soviets. Normalization was discussed with agreement to go forward with negotiations—amid signs there may be somewhat more flexibility than in the past. Mr. Aaron observed that, indeed, there had been some signs of movement since Dr. Brzezinski's visit. Mr. Aaron noted the imminent departure of a high-level US science and technology delegation to Peking and considerable activity in the arms area between some West European countries and the Chinese.

### *Miscellaneous*

Marshal Siddhi noted that a new PRC representative would soon be arriving in the United States. He said they were acquainted and that the Chinese diplomat was a "good man".

---

<sup>4</sup> For documentation on Brzezinski's trip to Beijing May 20–23, see *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vol. XIII, China, Documents 108–114.



**170. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, January 8, 1979, 1058Z

675. Subj: Proposed Policy Lines on Indochinese Situation As Seen From Bangkok.

1. Like most analysts, the Thais did not believe the Vietnamese would march into Phnom Penh.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, they realistically appreciated the likelihood of an eventual Vietnamese victory in Kampuchea. They wanted and worked to get ASEAN and world opinion to constrain Hanoi but were resigned to their inability to do much about it. Thus, while events of the past few days came as a shock, it is not a totally unexpected shock. The Thais are deeply disquieted and concerned, but not panicked. They recognize that Vietnam's course in Kampuchea was motivated by special circumstances which do not necessarily apply to Thailand. They do not now see the Vietnamese as marching across the Kampuchean border into Thailand, although they are fretful about the long run. Their present concerns are to stem any sense of panic and to do their best to constrain Hanoi. For want of a better alternative and capability and assuming that Vietnamese control will be quickly consolidated, which seems likely, the Thais will eventually be inclined to go much the same route with Kampuchea as they are going with Laos, i.e., cooperation and conciliation in hope of avoiding provoking Hanoi and of having some influence on the Kampuchean situation. The Chinese who have their own axe to grind with Vietnam may attempt to talk them out of this and into cooperation in covert efforts against the Vietnamese in Kampuchea. This is something we should not encourage given its unlikely success and the serious dangers it could generate.

2. We have no certainty about future Vietnamese action. Conceivably the Vietnamese might stop and leave western Cambodia alone as the King of Thailand thinks. Or they might call for a cease fire. Some think Sihanouk might become a means for reestablishing peace. None of this strikes us as likely but we don't preclude them. Nor is timing

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 56, Vietnam, 1978–1979. Secret; Niact Immediate; Exdis. An unknown hand wrote at the top of the page, "Show to Les Denend, particularly Para. 7."

<sup>2</sup> Beginning December 25, 1978, the Vietnamese invaded Kampuchea, overthrew the Khmer Rouge, and occupied the country. In January, the pro-Vietnamese People's Republic of Kampuchea was established. See Documents 36–38.

of Vietnamese moves certain. All this requires us to allow ourselves a little flexibility.

3. Given the present difficulties, what might usefully be done? Here are our preliminary views: basically we want to try (1) to minimize the psychological repercussions in Thailand of the Vietnamese victory; (2) increase constraints on Vietnam to avoid escalation of tensions; (3) minimize the chances of offensive Thai moves; and (4) prevent a serious decline in business and investment confidence in Thailand.

4. Our comments on Kampuchea should play down worry about the threat posed to Thailand or about Thailand's future. Let us not resurrect dominoes. Rather we should stress our confidence in Thailand's basic strengths and in its ability to cope successfully with the situation; we should highlight the vast differences between Kampuchea and Thailand. We should preemptively respond to inevitable questions about our security commitment by declaring flatly that we regard ourselves as continuing to have a valid treaty obligation to Thailand. It is essential to avoid any inference that we are backtracking on the treaty. Nothing could be more destructive to Thai confidence at this time. If we can bring ourselves to issue a strong statement of support for Thailand's security, as Kriangsak has requested,<sup>3</sup> so much the better here. If nervousness here grows precipitously, a statement may be essential. It is conceivable (although at present unlikely) that the Thais will request consultations under Article IV of the Manila Treaty.<sup>4</sup> If the Thais appear to be approaching that point, we may want to quietly talk them out of it by stressing the importance to them of avoiding unsettling their own population.

5. We need to impress on Hanoi the force of our and international condemnation of its actions. Despite our distaste for the Pol Pot government, we must continue to loudly and roundly condemn this act of external aggression. (State 004513<sup>5</sup> is a welcome effort in that direction.) From behind the scenes we should encourage the Thais and other like-minded states within the grouping to produce an ASEAN condemnation of Hanoi and its violation of its peaceful intent. We should urge others to contribute to this effort and we must consider whether we want to get others to suspend aid to Vietnam. We should work to

---

<sup>3</sup> Telegram 674 from Bangkok, January 8, reported that Kriangsak requested a U.S. statement of support for Thailand and material manifestation of support through increased FMS credits. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790009-0699)

<sup>4</sup> Article IV of the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty addresses how member countries should respond to armed aggression within the treaty area.

<sup>5</sup> Telegram 4513 to Bangkok and Rangoon, January 8, contained press guidance on Vietnam's invasion of Kampuchea. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790009-0450)

provide Sihanouk the Security Council forum to denounce Vietnamese aggression, not so much as a representative of the Pol Pot regime but as the most prominent and widely respected Cambodian of our time speaking on behalf of his people. (We see no advantage in attempting to preserve a Pol Pot regime in exile and should therefore refrain from getting involved in a credentials or any other legalistic struggle on its behalf.) But we should avoid an embrace of the Prince. Hanoi is probably braced for an international storm and to let it off lightly publicly would constitute even more dangerous encouragement for future adventures by Hanoi and anyone else. Conversely, an international uproar backed by reduced assistance may enhance chances of Vietnam acting a little more prudently in its new position of dominance in Cambodia. I leave it to others to determine whether the U.S. is in a position to go to Hanoi and tell them to lay off Thailand.

6. Kriangsak has also asked us to make some material gesture in the security field, both to quiet his generals and maintain public confidence. Our bureaucratic response to Thailand in this period of heightened Indochinese tension was to cut back on Vice President Mondale's promise that we would keep FMS levels at \$30 million annually. That level was reduced to \$24 million in FY 1979. So much for our bureaucratic sensitivities.

7. Nevertheless it is necessary to be cautious in this area. Even if we were able or so inclined I do not think it prudent to open up the old arms cornucopia. The Thais have to get away from their fond notions of a US or Chinese *deus ex machina*. They must work on their domestic problems and enhance their security. But they need above all now to preserve their psychological confidence and sense of security. I think we could usefully contribute to that by scrounging around for another \$10 million in FMS credits in FY 1979<sup>6</sup> (despite it all being orally doled out) and seeing what items in the pipeline, as they requested, could be delivered quickly.

8. We should consult with the Japanese to get them to use Kriangsak's visit next week in a manner which would contribute to Thai and investor confidence. Rhetoric will be important, but some concrete things they could do would be to provide more generous concessional assistance than now planned. Conversely, they might but probably won't suspend their aid to Vietnam as a sanction against its behavior in Kampuchea.

---

<sup>6</sup> Telegram 12409 to Bangkok, January 17, promised an additional \$6 million in FMS support for FY 1979. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790023–0086)

9. We will have to do some rethinking of how we play the Kriangsak visit and I will be sending in some notions over the next week or so. Kampuchea developments obviously force some recasting of this visit to Washington, but we should do what we can to avoid public focus only on security issues. Thai agriculture development programs are vital and need support. Economic development also importantly depends on an uninterrupted flow of domestic and foreign investment. We must keep in mind the need to preserve business confidence in Thailand, to avoid the hiatus of growth which took place in the 1975–76 aftermath of the fall of Vietnam. An economic downturn against the background of Kampuchea could be profoundly destabilizing. A failure to maintain confidence would also encourage a coup by military hardliners and rightists which would increase chances of Thai adventurism and dangerously escalate tensions. A realistic but accommodating U.S. position diminishes, but does not eliminate, this worrisome prospect.

10. These are our quick preliminary thoughts and we will want to refine them as the situation becomes clearer. However cautious the Thais are we want to stress the importance of discouraging Thailand from crawling into the Chinese bed on Kampuchea. Whatever any short-term gains, nothing could be more threatening to Thailand's long-term prospects as its participation in the Sino-SRV/Soviet confrontation.

**Abramowitz**

---

## **171. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, February 6, 1979, 11–11:50 a.m.

### **PARTICIPANTS**

*U.S.*

President Carter

Vice President Walter Mondale

Secretary of State Cyrus Vance

Secretary of Defense Harold Brown

Zbigniew Brzezinski, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, East Asia, Platt Chron File, Box 66, 2/1–13/79. Secret. The meeting took place in the Cabinet Room at the White House. Kriangsak made an official visit to Washington February 4–8.

Morton Abramowitz, U.S. Ambassador to Thailand  
 Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia  
 Nicholas Platt, Staff Member, NSC (Notetaker)

*Thailand*

Prime Minister Kriangsak Chomanan  
 Deputy Prime Minister Sunthorn Hongladarom  
 Upadit Pachariyangkun, Foreign Minister  
 Somphon Bunyakhp, Minister in Charge of Foreign Investment  
 General Lek Naeomali, Minister of Interior  
 Kasem Chatikawanit, Minister of Industry  
 General Prem Tinsulanon, Deputy Minister of Interior and Commander-in-Chief  
 of the Royal Thai Army  
 Lt. General Yos Thep-Hatsadin Na Ayutthaya, Deputy Minister of Defense  
 Ambassador Klos Vissessurakarn  
 Air Marshal Sitti Savetsila, Secretary General of the National Security Council  
 General Surakit Mayalarp, Minister of Communications

SUBJECT

The President's Meeting with Thai Prime Minister Kriangsak

*President:* I'm pleased and honored to welcome you. We have learned a great deal from Thailand, our valuable ally. We will do everything we can to assure that your visit is successful. You come at an important time. I need your advice and counsel on the situation in Southeast Asia. The value that we attach to Thai security is long-standing. We stand behind the commitments made in the Manila Pact. As we have told the world, the integrity of your borders, peace, security, and the independence of Thailand are important to the people of the United States. I would like to have your comments and then proceed to discuss matters of mutual interest.

*Kriangsak:* Thank you for your friendly welcome. I'm looking forward to my visit, and particularly to our discussions, which have become urgent due to events in Kampuchea. At the outset I would like to express my heartfelt thanks for your press conference statement of January 17.<sup>2</sup> It was heartening for the Thai people to hear the U.S. President state that the United States is interested in the integrity of the borders of Thailand, and the protection of its independence. I would hope that you would repeat this often, because the statement raises the morale of ASEAN and also the countries of Northeast Asia.

*President:* I have reiterated the statement three times already this morning,<sup>3</sup> and will continue to do so if you find it helpful. (Laughter)

---

<sup>2</sup> For the transcript of the press conference, see *Public Papers: Carter, 1979*, Book I, pp. 50–58.

<sup>3</sup> For the President's comments at the welcoming ceremony for Kriangsak, see *Public Papers: Carter, 1979*, Book I, pp. 221–222.

*Kriangsak:* Your statement is a real deterrent to Vietnam, and prevents miscalculation.

*President:* We are deeply concerned about the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, and were gratified to read the united statement of the ASEAN countries.<sup>4</sup> The best way to punish Vietnam is increasingly to isolate Hanoi in the international community in the United Nations. For the first time in the history of the United Nations the Vietnamese and the Soviets were publicly condemned.<sup>5</sup> We have encouraged the industrial nations to halt aid to Vietnam as long as Vietnamese troops are in Cambodia. The United States does not want to see a spread of the conflict. So far, we understand that the Vietnamese have kept their promise not to violate your borders, but we are not convinced of Vietnamese trustworthiness and should form a united diplomatic front against them. Your praiseworthy leadership, Prime Minister Kriangsak, has been an important factor in maintaining the stability.

*Kriangsak:* The Thai Government still feels greatly concerned about the risks of a miscalculation and the involvement of outside powers in the area. Thai policy is based on the following principles: strict neutrality, solution of problems by peaceful means, and peaceful co-existence. We want no escalation in the conflict. The stand taken by ASEAN in the January 12 statement in Bangkok strongly deplores armed intervention and the violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cambodia. It affirms the right of self-determination and calls for an immediate withdrawal of foreign forces.

While he was in the United States, Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping told the newspapers that he would like to see Thailand pass supplies through its territory to resisting forces in Cambodia.<sup>6</sup> It is not for Deng nor for Prince Sihanouk to speak for me. I will decide how best to safeguard our national interests. Our main stand is that we remain neutral. If others do the same, fine. If they do not, I will decide what to do.

*President:* I have confidence in your actions to protect the Thai people. We have discouraged actions by China to threaten Vietnam. Though we have no control over Peking, we have made it clear to the Chinese and the Vietnamese that any escalation of conflict is not in the best interest of the region. We have protested strongly to the Soviet

---

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 2, Document 40.

<sup>5</sup> The Security Council met January 11–15 to consider the situation in Cambodia. A draft resolution calling for an immediate cease-fire and withdrawal of foreign forces from Cambodia was not adopted due to the negative vote by the Soviet Union. (*Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1979, pp. 273–275)

<sup>6</sup> Deng visited the United States January 28–February 5. See *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vol. XIII, China, Documents 201–210.

Union that their actions supporting the Vietnamese move into Cambodia threaten detente.<sup>7</sup>

During the past year we have strengthened our relations with the nations of Asia. We have concluded a base agreement with the Philippines, improved our relations with Korea (we are interested in signs that the Korean Government is willing to resume their dialogue), supported the economic and political cohesion of ASEAN in every possible way; strengthened our security relations with Japan; and normalized diplomatic relations with China. Further, we plan over time to strengthen our military presence in the Western Pacific. Our Navy and Air Force will maintain its presence. We are very concerned with the strategic balance in your part of the world, and value your counsel on ways to maintain it.

On refugees, we want to share more efforts and encourage each other to do more. We have received 170,000, and want to increase our share this year to 54,000. Is that figure correct, Cy?

*Vance:* It is 58,000, and we may try to do more.

*Kriangsak:* How many of these are from Thailand?

*Holbrooke:* The number will depend on categories of persons that apply.

*President:* This is a matter that you could discuss with Secretary Vance and former Senator Dick Clark whom I have just appointed as our new refugee coordinator. I understand that he will be calling on you.

I am also grateful for your efforts to control narcotics flows. I know that you have reorganized the government structure. Is there any way that we can be a more helpful and effective partner in controlling the flow of opium and heroin. I know that your border with Burma is difficult to control.

*Kriangsak:* Recently before I came, our government impounded 8,000 kilograms of refined heroin, with a street value of some \$4 billion U.S. dollars. We have done our best and will continue to do so. In the last week alone, for example, we have captured 900 kilos.

*President:* Is the cooperation between our agents and governments satisfactory?

*Kriangsak:* It is very good. I would like to have additional agents and officers in the field. Four of our helicopters supplied by the United States have no spare parts. Can I ask you to help us with this problem? Altogether we have received 18 helicopters from the United States for use in narcotics control. They have been very important to our program.

---

<sup>7</sup> See footnote 3, Document 41 and footnote 5, Document 42.



We have done a great deal with them. Crop substitution is extremely difficult to implement successfully. We need to centralize authority for all programs under one group and do more development work. We lack money, management, and good markets. If there are no markets, the growers return to opium production. We need more dollars and support for crop subsidies.

*Ambassador Abramowitz:* We have an active program with the Thai Government. Next year we will expend \$3 million on drug enforcement and crop substitution. We need to do more. I think we have been as successful in Thailand as we have with any other country. But there is a long way to go as I am sure the Prime Minister will agree.

*President:* We will try to get spare parts for those helicopters.

*Kriangsak:* ASEAN would benefit if the frequency of ship visits to the various countries, particularly Thailand, were increased.

*Secretary Brown:* A carrier task force visited Thailand a few months ago. We will continue our ship visit program. It is important, however, that ship visits not be too closely connected with specific events, lest the wrong signals be given.

*President:* We should assess the frequency of our ship visits to the ASEAN countries.

*Abramowitz:* There are normally two carrier visits scheduled per year, in addition to a wide variety of other ships.

*President:* I am sure the sailors enjoy their visits to Bangkok.

*Kriangsak:* Yes, it is good for tourism.

It is our hope that you will be able to visit the ASEAN region soon. You would be most welcome.

*President:* That would please me very much. We will try to work out a time.

*Kriangsak:* Right now, don't forget, Thailand is the crossroads of the world. Whoever controls the Kra Isthmus controls the Straits of Malacca. Help us, Mr. President, to keep Thailand strong. We don't want this for selfish reasons, but for the long-range benefit of the region.

Your friends will gain if your strategic objectives remain consistent. Actions to enhance Thailand's strength, especially at this moment, would be particularly significant.

We rely on ourselves, but lack production facilities and must buy equipment from other countries. Time is short, so we must look to others. Economic development alone is not enough. We have 1.2 million unemployed living at a per capita income level of \$95. We need to strengthen our economy to protect our security. This is the year of the farmer. Incidentally, we have seen a lot of tractors here in Washington.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Reference is to the "tractorcade" in Washington the same week as Kriangsak's visit. See Christopher Dickey and Blaine Harden, "Pent-Up, Angry Farmers Taunt Police," *Washington Post*, February 7, 1979, p. A5.



*President:* Perhaps we can send you some. (Laughter)

*Kriangsak:* The response of the Japanese was very good. They gave us a \$240 million loan at 3.5 percent with payment forgiven for ten years and fully due after 30. We also received a grant of \$60 million, half of which will go for rural development.

*President:* I admire the actions you have taken in the development field and your emphasis on a better quality of life.

As far as our own contribution is concerned, the Vice President reminded me of his promise to you last April,<sup>9</sup> and I have restored the \$6 million cut in your foreign military credits, bringing the level back to the \$30 million originally planned. In addition, I plan to seek Congressional authorization to transfer cost-free to Thailand \$11.2 million worth of U.S. ammunition stored in the country.

*Kriangsak:* I thank you in advance. We do need more FMS credits.

*Brown:* The transfer of the ammunition will free up some funds for other purposes.

*President:* Let me assure you about our relations with Taiwan. We plan to maintain a full range of commercial relations, including prudent sales of defensive weapons. Peking understands the last point. Although they do not approve, they accept it. The normalization of relations with Peking has resulted in a net gain for us. Normalization was not accomplished at the expense of Taiwan.

I am very pleased to hear about the progress you have made in moving toward Parliamentary democracy. Could you describe the prospects?

*Kriangsak:* Election is planned for April 22. So far we have had no problems in holding to the schedule in preparation for the constitutional convention.

*Kriangsak:* Before I came, Chiang Ching-kuo requested that I ask you to grant the same diplomatic privileges to officials from Taiwan as they enjoyed before.

*President:* Our relations with Taiwan will be on the same basis as those between Taiwan and Japan. Under our agreement with Peking there will be no more official relations with Taiwan.<sup>10</sup> You should know, however, that Taiwan's relations with Japan have prospered under unofficial auspices. Trade levels, for example, have tripled.

---

<sup>9</sup> See Documents 167 and 168.

<sup>10</sup> For documentation on the newly-established diplomatic relationship with China and the changing relationship with Taiwan, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XIII, China.

We have introduced legislation to maintain the kind of relations with Taiwan that we have with other governments. The legislation will authorize us to permit government guarantees of business loans. I believe that the interests of the Taiwanese people will be protected.<sup>11</sup>

*Vance:* We have been in constant touch with the business community, and are confident that business relations will continue to expand in the future.

*President:* The Taiwan stock market and the currency exchange rates have remained stable, showing confidence in Taiwan.

I hope that you will have a successful visit with members of the U.S. business community. I know that this is an important purpose of your trip to the United States.

*Kriangsak:* We want to buy military equipment from the Koreans (and Taiwan), and need your support and approval for licensing and co-production arrangements. There are a number of advantages to this kind of an arrangement. The producers are closer geographically, delivery times are shorter, and barter terms are possible, enabling us to several considerable foreign exchange. [*sic*] As you know, we spend a quarter of our budget on crude oil purchases.

*Brown:* This may be feasible with Korea.

*Abramowitz:* There may be some legislative restrictions in the case of Korea. Ammunition and small arms shipments could be helpful to Thailand.

*President:* What kind of equipment do you want from Korea?

*Kriangsak:* 155 shells, mortars, M-16 rifles.

*President:* Give Secretary Brown a list and we will get an answer to you through our Ambassador.

*Kriangsak:* This year Taiwan is producing 100 F-5E's. We would like to purchase some of those.

*President:* Taiwan may be more difficult.

*Vice President:* We have a co-production arrangement with Indonesia for M-16 rifles.

*President:* Mr. Prime Minister, do you have other items you would like to discuss before you go to lunch at the Senate?

*Kriangsak:* I have discussed with Mr. McNamara of the World Bank a request for aid from the IDA and the IFAD. I would like to elicit your support for our requests.

*President:* We will discuss this matter with Mr. McNamara and encourage him to be responsive.

---

<sup>11</sup> Reference is to the Taiwan Relations Act, April 10. (22 U.S.C. 3301, et seq.)

*General Lek:* In light of your remarks on the importance of the balance of power, we need to strengthen the Thai Air Force. We request that you expand FMS credits to \$50 million or more long-term payments and speed up deliveries in the FMS pipeline. We are short of spare parts. In addition, we request that you include us in the wartime standard support system for foreign military forces.

*President:* Secretary Brown can address this question when you meet this afternoon.

*Kriangsak:* If you have obsolete or surplus equipment—M-20 half tracks, M-48 or M-41 tanks—we would be grateful.

*General Prem:* M-60 tanks also. (Laughter)

*Kriangsak:* M-60 tanks are not surplus.

*President:* We are eager to help you. Discuss this with Secretary Brown. The meeting that you are having will be important both for you and for the Administration. This evening we can continue discussions on topics of your choice.<sup>12</sup> Let me close by saying once again how delighted I am to welcome you here as friends.

---

<sup>12</sup> The Carters hosted a State dinner for Kriangsak and his wife that evening.

---

## 172. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, February 6, 1979, 5 p.m.

### PARTICIPANTS

#### *United States*

Secretary of Defense, Honorable Harold Brown

Deputy Secretary of Defense, Honorable Charles Duncan

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, General David Jones

Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia, Honorable Richard Holbrooke

Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA), Honorable David McGiffert

U.S. Ambassador to Thailand, Honorable Morton Abramowitz

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, East Asia & Pacific Affairs/Inter-

American Affairs (ISA) Mr. Michael Armacost

Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, Rear Admiral Thor Hanson

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330-82-0205, 22, Thailand 1979. Secret. The meeting took place at Blair House. Prepared by Armacost and approved by McGiffert on February 21.

*Thailand*

Prime Minister of Thailand, Honorable KRIANGSAK, Chomanan

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Honorable UPADIT, Pachariyangkun

Minister of Interior, General LEK, Naeomali

Deputy Minister of Interior and Commander-in-Chief, Royal Thai Army, General PREM, Tinsulanonda

Deputy Minister of Defense, Honorable YOSE, Davahasdin

Ambassador of Thailand to the United States, Honorable KLOS, Visessurakarn

Secretary General of the Prime Minister, General PORN, Dhanabhum

Secretary General of the National Security Council, Air Marshal SIDDHI, Savetsila

(C) After felicitations, the *Prime Minister* indicated that he had a number of requests for additional military equipment. *General Lek* outlined these in considerable detail. He particularly emphasized the Thai desire for an additional \$20 million in FMS credits; accelerated delivery of equipment currently in the pipeline; US authorization for the RTG to obtain equipment and/or spare parts currently produced under US licensing arrangements in Taiwan and Korea; retention of the US MAG in Thailand; and access to additional major US equipment items such as tanks, APC's, interceptor aircraft, helicopters, ammunition, anti-tank weapons and anti-aircraft systems.

(C) *General Prem* added that the Thai Army is currently weak relative to its principal adversary, the Vietnamese. Consequently it must upgrade its forces on an urgent basis. He assigned highest priority to the acquisition of three battalions of medium tanks which he wanted to have operational within a year. He also cited a requirement for M-41 tank ammunition and spare parts which he suggested is currently available in Taiwan. *General Prem* recited other equipment needs such as howitzers and ammunition. He promised to provide additional details after the US side examined a detailed list of requirements which he passed to Ambassador Abramowitz.

(C) *Secretary Brown* noted that some of the items were already known to us; others were new requests. Therefore, we would have to study the list in detail. He underscored the serious effort the US recently had made to demonstrate continued support for the independence and security of Thailand. Specifically, he mentioned the \$6 million increase in FMS credits, the change in the priority accorded to the RTG in the Force Activity Designator System from V to III, accelerated delivery of a number of systems in the pipeline (as outlined at Tab A),<sup>2</sup> and the planned effort to obtain congressional authority for cost free transfer of \$11.3 million worth of ammunition left in Thailand. Secretary Brown reiterated that we will look at the possibility of expediting additional deliveries and responding positively to other Thai equipment requests.

---

<sup>2</sup> Attached but not printed is an undated table.

He noted that no main battle tanks are currently available, and that a preliminary look at our surplus stocks reveals no tanks, half track vehicles or APC's in stock, though some trucks are available. As for obtaining US origin items from Taiwan and Korea, he promised to look at the issue, but noted that it presented additional policy questions. He emphasized that we have been attempting to avoid encouraging additional countries to enter the arms export business and that acquisition of any items from Taiwan would present issues that we would have to review in the context of our China policy. Nevertheless he promised to review the bidding on this question and get back in touch with the Thai authorities.

(C) Regarding air-to-air missiles, he suggested that the Thai concentrate on deploying the AIM 9-J and defer consideration of the AIM 9-L due to its high costs and sophistication. The Secretary noted that we have no plans to withdraw the MAG from Thailand. As for F-5E/F, he promised that he would see what could be done about accelerating deliveries but he urged Kriangsak not to get his hopes up.

(U) *General Prem* requested consideration of Thai needs for the Bell helicopter outfitted with TOW anti-tank weapons.

(U) *Secretary Brown* indicated that it should be possible for us to provide additional TOWs to the RTG, underscoring the fact that we could probably provide anti-tank weapons more expeditiously than tanks themselves.

(U) *General Prem* noted that tanks are nonetheless the best anti-tank weapon.

(U) *Secretary Brown* acknowledged that he had argued that case himself but added that TOWs are cheaper. In any event he emphasized that he will review this along with other new Thai requests and get back to the RTG through Ambassador Abramowitz.

(U) *Prime Minister Kriangsak* reiterated the desire of his government to learn what excess defense stocks might be available.

(U) *Secretary Brown* reiterated that an initial look at our surpluses did not turn up many items on the Thai list of requests, but he said that we would keep looking.

(S) There followed some discussion of the type of tanks currently available to the Thais. *General Prem* indicated that the RTG tank inventory consists of M-41s which cannot cope with the T-55s available to Vietnam. Indeed he asserted that the only thing the Thais have to stop Vietnamese tanks is the heavy traffic in downtown Bangkok.

(S) *Secretary Brown* said he shared Thai concerns about Vietnamese military pressures against them. He suggested a variety of political and military reasons why the invasion of Thailand by the Vietnamese currently appears unlikely—not least the overextension of SRV forces

in Cambodia and its economic difficulties at home. But he added that we would want to reaffirm in tangible ways our support for Thailand asserted on two separate occasions by the President that morning.

(S) *Prime Minister Kriangsak* indicated that visible display of American power in Southeast Asia was important not only to give pause to the Vietnamese, but to sharpen perceptions of America's capacity and will to remain an effective force in the region. He also maintained that while one could argue that the Vietnamese would be unwise to attack Thailand, he was in a position in which he could not afford to be sanguine about Vietnamese ambitions. Therefore he must take the "worst case" into account.

(S) *General Lek* added that the President had indicated an interest in preserving a balance of forces in the area, but at present there is an imbalance. The Vietnamese have expanded their forces; they are deploying their army in Cambodia; they have the advantage of being able to utilize many weapons left in Vietnam by the U.S. Since this is a "proxy war," he said, the Thais also have to estimate what the PRC and USSR might do. Taking all these considerations into account, he concluded that the Vietnamese could still escalate the scale and intensity of conflict in the area.

(C) *Secretary Brown* acknowledged that the Vietnamese have been more impressive in their efforts to build a military machine than in seeking to overcome their economic problems. He emphasized our hope that an expansion of conflict in Indochina can be averted, and commended Kriangsak for the calm and effective manner in which he had dealt with the new situation in Cambodia—i.e., affirming Thai confidence, avoiding panic, concentrating on strengthening his own military forces for the longer-term.

(S) The *Prime Minister* noted that if something were to happen to Thailand, there would be an inevitable general reaction involving other ASEAN countries, and indeed affecting the U.S. position. If we don't plan for the worst, he said, we could find ourselves in great difficulty. He added that what he has said in public about the current situation is somewhat different than what he had in his own mind.

(S) *The Secretary* responded that he recognized the Thais faced real security dilemmas. And he emphasized that there are ample reasons for demonstrating US solidarity with Thailand at this time. He acknowledged the importance of Thai actions to build up their own forces. He said that if the Thai would leave their equipment list with Mr. McGiffert and Mr. Armacost a review would be undertaken in an expeditious way. He said that we obviously intended to maintain an effective military presence in the region, and would be prepared to consider additional ways of visibly displaying that presence. With respect to ship visits, for example, there were 32 last year to Thai ports and this

figure seemed rather high. But he invited Kriangsak to tell us if he wanted more.

(S) There followed some discussion about the communication between Thai insurgents and hostile forces in Laos or Cambodia. *Prime Minister Kriangsak* said that there was some evidence of this, and he emphasized that there were still 70,000 ethnic Vietnamese inside Thailand. *Air Marshal Siddhi* said that the Communist Party of Thailand formerly had maintained some form of liaison with the Vietnamese, but this ceased in December, 1978. The Vietnamese are now seeking to provide support to various other groups within Thailand and he claimed that the Vietnamese were more skillful than the Chinese in utilizing such support.

(C) *General Jones* underscored the warm feelings that exist between the Thai and the US military, based upon the experience of fighting together in Korea and Indochina. He said that we recognized that the threat to Thailand has wider implications for Southeast Asia and for the US.

(C) *General Lek* noted that the Integrated Communication System in Thailand is getting old and is in need of spare parts. *Prime Minister Kriangsak* commented that the RTG was currently discussing with IT&T major investments in the Thai telecommunication system. Some of their military needs might be taken care of through an augmented civilian communications system.

(C) *Secretary Brown* emphasized our understanding of Thailand as the key to the current situation in Indochina. He said it was important to deter Vietnamese military pressures against Thailand, and that while military power is one element of the deterrent, skillful diplomacy is another. He supported the development of additional Thai military strength, but added that the key questions concerning military forces and equipment are: how much? how fast? and what kind?.

(C) *The Prime Minister* said that the Thais have a good deal of obsolete ammunition, for example 60 millimeter shells which can only be used about 60 to 80% of the time due to problems with the fuses.

(C) *General Prem* reiterated the need for M-41 spare parts. He said that these were currently available in Taiwan, and that he was ready to send people to Taiwan at a moment's notice.

(U) *Secretary Brown* said that he would look into this matter.

(C) *Prime Minister Kriangsak* reiterated the desire of the RTG to purchase US origin items such as 155 millimeter guns and ammunition from either Taiwan or Korea.

(C) *Secretary Brown* concluded the meeting by saying that we will take the Thai equipment list and review it sympathetically. We have already been able to provide some support; we will review other possi-



bilities and relay our response through Ambassador Abramowitz. Meanwhile we will wait for any further suggestions the Prime Minister may have with regard to ship visits.

---

**173. Letter From Thai Prime Minister Kriangsak to  
President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, June 11, 1979

Dear Mr. President,

The deteriorating situation in the Thai-Kampuchean border areas has prompted me to write to you.

Following the armed invasion of Democratic Kampuchea by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam late in December last year, incessant waves of refugees have crossed the border into Thailand. The recent intensification of Vietnamese military operations in the Western and South-Western parts of Kampuchea has caused a sudden and dramatic rise in the influx of these refugees, bringing the number of each wave at times to tens of thousands.

Despite our two-pronged efforts of persuading them to return home or getting third countries to admit them, the total number of refugees in Thailand now approaches 200,000, making it quite unbearable to the economy of the nation. Social problems brought about by their presence are also numerous and grave, let alone the threat to our national security.

What is especially disturbing is that we have reason to believe that the Vietnamese Government has been behind the organizing of the outflow of these refugees, who are mostly of Chinese origin, from both South Vietnam and Kampuchea to serve twofold purpose, namely: getting rid of the undesirable Chinese and at the same time imposing on Thailand onerous economic, social and security burdens. It is also possible that the Vietnamese may have the intention to let the Kampuchean people perish through starvation and to replace them by the Vietnamese emigrants. For our part, even though Thailand continues to be guided by humanitarian consideration in dealing with the refugees, it is now apparent that it is beyond the capability of Thailand to

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 19, Thailand, Prime Minister Kriangsak Chomanan, 12/77-5/80. Confidential; Immediate.



cope with the present refugee problem. Despite a great deal of rhetoric, the appropriate actions of the world community are not forthcoming. It is therefore imperative that Thailand has to take an appropriate step to help solve this problem.

I cannot emphasize too much that the question of refugees is a matter of deep concern to my Government. Hence, I venture to hope that the United States Government will understand how serious the situation is and will again find it possible to widen the scope of its assistance, either through increased admission of refugees to the United States or through more financial aid, or in any other forms deemed appropriate.

I understand that the question of refugees from Indochina may be included as one of the agenda items to be discussed between you, Mr. President, and Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira of Japan at a bilateral talk to be held in Tokyo sometime toward the end of this month.<sup>2</sup> It is my earnest hope that the matter will receive your sympathetic attention and consideration leading to a substantial easing of the enormous burden now being shouldered by Thailand and other countries in the region.

Apart from the refugee problem, there are indications that Vietnam may launch an armed incursion into Thailand from across the Thai-Kampuchean border, although initially it may be limited in scope and come under the pretext of a "hot pursuit." It is noteworthy in this respect that both Phnom Penh and Hanoi have lately become much more vocal and strident in their accusations that Thailand has not been strictly neutral, and that we are still helping Pol Pot forces.

Should such an incursion by Vietnam occur, armed clashes with Thai forces would be inevitable and could lead to uncontrollable escalation. Such an eventuality would not only impair Thailand's territorial integrity, but also gravely endanger peace and stability of the entire South-East Asian region. Adverse effects on world peace would also be unavoidable.

You will see, Mr. President, that the prevailing highly fluid situation makes it imperative that Thailand's defence be bolstered as quickly and as effectively as possible. I should be very grateful, therefore, for whatever help you could give to expedite the delivery of arms, ammunition and other military hardware already purchased or committed to Thailand. I hope you will agree with me how urgent and vital, under the present circumstances, this matter has become to the security of my country.

---

<sup>2</sup> Carter was in Tokyo June 24–29 for a State visit and to participate in the Tokyo Economic Summit.

Before concluding, I must say that I still carry with me happy memories of the pleasant and fruitful visit which I made to your great country early this year.<sup>3</sup> I should like once again to convey my grateful thanks to you for making possible that memorable visit.

With warm personal regards and best wishes,  
Yours sincerely,

**Kriangsak Chomanan**<sup>4</sup>  
*Prime Minister of Thailand*

---

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 171 and 172.

<sup>4</sup> Kriangsak signed "Kchomanan" above his typed signature.

---

**174. Letter From Thai Prime Minister Kriangsak to  
President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, July 30, 1979

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter of May 19, 1979.<sup>2</sup> I sincerely appreciate both your congratulations and your expressed interest in and understanding of the many problems facing Thailand and our people as we struggle to develop ourselves and to maintain our national security against internal and external communist aggression. We Thai are also, especially appreciative to the United States for your firm commitment to our integrity, freedom, and security.

Regarding our national security, we are quite concerned that the Vietnamese may choose to undertake military actions against Thailand. The scope and nature of the military actions that the Vietnamese may

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 19, Thailand, Prime Minister Kriangsak Chomanan, 12/77-5/80. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> Carter's letter congratulated Kriangsak on his reappointment as Prime Minister and pledged that the United States would work closely with Thailand to find an international solution to Vietnamese aggression and the plight of the refugees. The letter was transmitted in telegram 127059 to Bangkok, May 18. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790226-1086)

opt to undertake are varied, and range from the more probable clashes with Thai military forces resisting Vietnamese “hot pursuit” of Khmer Rouge forces, to deliberate small scale border clashes instigated by the Vietnamese, to the less likely but still possible full scale invasion of Thailand by Vietnamese military forces. Of course, border clashes and Thai interdiction of “hot pursuit” forces could easily escalate into full scale warfare. Even should Thailand not face overt Vietnamese aggression in the short term, we are concerned about it in the long term, and at a minimum, we fully expect Hanoi and Moscow to sponsor insurgency against our government.

I consider it a matter of urgency that Thailand undertake all prudent measures to deter Vietnamese military aggression, and should that fail to defend successfully against an invasion. Our nation is, however, limited in its ability to provide for its military equipment needs, and must therefore of necessity turn to the industrialized nations for those critical military items that are essential for defense in this era of modern warfare. We intend to do all possible to help ourselves and to provide the forces for our self-defense, but we do need material assistance, which we prefer to obtain from our friend and ally, the United States. Only in the event that our national survival were at stake, would we seek American military assistance in the form of ground combat units, although we would hope that in the event of external aggression against our nation that the United States would assist us, if required for a successful defense, with air and naval support, and certainly with material support, to include grant aid. In this regard, I wish to request that in the event that hostilities between the Vietnamese and ourselves develop or seem imminent, the United States places Thailand in the Wartime Standard Support System for Foreign Armed Forces (WSSSFAF).

In addition to the United States including Thailand in the WSSSFAF, if necessary, I respectfully request that for the present, the United States provide immediate delivery of the following Foreign Military Sales items:

1. *Tanks*

- a. *General.* We recognize that the M-60A3 tank is the most combat capable tank for the battlefield, followed by the M-48A5 tank. Our tank fleet consists of 176 M-41 tanks with 76 mm guns. We are faced with Vietnamese M-48 and T-54 tanks in superior number. To upgrade our tank fleet to meet such threat, we continue to desire to attain both M-48A5 tanks and M-60A3 tanks, with supporting parts, munitions, support equipment and a training team. Internationally, it is politically most important—and psychologically very important to the morale and esprit of the Royal Thai Army—as well as important to our eventual defense to get the tanks in hand and begin training as quickly as possible.

b. *M-48A5 Tanks*. We expect a Letter of Offer and Acceptance (LOA) on the initial purchase of 15 tanks shortly, with delivery in October, 1979. The RTG will respectfully request an LOA for an additional 30 M-48A5 tanks to round out the M-48A5 tank units with a total of 45 tanks. Hopefully, we will be able to obtain the entire fleet within one year.

c. *M-60A3 Tanks*. We desire to continue to upgrade our tank fleet with M-60A3 tanks, in addition to the M-48A5 tanks noted above. We are awaiting an LOA for 16 M-60A3 tanks. I request that the LOA be extended as soon as possible, and that following our acceptance, the United States provide the tanks promptly. I recognize that the rate of production is limited, but I sincerely hope that you will give priority to providing the tanks to Thailand, along with the necessary training teams and support equipment. Should you be unable to provide all of the tanks on an immediate basis, I hope that, at a minimum, you can immediately provide us with 4-6 M-60A3 tanks.

2. *Dragon Anti-Tank Missile* (M-47 Weapons system). The RTA has submitted a formal request for a LOA for 120 trackers and 600 Dragon Anti-tank missiles, together with trainers and test equipment. We would appreciate the United States in expediting the LOA, and, following our acceptance, providing immediate delivery, together with a training team to train our cadre, (In view of the formidable tank and mechanized capability of the Vietnamese Army, the Dragon and other anti-tank weapons are critical for a successful defense).

3. *155 mm Howitzers*. As a matter of information, the RTA has requested a LOA for 34 M-114A1 howitzers. Due to similar production lead times for the M-114A1 model and the M-198 models coupled with the differences in capabilities, we have changed our request to reflect a purchase of the M-198 howitzer vice the M-114A1 howitzer, with no change in quantity.

4. *TOW* (Tube-launched, Optically tracked, Wire-guided) Anti-tank Missiles. The RTA has submitted a request for Pricing and Availability (P&A) data for 24 launchers and 100 missiles. It is our intention to use at least some of these systems on UH-1 helicopter platforms. Should this not be possible, we may be obliged to review our employment concepts and not pursue a purchase of the TOW. Otherwise, an expeditious processing of an LOA with early delivery will be most appreciated.

5. *AIM-9P Missiles*. The Royal Thai Air Force currently has only twenty-seven AIM-9P missiles on hand. We have 206 AIM-9P missiles on FMS order with estimated delivery dates of October 1979 to February 1980.

6. *UH-1H Helicopters*. The RTA has submitted a request for a LOA for 14 UH-1H helicopters. The projected delivery dates for the helicop-

ters range from 17 to 21 months. I request that, at a minimum, we be allowed to purchase 4–6 UH–1H helicopters which can be delivered within 12 months. This assistance will enable the RTA to maintain at least a minimum of support to its ground forces. My office will be officially requesting accelerated delivery for the pending LOA. We respectfully request your assistance in procurement and early delivery of these helicopters.

7. *Vulcan*. We anticipate P&A data on the Vulcan within a month. Presently, we anticipate requesting 24 systems and expressing desires for accelerated delivery. This system is necessary to assist in protecting ground maneuver and support forces against air attacks, as our present air defense capabilities are severely limited.

8. *M–72 mm Light Anti-tank Weapon (LAW)*. During 1977, our request for the LAW was turned down because the quantity requested was not economically procurable. However, because of United States and other allied force requirements during the past two years, we surmise that these conditions may have possibly changed. The RTA is aware that the US Army will replace its LAW weapons with the Viper, soon to be produced. We are most desirous of attaining the LAW as essential complement in rounding out our close-in antitank defenses. To this end, we request that your good offices direct that an LOA for the M–72 LAW be directed for a Foreign Military Sales case for Thailand in the quantity of 72,922 each. Again we will most certainly appreciate your assistance in expediting our request.

9. *Ammunition*

a. FMS procured ammunition. Although the RTA has accepted and fulfilled financial obligations for all LOA's for ammunition sales, deliveries continue to greatly lag behind originally scheduled deliveries in many cases. In some cases, delays are in excess of one year.

b. Fourth Increment, Ammunition in Thailand (AIT). For some reason, the AIT which we discussed last February has yet to be turned over. I very much appreciate your interest and concern in this matter, and feel obliged to inform you of the actual status as it stands today.

10. *Signal Equipment*. Again, we continue to be plagued with exceptionally long lead times in the attainment of some of the signal equipment which we have requested through FMS. In some cases, LOA's have been accepted for more than two years, while we are informed that items purchased will not be available until next one or two years.

11. *Repair Parts*. Currently, we are experiencing the same type of difficulties with repair parts as we are with ammunition and signal equipment. Essentially, LOA's have been accepted but repair parts are not arriving. We are doing our best to attempt to maintain our military equipment in a high state of combat readiness. In those cases where

there is a lack of spare parts, we are up against obstacles which cannot be overcome.

There are, of course, many other critical items of FMS equipment and munitions that the Royal Thai Armed Forces need for defense of the nation, but the above we consider to be the most immediate and critical needs. The magnitude of the Vietnamese tank and mechanized threat is significant, and our current anti-tank weapons are inadequate to counter the threat: 3.5 inch rocket launchers, 57 mm and 75 mm recoilless rifles, and the 66 mm LAW (Light Anti-tank Weapon) being the principal infantry anti-tank weapons on hand.

Our country is in danger, and we solicit your assistance in preparing us to deter Vietnamese aggression and to defend against it if deterrence fails. In addition to your generous commitment of the United States to preserving the integrity, freedom, and security of the Kingdom of Thailand, we need to purchase from you those items of equipment, weapons, and munitions essential for defense, and we need those Foreign Military Sales items delivered on an expedited basis, while there is still time.

On behalf of the people and government of Thailand, I thank you for whatever you can do to materially assist Thailand in this time of danger to our national security. Thailand considers the United States its friend and closest ally, and we appreciate the friendship and alliance we share.

With personal best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

**General (Kriangsak Chomanan)<sup>3</sup>**  
*Prime Minister*

---

<sup>3</sup> Kriangsak signed "Kchomanan" above his typed signature.

**175. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Thailand<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 22, 1979, 2159Z

220836. For Ambassador. Subject: Presidential Reply to PM Kriangsak Letters. Ref: Bangkok 30029.<sup>2</sup>

1. (C)—Entire text.

2. During your anticipated August 23 meeting with PM Kriangsak, you are authorized to convey the following points from President Carter in response to the PM's letters of June 13 and July 30.<sup>3</sup>

—The President is seriously interested in the security of Thailand and its defense requirements and is watching the present situation carefully.

—The stability of the ASEAN states—including the territorial integrity of Thailand—is the priority U.S. concern in Southeast Asia. This point has been made personally by the President to Chairman Brezhnev<sup>4</sup> and has been reiterated to both the USSR and the SRV.

—The USG shares the PM's attitudes toward Vietnam's actions, particularly the dangers of its continued military presence in Kampuchea and the massive flows of refugees produced by its actions. The discussions and general agreement on strategy among ASEAN, the U.S. and other nations at the Bali and Geneva meetings<sup>5</sup> and since have had tangible effect, including the positive results of the Geneva refugee meeting. However, more must be done, including a greater international focus on Hanoi's policies and actions in Kampuchea and the more rapid movement of land refugees out of camps in Thailand. The President is accordingly appreciative of the initiative taken in the statement issued by the ASEAN Ministers of Foreign Affairs following

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790383–1026. Confidential; Immediate; Exdis. Drafted by Terrell R. Otis (EA/TIMBS); cleared by Robert E. Fritz (EA/TIMBS), Oksenberg, Seitz (S/S), and Robert Steven (S/S–O); cleared in substance by Stanley McClure (DOD/ISA) and David T. Rogers (PM); approved by Oakley.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 30029 from Bangkok, August 15, transmitted the text of Kriangsak's July 30 letter. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790375–0774)

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 173 and 174.

<sup>4</sup> See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Document 204.

<sup>5</sup> The ASEAN Foreign Ministers met with the Australian, New Zealand, Japanese, Irish, and U.S. Foreign Ministers in Bali July 1–3 to discuss the Indochinese refugee situation. See footnote 6, Document 176. Regarding the July 20–21 Geneva conference, see Document 138.

their August 16 meeting in Kuala Lumpur.<sup>6</sup> The statement was a very useful step, as was the ASEAN decision to inscribe the issue on the UN agenda. The U.S. along with Thailand (and ASEAN) thus looks toward the United Nations meetings this fall as an additional opportunity to focus world attention on the situation in Kampuchea as a threat to regional peace and security, and to put greater pressure on Vietnam to change its policies.

—As noted in the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' statement in Kuala Lumpur, the threat of famine in Kampuchea could bring about a greater flow of refugees toward Thailand than we have seen heretofore. The U.S. believes it is essential that international assistance be funneled to the Khmer people and is encouraged that some international organizations are working now to see this accomplished. Obviously this assistance should be monitored and should go to needy Khmer in all areas of the country. The President appreciates all that you have been doing in this regard and would count on your continued support to permit such assistance in border areas as well as in transiting Thailand.

—The President appreciates the PM's hospitality during the visits of several congressional delegations to Thailand this summer and believes they helped to focus U.S. media and other attention on refugee problems in the wake of the Geneva meeting. As these delegations indicated, an essential element in the overall effort is for Thailand and the other ASEAN countries to implement the policies of humanitarian first asylum which have in the past won for the RTG and the Thai people international recognition and support. Thailand's humanitarian approach, despite the difficulties, is in noteworthy contrast to the irresponsible and destructive attitudes adopted by Vietnam. The congressional delegations have returned impressed by what they saw and heard in Thailand and supportive of continued help.

—The President recalls his discussions with the PM last February and the agreement to take certain steps to increase and accelerate military assistance to Thailand.<sup>7</sup> He has looked to Amb. Abramowitz to keep the PM up to date on the acceleration of our arms deliveries to Thailand and success in diverting to Thailand some deliveries scheduled for other countries and for U.S. units. Most of the equipment asked for in February<sup>8</sup> and May will be delivered this fall, by sea and possibly also by air, provided the RTG and USG can complete quickly the necessary technical procedures and financial agreements. In that

---

<sup>6</sup> The statement was reported in telegram 14076 from Kuala Lumpur, August 17. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790373-1230)

<sup>7</sup> See Document 171.

<sup>8</sup> See Document 172.



regard, the PM's letter of July 30 is helpful as a further clarification of Thailand's defense needs.

—With regard to the U.S. ammunition currently stored in Thailand, it is anticipated that the Congress will approve the transfer after it returns from its current recess.

—In closing, the President wishes to emphasize to the PM that our mutual efforts to resolve the current problems in Southeast Asia are in accord with the long history of mutual esteem and close cooperation between the U.S. and Thailand.

—The President and Mrs. Carter send their best wishes to the PM and Khunying Virat and very much enjoyed meeting them as well as their fine son and daughter last February.<sup>9</sup>

**Christopher**

---

<sup>9</sup> Abramowitz reported on his August 23 meeting with Kriangsak in telegram 32261 from Bangkok, August 24. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790386–0471)

---

#### **176. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, August 28, 1979, 1154Z

33017. For S/S. Subj: Memcon of Vance-Uppadit Meeting in Bali. Ref: State 206244.<sup>2</sup>

1. (Secret–Entire text)

2. We have finally pried the memcon loose from MFA on the meeting July 2, 1979, in Bali between Secretary Vance and FonMin Uppadit. Minister's Secretary had tried unsuccessfully for past week

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Records of Cyrus Vance, Secretary of State, 1977–1980, Lot 84D241, Vance Nodis Memcons, 1979. Secret; Immediate; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 206244 to Bangkok and Singapore, August 8, concerning the Secretary's memoranda of conversation covering his bilateral meetings in Bali, is in National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790359–1230. Vance met with the ASEAN Foreign Ministers after their June 28–30 meeting. See footnote 5, Document 175.

or so to get Uppadit to review the text. Nonetheless, we would regard text as official record from RTG side.

3. Text follows:

Record of the conversations between H.E. Dr. Uppadit Pachariyangkun, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and Rt. Honorable Cyrus Vance, Secretary of State of the United States at Bali, Indonesia, July 2, 1979, 2:00–2:30 p.m.

Also present were from the Thai side Dr. Owat Sutthiwatnaruphut, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and Dr. M.L. Phiraphong Kasemsi, Director-General of the International Organization Department; and from the U.S. side Mr. Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for Asia and Pacific Affairs, Mr. Robert D. Oakley, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Asia and Pacific Affairs, and Mr. Morton I. Abramowitz, U.S. Ambassador to Thailand.

Secretary Vance: Anything you want to raise with me?

Minister Uppadit: It is nice to see you again; indeed, it is an encouragement for us. That the U.S. Secretary should be here in Bali is a show of support for our cause. We need this kind of support and solidarity to maintain our national existence. The situation with which we are facing is explosive. The Vietnamese are poised to attack us. In this regard, we deeply appreciate the U.S. President's statement that the U.S. will honour the Manila Pact and remains firmly interested in the integrity of Thailand.<sup>3</sup>

Secretary Vance: I will reaffirm that commitment again now.

Minister Uppadit: The problems we are confronting relate to the refugees. We have reasons to believe that the new influxes were organized. The Vietnamese are pursuing a deliberate policy of pushing the ethnic Chinese minority into Thailand. This would serve a two-fold purpose, namely: getting rid of the undesirable elements and at the same time creating a problem of severe disruptive effects on our society.

—We also suspect that the Vietnamese might want to exterminate the whole Kampuchean race, as can be seen in their efforts to move in their people for settlements in Kampuchea. The immediate danger for us, however, is that the Vietnamese forces may move across the border into our territory under the pretext of "hot pursuit." If that should take place, it will result not only in the escalation of the fighting but in the widening of the areas of the conflict. Of course we cannot stand still and see our territorial integrity be violated. Then China may make a move of its own, either into northern Vietnam or into Laos.

---

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to President Carter's welcoming remarks to Kriangsak during his February 1979 visit. See footnote 3, Document 171.

—Once the fighting starts between Thai and Vietnamese forces, it will be hard to stop. This is what is worrying us. That is why we would like to request for the expedition of the arms sales which we have already purchased.

Secretary Vance: I will see what I can do when I get back.

Minister Uppadit: We are now in urgent need of tanks, aircrafts and ammunition.

Deputy Assistant Secretary Oakley: I think that most of the arms sales will hopefully be delivered before the end of this year.

Secretary Vance: On refugees, I understand how tremendous the problems may have been to your country. Central to any solutions to this problem are two basic aspects: (1) get to the source, and (2) deal with the humanitarian aspects, i.e., feeding them, finding third countries. But I want to point out the importance of countries of first asylum to continue giving assistance. This is what they must do if we are to get congressional support. The American public must be convinced that the countries of first asylum are prepared to do their part. The negative impact that will come out of the communique can never be overemphasized in the eyes of the American public.<sup>4</sup> I want to make it very clearly and very frankly to you.

Minister Uppadit: We still have over 200,000 people who have been a big strain for us. Then came recently an additional 80,000; the feelings are running high. The government could not stand still or it confronts domestic problems. That's why we cannot give much consideration for humanitarianism and that's why there is a pushback. However, having taken your request into consideration, we have suspended the action.<sup>5</sup> In the meantime, more and more are coming in.

Secretary Vance: We are trying to do what we can, but at the same time we also need your help.

Minister Uppadit: I believe that the problems of the Indochinese refugees are a consequence of the developments in Kampuchea. If we can stop the fighting in Kampuchea, we would solve the whole problem. Maybe you could raise it with the USSR.

---

<sup>4</sup> In the joint communiqué issued at the conclusion of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers meeting on June 30, the Foreign Ministers reiterated previous statements that no more refugees would be accepted in their countries. The text is in telegram 16 from Bali, June 30. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790314–0350)

<sup>5</sup> Telegram 16472 from Bangkok, May 15, described the growing refugee problem from the Thai perspective. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790218–0943) Telegram 165416 from Bangkok, June 26, described Thai efforts to limit the refugee influx by refusing admittance. (National Archive, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790289–0788)

Secretary Vance: We have done that and we will take it up at the Security Council.

Minister Uppadit: We support your action and think that it is still useful even if Vietnam does not attend. Although nothing comes out, it will still attract world's attention.

Secretary Vance: How do you feel about the convening of the Security Council? I will raise it with all the ASEAN Ministers this afternoon.<sup>6</sup>

Minister Uppadit: The Japanese also favor the idea of convening an international conference but they are still not yet so sure about how to organize one.

Secretary Vance: We support the concept.

Minister Uppadit: We welcome your President's recent announcement on the Indochinese refugees,<sup>7</sup> but the measure may still not be adequate. We have to attend the problems at source.

Secretary Vance: I wish to refer to the situation along the border. We understand that recently a large number of people were pushed back. We have received the information that these people are now starving. We would appreciate it if you can help us provide food to these people so that they will not die.

Ambassador Abramowitz: We get many letters. Please see what you can do to assist. We can provide the funds for you and we want to bring this to your attention.

Minister Uppadit: Are you sure that the food will get to them? It could be diverted to the hands of the Heng Samrin forces.

Secretary Vance: I shall ask the Ambassador to follow up on the matter and see to it that our purpose is served.

Deputy Assistant Secretary Oakley: Speaking of Peacock's proposal about the draft statements.<sup>8</sup> Should we issue a separate statement? Has ASEAN discussed it?

Minister Uppadit: No, we have not. What the ASEAN Ministers want is your endorsement of the joint communique—perhaps the

---

<sup>6</sup> Vance met on July 2 with the five ASEAN Foreign Ministers and the Foreign Ministers of Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and Ireland (representing the EC). A summary of the discussion is in telegram Secto 6151 from Bali, July 3. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790302-0860) For Vance's statement and press conference after the meeting, see Department of State *Bulletin*, September 1979, pp. 35-39.

<sup>7</sup> On June 28, at the Tokyo Economic Summit, Carter committed the United States to double the number of refugees it would admit. See *Public Papers: Carter, 1979*, Book II, p. 1191. In addition, the seven nations at the Summit issued a statement on the refugee situation; see *Public Papers: Carter, 1979*, Book II, p. 1188.

<sup>8</sup> Not further identified.

important part of it. What is your idea about solving the Kampuchea problem?

Secretary Vance: We have to raise the issue in a political forum but it will take time and is very difficult to set one up. We must continue to utilize our bilateral contacts with the USSR, China and Vietnam and talk directly to them. Even then we still cannot be too sure.

Minister Uppadit: If we can bring the fighting to an end, then the next move would be to establish a government chosen by Kampuchians and one accepted by all. Of course all foreign forces must first be withdrawn. Vietnam is not going to do it. The conflict between the Soviet Union and China has much to do with it. ASEAN alone will not be in a position to contribute much.

Secretary Vance: All of us will play a part but primarily it is ASEAN because it is important to you.

Minister Uppadit: Immediate steps must be taken to bolster Kampuchea's will to fight. Vietnam is now being harassed and facing difficulties. We must help Pol Pot or Heng Samrin will get stronger. As regards our role in this, we cannot do it for obvious reasons.

Secretary Vance: Neither claimed government will provide solutions in my judgement.

Minister Uppadit: Our position is clear on this that we shall not recognize Heng Samrin.

Assistant Secretary Holbrooke: Go along with that.

Deputy Assistant Secretary Oakley: In the long run it will not work if Pol Pot is there.<sup>9</sup>

**Levin**

---

<sup>9</sup> After leaving Bali, Vance traveled to Canberra for a meeting of the ANZUS Council. His statements there and the ANZUS communiqué expressed concern about the situation in Indochina and especially the plight of the Indochinese refugees. See Department of State *Bulletin*, September 1979, pp. 53–58.

**177. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 5, 1979, 5:30–5:45 p.m.

**SUBJECT**

Summary of Dr. Brzezinski's Conversation with Morton Abramowitz,  
U.S. Ambassador to Thailand

**PARTICIPANTS**

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski  
Mort Abramowitz  
Nick Platt, Staff Member, NSC

Ambassador Abramowitz told Dr. Brzezinski that the Vietnamese were determined to reduce significantly, if not destroy altogether, Pol Pot's forces in Cambodia. Our intelligence indicates that they have requested data on Thai military dispositions along the Cambodian border. In the course of attacking and pursuing Pol Pot, the Vietnamese are likely to violate Thai territory, and perhaps tangle with Thai forces. At that point, American policy will be tested, and the United States will be under pressure to do something. (C)

Ambassador Abramowitz also said that Vietnamese successes against Pol Pot were likely to inspire the Chinese to make another attack of some sort on Vietnam. While this was occurring, famine will be spreading in Cambodia, refugees will pour across the Thai border, and the flow of boat people from Vietnam will resume. All of these events—Vietnamese offensive in Cambodia, border violations in Thailand, Chinese military pressure on Vietnam, famine and refugee flows—were likely to occur between November and January. They would coincide with an intense period of political activity in the United States at a time when the United States was politically unable to absorb more refugees. (C)

We should look ahead and develop options to deal with these contingencies. He did not favor the despatch of aircraft carriers or military flag-showing exercises, since we would not be able to follow through. He did favor development of a modest contingency military assistance package (\$40–50 million) for use if needed. On Cambodian aid, Ambassador Abramowitz felt that the Administration had been

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Subject File, Box 34, Memcons, Brzezinski, 9–12/79. Confidential. The meeting took place in Brzezinski's office.

reticent, and that a special Presidential message was required. He hoped that the Pope's visit<sup>2</sup> might provide an occasion for a statement. (C)

Dr. Brzezinski agreed that the situation was most worrisome and that the Administration had moral responsibilities in Cambodia and toward the refugees. He instructed Mr. Platt to organize discussions within the government on policy options for the United States involving relevant officials from State, Defense, Intelligence, and the NSC. (C)

---

<sup>2</sup> Pope John Paul II visited the United States October 1–7.

---

**178. Letter From Thai Prime Minister Kriangsak to  
President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, October 31, 1979

Dear Mr. President,

It was with great gratification that I recently learned from press reports that the U.S. Government, under your initiative, has pledged to contribute a sum of \$70,000,000 towards the relief aid for the suffering people of Kampuchea.<sup>2</sup> This is indeed a most welcome news not only for these people who now number close to 200,000 on this side of the border, but also for all concerned who have dedicated themselves to the task of making the lives of these people bearable again. The Government of Thailand wholeheartedly applauds such a decision on the part of the U.S. Government. This is truly an act of profound generosity and genuine sympathy for other less fortunate people that has been traditionally reserved for American people.

The plights of the Kampuchean refugees are beyond anything humanly imaginable. There appear to be few scepticisms today as to the extent of the tragedy that has befallen the unfortunate people of Kampuchea and their nation. We in Thailand are heartened by the fact that the international community, with all due credit to the leadership of the United States, has at long last come to appreciate how vital and urgent the matter has become for more concerted efforts and accelerated

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 19, Thailand, Prime Minister Kriangsak Chomanan, 12/77–5/80. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 63.

worldwide response to be forthcoming in order to prevent further loss of lives. It is altogether clear that the entire Khmer race and civilization is now facing a real danger of extinction if nothing is done in time to alleviate their situation.

This was one of the reasons which has prompted my Government to adopt the new policy of giving asylum to all Kampuchean refugees on a temporary basis.<sup>3</sup> Out of humanitarian consideration, we have chosen to undertake this step even though it is clear to us that our action will have created for us not only grave security risks, but also the unbearable burden of having to care for these refugees out of our own limited resources. In this connection, I can assure you, Mr. President, that Thailand has done all that it can and will continue to do our utmost to help these people. We will continue to cooperate with donor countries in channelling assistance through designated international organizations for the Kampuchean relief so that these people may yet see better days again.

In this connection, however, it should be understood that relief aid, no matter how enormous it can be acquired, can only provide a partial solution at best. There can be no light at the end of the tunnel for the Kampuchean people, both inside and outside Kampuchea, so long as the war resulting from the armed intervention on the part of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam continues in that country. The mass exodus of the Kampucheans has been caused by widespread famine and starvation, which is a direct result of the ongoing armed conflict in that country. Above all, all this has already become an important factor which now adversely affects the relations between Thailand and Vietnam. The tense situation has led to an increase of incidents along the Thai-Kampuchean border resulting in frequent violations of Thailand's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The prospect of the armed conflict to widen its scope and spillover into adjacent areas and possibly also the entire region is therefore ever-present and can no longer be discounted.

That is why it is the firm conviction of my Government that, in regard to the situation in Kampuchea, there must be continued world efforts to arrive at a political solution to the problem. We feel that continued military solution as pursued by Vietnam will only add to the untold miseries already suffered by the Kampuchean people, and that it could well lead to a larger conflagration with serious consequences for the world at large. This was the reason for which I wrote a letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, a copy of which

---

<sup>3</sup> On October 19, Kriangsak announced that Thailand would take in refugees rather than forcibly send them back into Cambodia. ("Thailand Shifts Policy, Vows to Accept Indochinese Refugees," *Washington Post*, October 20, 1979, p. A12)



has been attached hereto for your information,<sup>4</sup> requesting for a fact-finding mission to monitor the situation as it exists along the Thai side of the Thai-Kampuchean border. I would venture to hope that this initiative will be appreciated by the U.S. Government. For we believe that the establishment of such mission will serve to defuse the potentially explosive situation in the region. At the same time, I would also urge that the United States continues its efforts in convincing the Soviet Union and China that peace and stability in Southeast Asia would serve to advance rather than hinder the interests of all concerned, most particularly the countries of the region including the Socialist Republic of Vietnam itself. On our part, the United States can rest assured of our readiness to cooperate fully with all concerned in bringing the war in Kampuchea to an early end in the interest of peace and stability in the Southeast Asian region.

In concluding, Mr. President, I would like to emphasize once again the importance which we attach to the situation in Kampuchea. For us in Thailand, there can be no higher purpose than to see that the people of Kampuchea be given the opportunity to determine their own future free from outside interference or coercion.

With warm personal regards and best wishes,  
Yours sincerely,

**General Kriangsak Chomanan**<sup>5</sup>  
*Prime Minister of Thailand*

---

<sup>4</sup> Not found attached.

<sup>5</sup> Kriangsak signed "Kchomanan" above his typed signature.

**179. Letter From President Carter to Thai Prime Minister Kriangsak<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 7, 1979

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

Thank you for your recent letter.<sup>2</sup> I share your assessment of the dimensions of the human tragedy which has overtaken the people of Kampuchea. I share as well your sense of concern that the Khmer people face a real danger of extinction. My wife Rosalynn joins me in this deep concern. I have asked her to deliver this letter to you personally<sup>3</sup> to underline my commitment to work with you and the international community to bring about an end to the suffering and death.

Nothing has served this humanitarian purpose more than the open door policy which you have adopted toward the Khmer refugees. Thailand's provision of temporary asylum and Thailand's full support of the international relief efforts have already done much to help alleviate suffering. These efforts have required skillful coordination. I have been deeply impressed by your personal efforts and those of your government to coordinate the contributions of many nations and to maximize the benefits to the refugees. Your commitment to a continuing effort is also warmly welcome.

I am grateful for your hospitality and assistance to members of the U.S. Senate, House of Representatives, to Governors of a number of our states, and to other American groups which have visited Thailand. These visits have helped focus world attention on both the plight of the Kampuchean people and the burdens on the Thai people. In particular, I want to thank you for your assistance to Senators Sasser, Danforth and Baucus, and for your support of the land bridge proposals<sup>4</sup> in Kampuchea. We intend to pursue this approach and to explore every other way to reduce the starvation and suffering. Rosalynn and those accompanying her in Thailand will be exploring ways and means by which we can usefully marshal further assistance. No single solution will be enough. Rather, the magnitude of the problem calls for a multitude of approaches.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 50, Thailand: 1979. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 178.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 180.

<sup>4</sup> A "land bridge" was proposed by the congressional delegation of Senators Sasser, Danforth, and Baucus, and by the ICRC. The proposal recommended food aid delivery to Kampuchea via land routes through Thailand, in lieu of air delivery. See Documents 67 and 140.

We recognize that despite Thailand's heroic efforts, only a large-scale international response can hope to mitigate the horror. We want to continue working closely with you on increasing both humanitarian assistance and an international presence in or near Kampuchea. Our own pledge of \$69 million, including \$30 million for international relief efforts in Kampuchea, our support for Congressional measures to provide an additional \$30 million, and my pledge of \$9 million for the Thai Government program for Khmer citizens who have recently fled to your country are all designed to save Khmer lives, and incidentally to enhance long-term prospects for peace and stability in the region.

I agree with you that humanitarian aid is only a "partial solution at best" for the problems facing both the Khmer people and the people of Southeast Asia as a result of Vietnamese actions in Kampuchea. It is equally essential to pursue ways to end the fighting, to defuse tensions, and to find a political solution for Kampuchea. We will continue to devote our energies to this end. I welcome continued and close consultations with you and your government in accelerating our efforts to achieve these shared objectives.

I wish to reaffirm that a major objective of American policy is to maintain the security and territorial integrity of Thailand. The current tensions and the incidents recounted in your letter, with the possibility of even further intensified conflict on your border, are of great concern to the United States. We have made our concern known to the Vietnamese and Soviets on numerous occasions, most recently November 5 and 6 when Secretary Vance told the Vietnamese<sup>5</sup> and Russians<sup>6</sup> of our position in unambiguous terms. All parties involved in the border must exercise caution to encourage reduction of tensions and avoid exacerbating the present dangerous and volatile situation.

To this end the United States welcomes and fully supports your proposal for a UN fact-finding mission. It is an imaginative proposal and we hope that it marks the beginning of sustained and vigorous Thai and ASEAN diplomatic activity aimed at further constraining the Vietnamese and the Soviets.

As we proceed, I wish to reiterate my conviction that continued ASEAN unity is a key element in convincing the Vietnamese and the Soviet Union to act with restraint, and thereby relieve the political tension in the region. The United States is prepared to support Thai and ASEAN initiatives. I urge you to continue your close cooperation with my trusted representative, Ambassador Abramowitz, and to bring to his attention your concerns and ideas as you have in the past.

---

<sup>5</sup> See Document 68.

<sup>6</sup> Not found.

I also hope you will outline for Mrs. Carter the new assistance you believe you will need. I will give it my careful consideration.

In closing, I would like to thank you for your hospitality in receiving my wife and her party. She will carry back her personal experiences and views, and I am confident that her report will be of great value to me and my government in our efforts to assist Thailand in dealing with this chilling human tragedy.

With warm personal regards and best wishes.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter

---

## 180. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Bangkok, November 11, 1979, 11:15–11:45 a.m.

### SUBJECT

Summary of Mrs. Carter's Meeting with Thai Prime Minister Kriangsak

### PARTICIPANTS

Mrs. Rosalynn Carter  
Ambassador Mort Abramowitz  
Mr. Richard Holbrooke  
Mr. Michael Armacost  
Senator Harold Hughes  
Mrs. Jean Young  
Mr. Leslie G. Denend

Prime Minister Kriangsak Chomanan  
General Prem Tinsulanon, Minister of Defense and Commander-in-Chief, Royal Thai Army  
Uppadit Panchariyangun, Foreign Minister  
General Lek Naeomali, Minister of Interior  
Lt. General Chaleomchai Charuwat, Minister Attached to the Office of the Prime Minister  
General Phon Thanaphum, Minister Attached to the Office of the Prime Minister

Using a map, *Prime Minister Kriangsak* reviewed the refugees situation near the Thai-Cambodian border. He pointed out that there are nearly 200,000 Cambodian refugees on the border and perhaps another

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country File, Box 74, Thailand, 1/77–12/79. Secret. The meeting took place in the Prime Minister's residence. Printed from a draft dated November 14.

200,000–300,000 near Sisaphon approximately 40 kilometers from the border in Cambodia. Those near the border could move into Thailand at any time.

*Ambassador Abramowitz* asked what was being done to prepare for this influx. *Prime Minister Kriangsak* stated that four new sites for refugee camps were being prepared but that providing sufficient water was a major problem. He added that sites must be found west of the military line. *Mrs. Carter* pointed out that the voluntary agencies had told her that the most urgent need now was the location of additional sites for camps. The Prime Minister nodded agreement.

*Mrs. Carter* asked how the people along the border and in western Cambodia were being fed and asked about the possibility of having trucks standing by at the border ready to carry food into Cambodia. *Prime Minister Kriangsak* said that trucks would be stopped by the Heng Samrin regime and the Vietnamese. He felt that a truck convoy could only enter Cambodia after obtaining permission and even then it would require protection. In response to further questions, he indicated that he did not think the Vietnamese would allow aircraft to land at Siem Reap or other cities in the northwest, but that perhaps an airdrop would be effective. Even if 20 percent was lost to Heng Samrin forces and the Vietnamese, he still felt that the airdrop would be worth the effort. However, he reiterated that although he would certainly approve trucks or aircraft entering Cambodia from Thailand, this could only be done after obtaining permission.

In response to the question of when the Cambodians along the border would enter Thailand, *Prime Minister Kriangsak* felt that it would be soon. He was sure that during this dry season, the Vietnamese would attempt to extend control of the Heng Samrin regime to all of Cambodia. He felt that they would be unsuccessful but that the fighting would likely push those Cambodians near the border into Thailand.

The conversation next moved to security issues. *Ambassador Abramowitz* asked the Prime Minister if he believed the Vietnamese would respect Thai borders. *Prime Minister Kriangsak* responded that even though the Vietnamese have promised publicly to respect Thai sovereignty, Thailand could not trust the Vietnamese and would not be caught unprepared. He said that Thailand intended to remain strong and was fully engaged in planning for such a contingency as well as taking the necessary steps to increase the number of Thai divisions. The Prime Minister added that, should the Vietnamese enter Thailand, we will fight, we will go to the United Nations, and we will call on our allies for help. For example, he said that the Chinese had told him that if the Vietnamese invade Thailand they will administer a “second lesson” to Vietnam.

*Assistant Secretary Holbrooke* assured the Prime Minister that, in spite of congressional cuts, Thailand would receive the levels of security

assistance requested by the President. *Prime Minister Kriangsak* called this good news and added that Thailand realizes that it must bear some of the cost of maintaining a strong posture against the Communists, but that he hoped that others like the U.S. would remain convinced that this part of the world is also very important to their interests. We must not miscalculate Vietnamese intentions, he stressed.

Returning to the refugee issue, *Prime Minister Kriangsak* said that he had two hopes: first, that the outflow of refugees to resettlement countries should roughly balance with the inflow from all sources (Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam); and second, that there should be no residual. Eventually, all the refugees should either return to their country or the world should accept this burden. He added that he had thought for some time about his announcement that Thailand would accept all refugees wishing to enter and hoped now that other countries would help Thailand. In particular, he asked the U.S. to do more in economic cooperation with Thailand.

After confirming that it would be feasible administratively to make some adjustments in the allocation of the 14,000 monthly ceiling, *Assistant Secretary Holbrooke* asked the Prime Minister if an increase in U.S. acceptance of refugees from Thailand would be helpful in the coming months. *Prime Minister Kriangsak* responded that it would be very helpful in showing that the problem was not increasing for Thailand. The Thai people would be very appreciative. *Mrs. Carter* noted this point and indicated she would pursue it. *Prime Minister Kriangsak* went on to urge the U.S. to publicize Thailand's humanitarian decision, to point out the Vietnamese role in exacerbating the refugee problem, and thus to solicit private and public help in caring for and resettling the refugees.

*Prime Minister Kriangsak* concluded the meeting by asking *Mrs. Carter* to give his thanks to the President for sending her to Thailand and asked her to convey the following message to the President: 1) The U.S. has good friends in Thailand; 2) We need economic help; 3) We need security assistance and assurances; and, 4) We ask you to build and focus world opinion to support Thailand with the refugee problem.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> For Mrs. Carter's report on her trip, see Document 71.

**181. Letter From Thai Prime Minister Kriangsak to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, December 7, 1979

Dear Mr. President,

I wish to thank you most sincerely for your letter of November 7, 1979,<sup>2</sup> personally delivered to me by your wife, Mrs. Rosalynn Carter, on the eve of her departure from Thailand after concluding an unofficial visit here to investigate the plight of the suffering Kampuchean refugees along Thailand's eastern border.

The Government and people of Thailand owe a debt of gratitude to you, Mr. President, for the interest in and sympathy for the Kampuchean refugees which you have demonstrated in dispatching your wife to our country for this important mercy mission. As a result of this visit, I feel certain Mrs. Carter must have shared with us the feeling that this problem is a human tragedy of the first magnitude. We are greatly encouraged when we learn soon after Mrs. Carter's departure that the US Government has now decided to expedite the emergency relief aid for the Kampuchean refugees<sup>3</sup> and to increase the intake of refugees from Thailand to the United States. No doubt, such actions are bound to generate wider international response resulting in more contributions both in cash and in kind, as well as increased resettlements in third countries of the refugees now residing in Thai holding centers. Already, we are witnessing an increase in these contributions or pledges of contributions, which we hope will help to lessen the financial burden of Thailand.

As you are aware, the root cause of the Kampuchean refugees has been and will continue to be the ongoing war of aggression committed by Vietnam against Kampuchea. Although we have now succeeded in bringing the majority of the world to our side as evidenced by the recent voting in the UN General Assembly on the item "the Situation in Kampuchea", there is still a pressing need for us to continue to focus its attention on this problem.<sup>4</sup> Indeed we cannot afford to be

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 19, Thailand, Prime Minister Kriangsak Chomanan, 12/77–5/80. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 179.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 63.

<sup>4</sup> Reference is to UN General Assembly Resolution 34/22 adopted on November 14. See *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1979, pp. 306–307.

complacent. We cannot allow the world's conscience which has been awakened, and the renewed interest shown by the American public towards this matter, to ever slip into oblivion if we are to achieve the final results that have been much hoped for. Instead, it seems to me that constant and continuous pressure—both political and diplomatic, and for that matter even economic—must be brought to bear upon the Vietnamese so that they may soon find it to be in their interest to change the course of policy. We are counting on the sympathetic support and understanding of our good friend the United States for our cause. We would therefore urge the US Government to continue to play a central role in these processes, for the more efforts the United States are exerting both internationally and domestically the nearer they will bring us to our desired objectives.

I cannot emphasize too much the importance which we attach to our relations with the United States. We regard friendship and cooperation with the United States a high priority in the conduct of our foreign policy. It is therefore gratifying for me to note that our cooperative relations have achieved a remarkable degree of closeness and are steadily expanding in wide-ranging fields during the present US Administration. This gives us great confidence in meeting the challenges of the difficult times in which we now find ourselves. But as always, we shall seek to be self-reliant as we have been for centuries, especially on matters that border on national pride and sovereignty.

That is why we in Thailand are vigorously implementing various development strategies with a view to strengthening our national resilience. In these difficult tasks, of course meaningful assistance from the more economically advanced countries with which we feel we share a common commitment such as the United States can be of great value, especially in view of the fact that as a small, developing country with limited means Thailand has been hard hit by the ill-effects of world-wide inflation, recession, the problem of unemployment and an energy crisis. I would therefore propose that we seriously contemplate the possibility of intensifying our partnership in the economic and development fields, as well as in all other fields of common interest. Although it is true that the United States has been making substantial contributions towards our national development over the years—the fact for which we are always grateful—increased assistance in a manner that is either required by or consistent with our national objectives and development needs would be most timely at this crucial juncture. If for no other reasons, it should be clear to both of us that an economically viable Thailand can serve a useful purpose in all endeavours leading to peace and stability not only in Southeast Asia but also in the world.



With warmest personal regards and best wishes,  
Yours sincerely,

(General Kriangsak Chomanan)<sup>5</sup>  
*Prime Minister of Thailand*

---

<sup>5</sup> Kriangsak signed “Kchomanan” above his typed signature.

---

## **182. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, February 29, 1980, 1106Z

9397. For EA Holbrooke, Cleveland and Ambassador Abramowitz. Subj: Kriangsak’s Resignation and Next Thai Government: Initial Analysis. Ref: Bangkok 9310.<sup>2</sup>

1. (S–Entire text–Wnintel/Noform/Nocontract/Orcon)

2. Summary: Prime Minister Kriangsak’s resignation without Parliamentary fight caught everyone by surprise. It appears to have been precipitated by General Prem’s withdrawal of his support within last 24 hours. Kriangsak continues as caretaker PM under Constitution pending King’s nomination of successor. There are no indications that either military or student/labor groups will attempt to interfere with Constitutional procedures. National Legislative Assembly (NLA) meets March 3 and NLA President Harin is expected to forward nomination to King based on Assembly consensus which will almost certainly endorse General Prem if he expresses assent to taking the job. It is, however, possible that Prem could yet hold back in favor of neutral or civilian personality. Accession of Khukrit<sup>3</sup> or return of Kriangsak is technically possible, but considered highly improbable. Given initial

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800104–1021. Secret; Niact Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information to Beijing, the White House, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Singapore, Tokyo, Hong Kong, and CINCPAC.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 9310 from Bangkok, February 29, also discussed Kriangsak’s resignation and the constitutional processes that began as a result of the resignation. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800104–0377)

<sup>3</sup> Khukrit Pramoj, Prime Minister of Thailand from March 1975 to April 1976.

background of Kriangsak's demise, whatever new Cabinet comes in will probably focus first on oil price rises and other economic issues; chances seem high for initial price rollback as show of response to popular demand. Most likely items on any new agenda for foreign policy are China, SRV and refugee issues which have been closely associated with Kriangsak personally. If Prem's most obvious advisors play strong role, a right-wing, populist approach is probable on domestic affairs. In foreign policy, there is likely to be a more neutral stance toward both China and SRV and a tougher policy on Indochinese refugees. A generally close relationship with the US should continue, but chances are there will be problems on refugee matters, perhaps also on foreign investment. It is too early to speculate confidently since much depends on the intentions of the enigmatic General Prem, new personalities that may be installed in Ministries and the pace the new Cabinet sets for itself. The PM's resignation came against the background of steadily eroding support for Kriangsak prompted in the first instance by popular discontent over recent energy price hikes and over the past few months by a growing feeling that his leadership talents weren't up to the job and the country was drifting aimlessly while economic conditions deteriorated. Pot-shots at his liberal refugee policy didn't help, but were not significant in bringing him down. Foreign policy wasn't a factor. In resigning, the PM probably consciously decided to go down as a statesman rather than face the prospect of Parliamentary defeat or even a narrow victory which would have made his next two or three months hell with subsequent defeat inevitable.

Bangkok has remained calm in the wake of the resignation and is expected to continue so. No great social or ideological issues are at stake and the affair seems to be shaping up along more traditional Thai lines of elites changing hats.

End summary.

### 3. Kriangsak's demise.

Kriangsak has been under growing political pressure for weeks and opposition, both civilian and military, exploited his economically sound but unpopular decision to raise oil prices. Despite pressures, Kriangsak was expected to hold military support for next few weeks. There are several theories in Bangkok about resignation decision, but we find most credible explanation [*less than 1 line not declassified*] that Army Commander and Minister of Defense, General Prem Tinsulanon advised Kriangsak on February 28 to resign in order to prevent civilian disturbances. Prem's motives are almost impossible to read, but probably include concern for country's unity, unwillingness to confront right-wing military activists supporting demonstrations against Kriangsak and decision—reluctant or calculated—that he himself should shape country's fate. In any case, Prem has for months controlled military

forces and enjoyed popular adulation, and, therefore, has been the one man who could singlehandedly determine the outcome of any point of his choosing.

#### 4. Next steps.

Following Kriangsak's resignation, NLA President Harin scheduled next Assembly session for 9 am March 3 to discuss successor, stating that Kriangsak would remain as caretaker PM in accordance with Constitution until he is replaced. No vote is technically required to name successor and King issues order which must be countersigned by Assembly President. If nominee does not have Assembly support however, he can be removed within days by no-confidence vote, so Harin is expected to seek consensus as basis for his nomination. (Septel being sent on details of constitutional procedures.)

5. Constitutionally, the field is open to anyone, including Kriangsak. Opposition parties have already called for Prem and he is obvious choice of vast majority of Thai military. Only question, therefore, is whether he himself wants the job or would opt to support another candidate. It is conceivable that Prem, who has long held back from a strong political role, could yet decide to install a civilian or elder statesman to promote civilian government and retain his military focus, or simply to leave the choice to others. He has not yet made public statement, but most are betting he will be next PM.

6. The only strong politician in contention is former PM Khukrit, but most observers believe he remains unacceptable to the military and the Palace. In any case, other parties have voiced strong preference for Prem and would follow his lead, leaving Khukrit with only relatively small numbers in Parliament. Some have also suggested that Kriangsak resigned as a ploy with hopes of being reappointed when Parliament recognizes inadequacies of alternatives, but we find this implausible in light of his unpopularity and political disabilities. Furthermore, Kriangsak's resignation speech had the content and emotional twist of a man who is stepping down after having done his best.

#### 7. Prospective policy changes.

It is too early to speculate confidently on the next government since so much depends upon the intentions of the enigmatic General Prem. He may choose to force the pace of events or, even if named Prime Minister, to take a cautious attitude toward major policy shifts. While much is known about several of his close military advisors who are generally right-wing, it is far from clear how heavily he would rely on them or to what other groups he might turn. Nonetheless, there are several likely directions in which the next Cabinet will point: First, given immediate background of Kriangsak's demise, whatever new Cabinet comes in will probably focus first on the oil price rises and economic issues that underlay the widespread popular disapproval

of Kriangsak. Chances seem high, therefore, that there will be initial rollbacks in oil production prices to demonstrate responsiveness to popular demand. In the coming months this could exacerbate Thailand's economic problems. In the field of foreign policy, there will probably be early reviews of attitudes toward China, Vietnam and refugees, policies which have been very closely associated with Kriangsak personally.

8. If Prem's most obvious military advisors play a strong role in the new government's policy formulation, a right-wing populism is probable on domestic affairs. In foreign policy, we would anticipate efforts to move away from the present special relationship with China, and a tougher policy on Indochina refugees, both reflections of a rightist, nationalistic bent. Whether they would be accompanied by a more neutral policy toward Vietnam is as yet too early to know. Prem, other than staunchly supporting the monarchy and standing for military professionalism, has not elaborated many political or economic thoughts. [*less than 1 line declassified*] reports indicate, General Han Leelanon, General Rawi Wanphen, and General Sutsai Hatsadin, all associated with the rightist Internal Security Operations Command, have asserted influence on Prem in recent weeks. Prem, however, reportedly also has cordial relations with the Royalist leader of the Thai Citizen Party and with several in the Democrat Party, which is closer to the center.

#### 9. Implications for US.

There is likely to be considerable continuity in the generally close relationship between Thailand and the US. Prem, who had a year in 1953 at the US Army Armored School, has been friendly and cooperative toward the US, but has taken care to avoid an overtly pro-American label. Assuming, as noted above, his circle asserts a nationalist influence, we would anticipate some bilateral problems over refugee issues and possibly foreign investment insofar as effort may be made to promote stronger Thai control of local industry. A more neutral stance could have implications for US efforts to preserve ASEAN unity against the Vietnamese and for possible US use of facilities here in support of Southwest Asian contingencies.

Levin

**183. Intelligence Assessment Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>**

PA 80–10195

April 1980

Thailand: New Government, Old Problems  
[portion marking not declassified]

*Key Judgments*

General Prem Tinsulanon assumed power on 12 March with a broad mandate from civilian and military power centers, but already there are signs of internal disagreement and confusion within his coalition government. Some important military officers believe he is not sufficiently sensitive to their interests. Prem's lack of experience in civilian politics and administration will also work against him. [portion marking not declassified]

The new government will have a grace period of several months before its policies are implemented and in turn can be assessed. Prem will probably be able to muddle through in the short term because there currently is no obvious alternative to him with the stature and public respect that he enjoys. [portion marking not declassified]

The most serious problem facing the new government is the deteriorating economy. Prem has assembled an impressive array of economists and technocrats, but their solutions differ little from those of the discredited government of former Prime Minister Kriangsak. The new Cabinet hopes to win public confidence through better implementation of programs and more competent administration; for now, they are trying to buy time through limited price rollbacks and government subsidies. [portion marking not declassified]

Prem is expected to follow the same general foreign policy as Kriangsak, particularly toward Indochina. Over time, however, he probably will seek more balance in Thai relations with Vietnam and China; he sees Beijing as the more serious long-term threat to Thai security. [portion marking not declassified]

If Prem fails to provide the necessary leadership, the country could enter a period of instability paving the way for yet another new government, undoubtedly under the military. A military government probably would not significantly alter Thailand's domestic policies or relation-

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services, Job 81T00208R: Production Case Files, Box 3, Folder 17: Thailand: New Government, Old Problems, An Intelligence Assessment. Secret; [handling restriction not declassified]. A map of Thailand is not printed.

ship with the United States and would face the same problems governing as its predecessors. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The smooth transition from the government of former Prime Minister Kriangsak Chomanan to that of General Prem Tinsulanon assures continued political stability in Thailand over the short term. Nevertheless, Prem faces the challenge of trying to remedy Thailand's deteriorating economic situation while coping with the consequences of Vietnamese activities in Indochina. His task is complicated by a coalition Cabinet, many of whose civilian members are from the major opposition parties. *[portion marking not declassified]*

### *Out of the Shadows*

Prem is a widely respected career military officer with considerable command experience but little political background. He made his reputation introducing innovative counterinsurgency techniques in northern Thailand between 1974 and 1977; most of his military colleagues give him high marks for professionalism and honesty. *[portion marking not declassified]*

*[1 paragraph (8 lines) not declassified]*

Former Prime Minister Kriangsak brought Prem into the government in 1977 as Deputy Minister of the Interior in charge of narcotics suppression, police reform, and refugee affairs. Prem subsequently assumed the more politically sensitive posts of Commander in Chief of the Army and Minister of Defense—posts he held concurrently prior to becoming Prime Minister. Prem's loyalty to Kriangsak guaranteed the support of the military and assured a period of political stability. Although not considered politically ambitious, Prem evidently decided to step in when popular opposition to the Kriangsak government intensified in early 1980 and convinced Kriangsak to resign in order to avoid civil unrest. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The succession process was smooth because Prem was supported by the royal family, the military, and parliament. This orderly transition which prevented direct military action against Thailand's fragile parliamentary democracy, nevertheless, underscored the fact that the military still wields the real power. Political parties may challenge the government but military interests rather than parliamentary procedures still determine government changes. *[portion marking not declassified]*

### *A Coalition Government*

Unlike Kriangsak, Prem has succeeded in attracting members of opposition parties into the government. In particular, he has recruited several highly respected economists and technocrats who opposed Kriangsak. He has given them substantial control over economic affairs, which also makes them vulnerable to criticism if the situation deteriorates. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Overall, Prem's government offers the best possible leadership to address the nation's economic problems, while providing continued competence in foreign affairs, defense, and security matters. Nonetheless, like most coalition governments, the wide range of political interests it represents is not only a source of its strength but also potentially its undoing; Prem may not have the requisite political skills to keep his fractious coalition partners united. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The new 37-man Cabinet includes 11 members from the Social Action Party, six from the Democratic Party, and five from the Thai Nation Party; none of these three major political parties participated in the Kriangsak government. Prem also has established a 26-man group of military officers, academics, and businessmen to advise him on domestic and foreign policy. Deputy Army Commander San Chitpatima will head this group that will have a direct link to Prem and will be used to provide an independent assessment of policies or disagreements within the Cabinet. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The economic portfolios are divided between two major political parties, and this may cause more conflict than cooperation once debates over economic policies begin. Prem appointed former Finance Minister and deputy leader of the Social Action Party Bunchu Rotchanasathian as Deputy Prime Minister in charge of economic affairs and named other party members to key jobs in the Ministries of Finance and Commerce. *[4 lines not declassified]*

*[1½ lines not declassified]* He apparently intends to give Bunchu considerable authority to carry out needed economic reforms that should assuage Social Action Party concerns about government willingness to adopt its economic programs. Thai Nation Party leader and former Deputy Prime Minister Praman Adireksan was named Deputy Prime Minister responsible for administrative matters, and other party members were named Ministers of Industry and Agriculture. *[2 lines not declassified]*

The appointment of Democratic Party leader and former Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman as Deputy Prime Minister in charge of foreign affairs led to almost immediate and public conflict with Foreign Minister, and Prem's close confidant, Air Marshal Sitthi Sawetsila. A public disagreement over future Thai refugee policy, on which Thanat took a much harder line, led Prem officially to restrict Thanat's responsibilities to legal, scientific, and technological matters. This may ultimately cost Prem the support of Thanat's party. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Prem retained the Defense portfolio for himself. He named former Army Commander and leader of a rival military faction Soem na Nakhon as Deputy Prime Minister responsible for narcotics affairs. Prathuang Kiratibut was retained as Minister of Interior. Surprisingly, Prem did not name either of his close military advisers, former police director



General Prachuap Suntharankun and former 2nd Army Commander Han Leelanon, to Cabinet posts; both probably will continue in their present jobs at the Internal Security Operations Command and may be in line for senior Army positions later. *[portion marking not declassified]*

### *Intractable Economic Problems*

The success of the Prem government will be measured largely by its ability to handle Thailand's economic problems—the immediate cause of Kriangsak's departure. The international energy situation has caused oil shortages, aggravated inflation, widened the trade deficit, and contributed to a deterioration of the standard of living of the average Thai citizen. Former Prime Minister Kriangsak's attempts to address these problems by implementing an energy conservation program and raising energy prices sparked widespread demonstrations and strikes by labor and student groups that eventually brought down his government. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Prem's economic team is certainly competent to address Thailand's economic problems but will have difficulty in resolving them. The Prem government has not proposed any radical changes in economic policy, but rather hopes to implement it more comprehensively and competently. Indeed, Bunchu plans to accelerate and/or expand many of Kriangsak's economic programs and to introduce stricter austerity measures designed to reduce inflation. He also will attempt to improve management throughout the government bureaucracy; ineffective management as much as poor economic leadership undermined the previous government. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Bunchu's first move was to reduce the high prices for diesel fuel and kerosene established under the former government. The reductions—18 percent for kerosene and 13 percent for diesel—are a minor rollback of the 50 and 60 percent increases, respectively, imposed by Kriangsak just before his government fell. Bunchu, however, is counting on this action to appease labor and student groups and to buy time. Bunchu also will temporarily subsidize the prices of sugar and rice in a further effort to cushion the Thai consumer from inflation. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The new government will have to convince the public, however, that austerity measures are necessary and that higher fuel and food prices are inevitable. Previous governments have used subsidies and tax rebates since 1973 to alleviate the burden of high energy prices. Bunchu plans eventually to end such government subsidies because they divert funds from important economic development projects—the same dilemma Kriangsak faced. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Bunchu hopes to reduce Thailand's need for imported oil in the short run by implementing an energy conservation program and by



substituting coal for oil for domestic electric power plants. Imported oil now accounts for about 80 percent of Thailand's energy needs. The government is counting on such stop-gap measures to gain some time until offshore natural gas production begins in 1981, which is expected to reduce Thailand's dependence on imports an estimated one-third by the mid-1980s. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Thailand's poor balance of payments position is another major and related problem. Bangkok had a \$2.3 billion trade deficit last year, and could surpass \$3 billion next year. The new government will seek to correct this by slowing import growth, particularly oil, and promoting exports. It will probably borrow more heavily from commercial and international banks and try to encourage greater foreign investment, especially in energy and agriculture. All of these measures are designed to encourage the growth of private industry in order to expand production for export markets. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The government plans to spur rural development by bolstering full price support programs for crops as well as encouraging greater private investment. It will resuscitate the Tambon Development Fund—a program introduced by former Prime Minister Khukrit Pramot—which allots revenue to local government committees for their own use. This is as much a political as an economic policy and is intended to bolster the government's image among provincial constituents. The new government will find it difficult, however, to expand funds for rural development as long as competing sectors such as energy absorb so much revenue. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Prem's government, like Kriangsak's, will be hard pressed to cope with Thailand's economic problems in the short run, particularly as the key determinant, international energy prices, is beyond Thai control. If Prem cannot convince the public that his government can do the job, student and labor unrest may quickly revive. In particular, the government must avoid a fatal misstep like Kriangsak's decision to raise energy prices in one large increment, which sealed his government's doom. A resurgence of public dissatisfaction would cause disagreements among the members of Prem's coalition Cabinet, particularly between the two political parties holding the key economic portfolios. [*portion marking not declassified*]

### *Foreign Policy Concerns*

Prem is likely to continue Thailand's present foreign policy course. Over the long term, however, he will probably seek to redress the balance in Bangkok's relations with Communist states, which favored China during Kriangsak's regime. Prem's past military experience in counterinsurgency operations against Chinese-supported Communist guerrillas makes him more wary of Beijing's long-term intentions in

Southeast Asia, although he recognizes the present confluence of Thai and Chinese interests in opposing Vietnam in Kampuchea. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Although he believes Vietnamese military action in Kampuchea poses a potential threat to Thai security, Prem reportedly does not believe Vietnam will invade Thailand. Moreover, he does not believe that a pro-Vietnamese regime in Phnom Penh necessarily represents a permanent security problem for Thailand, but does want to see the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from the Thai-Kampuchean border. Under Prem, Thailand may be more receptive to a dialogue with Hanoi in an effort to reduce tensions. Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach is expected to visit Bangkok in April or May in response to an invitation from the Prem government. Whether Prem intends to redress the balance in Thailand's relations with Vietnam and China will probably become more evident at that time. [*portion marking not declassified*]

In any event, Thailand in concert with the other members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) will continue to recognize the Democratic Kampuchea regime as the legitimate government of Kampuchea because it still represents the only effective anti-Vietnamese resistance force and because the UN continues to recognize it. Prem's government, however, probably will continue to try to create a united front of Khmer resistance forces and to bolster the non-Communist groups, particularly Son Sann's Khmer Serika. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Unlike Kriangsak, Prem seems more receptive to a possible political role for former Kampuchean leader Prince Sihanouk. Foreign Minister Sitthi in particular reportedly favors a role for Sihanouk in any future united front because of the prince's popularity among the Kampuchean people. It is possible that over time the Prem government may shift its support away from the Pol Pot forces to some non-Communist group, but thus far it sees no viable alternative. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Although Prem wants to maintain correct relations with the USSR, he is concerned about the potential long-term threat to stability in Southeast Asia posed by the Soviet-Vietnamese alliance. Such concerns would intensify considerably if Moscow obtained permanent military facilities or established a large military presence in Indochina. [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *Confusion Over Refugees*

Prem has said publicly that Thailand will continue its "humanitarian policy" toward refugees, but his past actions and statements indi-

cate he will take a harder line on refugee policy than Kriangsak.<sup>2</sup> He hopes to prevent any more refugees from entering permanent camps in Thailand, and the Army already has begun refusing admittance of refugees into holding centers north of Aranyaprathet. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Along with other senior Thai officials, Prem worries about the potential security threat and economic burden posed by large permanent refugee encampments. Last January, in his capacity as Army Commander and Defense Minister, Prem approved an Army plan to repatriate gradually all Khmer refugees to areas in Kampuchea under the control of anti-Vietnamese/Heng Samrin resistance forces. He prefers to keep most of the refugees near the border to facilitate eventual repatriation. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Thailand will keep pressure on the UN and third countries to prevent the international community from taking Thai cooperation for granted. Prem wants the UN to convene an international conference on Kampuchea to try to force Vietnam to agree to the creation of UN-sponsored safe havens for refugees on the Kampuchean side of the border. Prem and his closest advisers are upset by what they perceive as UN unwillingness to support Thai refugee efforts. They have implied they might repatriate the refugees forcibly if the international community does not act soon.<sup>3</sup> Thailand considered the UN-sponsored donors conference convened on 26 March merely a token response to Thai demands.<sup>4</sup> [*portion marking not declassified*]

Conflicting statements on refugees by Prem's foreign affairs advisers Thanat and Sitthi in the first days of the new government caused considerable confusion about Prem's likely policy. Thanat publicly espoused a hard line and argued for forced repatriation; while Sitthi assured US officials that Bangkok would continue the "open door" policy of the former government. The contradiction reflected the ambiguity over which man had authority to speak for government foreign policy—a situation eventually resolved in Sitthi's favor. The incident nonetheless demonstrates the sentiment within the new Cabinet in favor of a harder line, and both Sitthi and Thanat warned that Thailand expects continued effective support and understanding from the inter-

---

<sup>2</sup> As of mid-March, there were about 162,000 Kampuchean refugees in Thailand, plus 178,000 Lao and 75,000 Vietnamese. In addition, there were an estimated 520,000 displaced Khmer along the Thai-Kampuchean border. [Footnote in the original.]

<sup>3</sup> The Thai Army forcibly repatriated about 40,000 Khmer refugees in June 1979 because Bangkok believed that the international community was ignoring its pleas for refugee assistance. [Footnote in the original.]

<sup>4</sup> The conference was held in New York.

national community in handling the refugee burden. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Prem's government will probably discuss the refugee issue with the Vietnamese Foreign Minister during his expected visit. The Heng Samrin regime recently publicly offered to negotiate the refugee issue with Bangkok but the Thai will not follow this up because it would imply recognition of the regime. [*portion marking not declassified*]

### *Military Politics*

To ensure his national political position, Prem must continue to consolidate his control over the Army. In part, this entails promoting to top posts his own proteges, who share Prem's desire to make the armed forces more professional. During the October 1979 annual military appointments, Prem placed his supporters in key command and staff positions and is likely to do the same after he retires as Army Commander next October. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Prem enjoys high standing with the military, but factionalism, particularly the growing power of the so-called "Young Turks"—an amorphous group of field grade officers—could well undermine his efforts and even his own political position over the longer term. The Young Turks do not yet represent a unified political/military faction of their own but rather constitute cliques within the major military factions. They share similar views, however, and could act as a pivotal element in a political crisis. [*portion marking not declassified*]

As Prime Minister, Prem can be expected to continue efforts that he began as Army Commander in Chief to modernize the military. Prem also has indicated he would like to intensify the counterinsurgency effort against guerrillas of the Communist Party of Thailand. As Army Commander, he expanded and improved the paramilitary units engaged in this campaign, but he also believed economic and social programs must be expanded in rural areas to undercut the Communists' appeal. To expand counterinsurgency programs, and modernize the Army, however, the government would need to divert financial resources already badly needed in the civilian economic sector. Prem hopes to resolve this dilemma in part by obtaining equipment with more lenient repayment terms through US foreign military sales provisions. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Continued military support is crucial to the survival of the Prem government. Prem's ability to maintain his power and influence in the military will depend in large part on how he manages growing factionalism within the Army. [*11½ lines not declassified*]

[*2 paragraphs (26 lines) not declassified*]

### Outlook

Prem faces considerable challenges but probably will be able to muddle through in the short term since there is currently no obvious alternative to him. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Over time, however, Prem will find it difficult to control factionalism, both among the diverse civilian groups in the Cabinet and within the military, and to avoid domestic unrest. Prem's economic advisers face the difficult task of alleviating the burden of high energy costs and inflation on the average Thai citizen, but they will probably be able to carry on as long as they avoid a fatal misstep. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Prem assumed control with a strong mandate to govern; but public conflicts and private bickering already have appeared over his choice of officials and over the division of authority among them. *[2½ lines not declassified] [portion marking not declassified]*

Prem's limited political experience may be his Achilles heel. *[12 lines not declassified] [portion marking not declassified]*

If Prem fails to provide the necessary leadership, the country could enter a period of chronic instability paving the way for a new government, undoubtedly under military tutelage. A new military government, however, probably would not alter significantly Thailand's domestic policies or relationship with the United States and would face the same problems governing Thailand as its predecessors. *[portion marking not declassified]*

---

### 184. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Thailand<sup>1</sup>

Washington, June 7, 1980, 0041Z

149603. Subject: Secretary's Pre-Luncheon Conversation With Thai Foreign Minister Sitthi, June 3, 1980.

1. (S)–Entire text.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country File, Box 74, Thailand, 6/80. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Sent for information Priority to Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Jakarta, Manila, Beijing, Tokyo, Canberra, Wellington, New Delhi, and the White House.

2. Secretary welcomed Foreign Minister Sitthi for a private conversation in his office prior to luncheon. Assistant Secretary Holbrooke, Ambassador Abramowitz and Messrs. Bernhard and Billings<sup>2</sup> were present on U.S. side. Mr. Sakthi accompanied Sitthi.

3. Secretary said he had not been in Thailand since 1965, however, he retained special interest in the country, was concerned about security problems there and was especially anxious to help Thai cope with refugee problem. Secretary lauded Thailand for its humanitarian help to Kampuchean people, noting high praise and support for Thailand in Congress; it was highly unusual he said for Congress to increase aid appropriation as it had for Thailand.

4. Sitthi thanked Secretary for inviting him and for giving him a chance to express RTG views. He expressed delight at news Secretary would go to Kuala Lumpur and said Secretary's attendance would be greatly appreciated by ASEAN FonMins.<sup>3</sup> Secretary said he looked forward to exchange of views. Secretary told Sitthi he had also asked Senate Majority Leader Byrd to visit Thailand on his way to China, and Senator Byrd had agreed to go sometime in early July. Sitthi was delighted.

5. Secretary then asked Minister Sitthi to give him an analysis of the situation in Kampuchea, and Sitthi described situation as follows:

6. Kampuchean war has reached stalemate militarily. Pol Pot's forces appear to be in stronger position than ever before and estimate is they number around 30,000–40,000—the Chinese say 60,000. These troops are well-disciplined and have high morale. They have inflicted and will continue to inflict severe damage on Vietnamese/Heng Samrin forces. Fighting is expected to intensify during upcoming rainy season and Vietnam will suffer a great deal more. DK probably has sufficient arms through dry season, but Chinese say ammo is a problem.

7. Sitthi said when he met Huang Hua in May latter had said that as long as Vietnamese troops remain in Kampuchea, the problem will be nonnegotiable; and Chinese will continue to support Pol Pot. Thailand, said Sitthi, especially present government, had for the moment taken position that they would not give military support to Democratic Kampuchea nor let Thailand be used by the Chinese to send military aid to DK. When told of this decision Huang showed his disappointment and had said privately to Sitthi that he was quite "embarrassed." Sitthi said he urged China to try to establish a sea route.

---

<sup>2</sup> Berl Bernhard served as Muskie's adviser; Leon Billings was Muskie's executive assistant.

<sup>3</sup> Muskie met with the ASEAN Foreign Ministers June 27–28 after their Ministerial meeting in Kuala Lumpur June 25–26. See Document 188.

8. Sitthi said that Thach had taken very hard line when he recently visited Bangkok, describing situation in Kampuchea as irreversible. SRV is trying every way to get Heng Samrin recognized. Vietnam, however, is fully aware that it has immense problem in Kampuchea and the longer the fighting goes on the more Vietnamese will suffer. They probably would like to find a way out, but they are very arrogant. FonMin said Thailand and ASEAN are trying their best to convince India to withhold its pledge of recognition of Heng Samrin. And at same time ASEAN is trying to convince its allies that assistance to Vietnam at this time would not help gain peaceful solution. Western countries should require Vietnam to comply with ASEAN's UN resolution.<sup>4</sup>

9. As for Thai/Kampuchea border situation, Thai believe that at present Vietnam has no capability to invade Thailand and would be afraid of political implications of such a move. Thailand is confident in her ability to defend herself, but assistance from the U.S. was much needed. Sitthi did not rule out possibility of some fighting along the border but said that it would not be on large scale.

10. Sitthi said that among members of ASEAN there were differing views; some like the Indonesians are more afraid of China than Vietnam. This is why Thai Prime Minister and Sitthi had recently toured ASEAN countries. As a result of the ASEAN visit, Thailand was able to consolidate position of its ASEAN partners. ASEAN now shared common stand and would speak with same voice in support UN resolution and ASEAN-EC political announcement,<sup>5</sup> calling for total troop withdrawal and self determination in Kampuchea. Sitthi said it does not matter who runs Kampuchea as long as the people elect them and foreign troops are out. Thailand and ASEAN dislike Pol Pot but it is necessary to retain seat in the UN for DK. The principle of non-intervention must be respected; recognition of Heng Samrin would condone SRV aggression.

11. Sitthi underscored that cornerstone of Thai foreign policy is ASEAN solidarity. Upcoming KL meeting would be very crucial. ASEAN must map out its strategy for the future.

12. Sitthi said that during his talk with the Vietnamese Foreign Minister, Thach had said the U.S. has inherent weaknesses. It is too wealthy and is afraid to lose its wealth, it is afraid to act. Vietnamese are poor and are willing to endure hardship.

---

<sup>4</sup> UN General Assembly Resolution 34/22. See footnote 4, Document 181.

<sup>5</sup> EC and ASEAN Foreign Ministers met in Kuala Lumpur March 6–7 to sign an economic cooperation agreement. On March 7, they issued a joint statement condemning the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. (Henry Kamm, "14 Nations Assail Soviet and Hanoi," *New York Times*, March 8, 1980, p. 4)



13. Sitthi said Thailand and ASEAN would like to have better understanding of long range U.S. policy toward the region. He had been delighted to learn that U.S. will assume its responsibility of assuring peace and stability in the region and the world. Thailand wanted very much for U.S. to help make her strong. Being the front line state Thailand must be ready to defend herself. ASEAN nations have told Thailand that they can go as far as Thailand is willing to go and will base their policies on Thailand's. Sitthi stressed the need for more U.S. support to Thailand, saying that recent increases in FMS were appreciated but more was needed, including grants for Thai along border, dislocated because of security problems and general unrest in area. Whereas Vietnam received more than 950 million dols from the USSR last year, Thailand received very little or nothing from its friends.

14. Sitthi said that Prime Minister Prem had authorized him to inform U.S. officials that Thailand is willing to make available the use of facilities for U.S. Air Force, but preferred not to have too many American troops in Thailand. Arrangement for the use of such facilities must be pursued discreetly. The Thai would want grant assistance if this were done.

15. Most crucial subject to focus on was aid to Democratic Kampuchea. Sitthi asked what steps should be taken with regard to Chinese request to send military aid to Pol Pot through Thailand. Should Thailand ignore the request or should Thai help them and would U.S. agree to it? Secretary replied this was hard question. Thailand must pursue its interest. Perhaps there might be other ways to send military aid to Pol Pot aside from through Thailand. Sitthi explained that aid could be sent by sea by way of Koh Kong but that would be extremely difficult and dangerous. He concluded that Thailand was very much concerned with this subject; she must be very careful not to create mistrust among friends; but at the same time must keep resistance forces alive.

**Muskie**



**185. Telegram From the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Posts<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 6, 1980, 0147Z

148264. Military Handle is Specat Exclusive. Subject: Secretary's Luncheon for Foreign Minister Sitthi, June 3.

1. (S)–Entire text.

2. At working luncheon June 3, Secretary had lengthy discussion with Thai Foreign Minister Sitthi which focussed on Kampuchean problem and recent SRV Foreign Minister Thach visit to Bangkok, possibilities for Sihanouk, and related issues. At the table on the U.S. side were Senator Glenn, Refugee Coordinator Palmieri, Assistant Secretary Holbrooke, Ambassador Abramowitz, DAS Negro Ponte, NSC Staff Member Gregg and Thai Director Cleveland. Foreign Minister Sitthi was accompanied by Thai UN PermRep Pracha Guna Kasem, Thai Charge Nikorn, Sitthi's secretary Sakthip and Embassy Pol Couns Suchinda.

3. Central points Sitthi made regarding situation within Kampuchea were that despite tough line SRV Foreign Minister Thach had taken during his recent visit to Bangkok, the Vietnamese were in an extended position in Kampuchea and were facing military and economic difficulties, whereas Pol Pot's forces were now stronger than last fall. Vietnam had not gained control of Kampuchea, and Sitthi believed they would not be able to do so. In Sitthi's view Pol Pot forces would survive in good condition through the wet season. Prescription for U.S. and ASEAN nations should therefore be to maintain firm, unified position based on ASEAN resolution.<sup>2</sup> Thai would also support DK seat in UN and urged our support.

4. At same time, Sitthi recognized possibility that given military stalemate he described present tense situation with attendant refugee pressures could go on for four or five years. Accordingly, he thought it increasingly important for the ASEAN/US side to search for possible political alternative of its own for Kampuchea. In this context, Sitthi said for first time that Thailand is prepared to allow Sihanouk to visit Kampuchean camps in Thailand, if all goes well during Sihanouk's

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Muskie Papers, Lot 83D66, Box 2, Memoranda 1980–1981. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Paul Cleveland (EA/T); cleared by Abramowitz, Negro Ponte, Palmieri, and in S and S/S–O; approved by Holbrooke. Sent Immediate to Bangkok; sent Priority to Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Manila, Beijing, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Wellington, Canberra, USUN, the Mission in Geneva, London, Paris, Moscow, and CINCPAC.

<sup>2</sup> UN General Assembly Resolution 34/22. See footnote 4, Document 181.

upcoming discussions with Lee Kuan Yew in Singapore, which Sitthi said were scheduled for June 16. Sitthi reported that Thai had asked Lee Kuan Yew to discuss with Sihanouk possibility of visiting Thai camps, and Lee had agreed. In response to a question Sitthi said Chinese had no legitimate basis for trying to stop Sihanouk visit to refugee camps, since it would take place on Thai soil.

5. Sitthi outlined the Thai talks in Bangkok with SRV Foreign Minister Thach in terms similar to those we have already heard from him and others. He acknowledged that Indonesia and Malaysia because of their greater fear and distrust of Chinese motives as well as their concern for Thai security were anxious to move sooner than Thailand toward political accommodation with Hanoi; Thai view is that Chinese can play a constructive role for time being, Thailand does not fear SRV attack and if ASEANs hold together on firm line, Vietnamese should prove flexible within next two years. Thach had clearly tried to exploit ASEAN differences during his visit to Kuala Lumpur. Sitthi had insisted however throughout Thach's sojourn to KL and Bangkok on full opportunity for consultation among the ASEAN partners, so as to frustrate Vietnamese splitting tactics. He underscored that at the present time the most important thing was that ASEAN continue to hang together in coming months.

6. In addition to these main points, Foreign Minister Sitthi also discussed Chinese role and refugee situation.

7. With regard to China, Sitthi said that Huang Hua when he recently visited Bangkok had reasserted need for continuing support to the DK forces and had said that other ASEAN nations were prepared to go along with this effort. Nonetheless, according to Sitthi, he had told Huang Hua that Thai would not facilitate Chinese supply of DK at this time. Regarding possibility China might teach SRV second lesson, Sitthi seemed to think Chinese would not do so in foreseeable future. Chinese he said were now emphasizing fact they were tying down 700,000 SRV troops merely by massing own troops on SRV border and helping DK. Chinese, said Sitthi, believe this is way to victory.

8. Sitthi reasserted RTG's humanitarian approach to refugees as long as international support continued. He evinced considerable worry however, that good portion of 1.5 million Khmer in western Cambodia could be driven to Thai border in coming months by famine. Longer term outlook also grim since only 50 percent of needs at most would be produced inside Kampuchea for some time unless Heng Samrin authorities changed policies and approach. Consequent tensions provided impetus to press hard for political solution.

9. At close of discussion, Secretary toasted Sitthi with firm reaffirmation of US support for Thailand and security commitment. Noting his admiration for Thailand's past achievements in maintaining its

independence and qualities of its people, Secretary said U.S. appreciated Thai friendship, most recently illustrated in RTG's support for Olympic boycott.<sup>3</sup> Secretary supported Thai efforts on behalf of its own security, ASEAN unity and search for political solution. He praised continued Thai demonstration of humanitarian concern for refugees, which presented greater burden for Thailand than for any other country. He had decided to go to Kuala Lumpur, after hearing ASEAN Ambassadors urge him to do so, as demonstration of support for what ASEAN nations are doing. While we had withdrawn forces from Vietnam war Secretary concluded, we had never lost interest in region, nor in Thai and ASEAN welfare.

Muskie

---

<sup>3</sup> In response to the continued Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, the United States boycotted the 1980 summer Olympics in Moscow. For more information on the boycott, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XXV, Global Issues; United Nations Issues.

---

## 186. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, June 3, 1980, 4–4:30 p.m.

### SUBJECT

Summary of Dr. Brzezinski's Meeting with Foreign Minister Sitthi Savetsila of Thailand

### PARTICIPANTS

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs  
Mr. Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs  
Ambassador Morton Abramowitz  
Mr. Donald Gregg, NSC Staff Member  
Mr. Roger Sullivan, NSC Staff Member

Foreign Minister Sitthi Savetsila  
Saktiep, Private Secretary  
Nikorn, Chargé of Embassy of Thailand

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Subject File, Box 34, Memcons, Brzezinski, 1–6/80. Confidential. The meeting took place in Brzezinski's office. An NSC correspondence profile indicates that Brzezinski "noted" the memorandum on August 25. (Ibid.)

Dr. Brzezinski and Sitthi were meeting for the first time. They exchanged greetings and noted that they had both studied in Cambridge. (U)

*Dr. Brzezinski* then moved to sketch the challenge which the US faces today. He stated that we face a strategic challenge of long-term duration. He noted that in the late 1940s and early 1950s the Soviet Union had pushed west and was stopped. A certain amount of detente then resulted in Europe. Subsequently the Soviets pushed east and wars in Korea and Viet Nam resulted, either directly or indirectly. Now the Soviets are pushing south in a two-pronged effort;

—In Afghanistan the Soviets are changing that state from a buffer to a wedge aimed at Iran and Pakistan

—In Cambodia the Soviets are using the Vietnamese as surrogates to try to secure a strategic foothold in Indochina. (C)

This two-pronged push will last well into the 80s, and has broader consequences. *Dr. Brzezinski* noted that if the drive to the Persian Gulf succeeds, great and immediate danger will result. He noted that there is a direct but related threat in SE Asia. To counter this, we must work closely with Thailand, ASEAN, Japan and the PRC. *Dr. Brzezinski* noted that the challenge of today is similar to that we faced in the late 1940s and early 1950s. How we respond will influence the next decade or two, just as did our responses in Berlin and Western Europe. (C)

*Foreign Minister Sitthi* stated that he felt very much the same about the two-pronged global strategy of the Soviets. He added that the PRC also hold to the same theory. *Sitthi* stated that during his recent visit to Bangkok, Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach had taken a very hard line on Cambodia, saying that the situation was "irreversible." *Dr. Brzezinski* noted that if it is "irreversible" the Vietnamese should pay a costly and protracted penalty for their attempt to occupy Cambodia. *Sitthi* said that he doubted that Viet Nam will invade Thailand directly, but said that if the Thais did not stand firm, Viet Nam would demand more concessions and would try to split ASEAN. He said that now ASEAN has a relatively united stand regarding Cambodia. (C)

Turning to Thailand's relations with the PRC, *Sitthi* admitted that the former Thai Government had allowed the PRC to pass arms through Thailand to the Pol Pot forces. They had done this in an effort to help the PRC to prevent the Vietnamese from achieving a full domination of Cambodia. *Sitthi* stated that the Prem Government has stopped the PRC from passing weapons for the time being. *Sitthi* stated that Thailand needs to wait, "to be sincere," and to try to push for a political solution in Cambodia. He commented that the fighting in Cambodia would go on, as Pol Pot launched limited attacks using weapons already

passed to him. *Sitthi* believes that Soviet support to Viet Nam may be limited and that if the Vietnamese become weakened by prolonged fighting in Cambodia some political compromise may be possible. (C)

*Sitthi* then referred to the recent visit of Huang Hua to Thailand. *Sitthi* said he urged Huang Hua to have Pol Pot demonstrate in the next month or two that he still has the strength to attack Vietnamese forces. Huang Hua said he feels that Pol Pot would soon run out of ammunition, and asked the Thais once again to allow PRC arms shipments to be sent to Pol Pot through Thailand. *Sitthi* said that he replied that the shipments had been stopped but perhaps only temporarily. (C)

*Dr. Brzezinski* commented that if he were Huang Hua he would do just what Huang Hua had done, and that if he were a Thai leader he would allow the PRC to supply Pol Pot in secret while not admitting it publicly. *Sitthi* reacted to this comment with animation and said that Huang Hua would be coming to Bangkok again in July. *Dr. Brzezinski* said that it would be sad if the PRC were to feel that either the US or Thailand was intimidated by the Soviets. *Sitthi* agreed but said we must work for a political solution in Cambodia. *Dr. Brzezinski* assented, but added that while Pol Pot cannot be part of the political solution he can be an instrument to bring it about. *Sitthi* commented that some in ASEAN are worried that the Thais are getting too close to the PRC. He stated that he would tell Ambassador Abramowitz "if we do something." (This appeared to be a reference to allowing resumption of PRC arms shipments to Pol Pot.) (C)

*Sitthi* described Thailand, Singapore and, to a lesser extent, the Philippines, as taking a tough line toward Viet Nam. He described Malaysia as rather weak and said that Indonesia was basically afraid of the PRC. *Dr. Brzezinski* asked for a fuller description of the Indonesian attitude. *Sitthi* responded that Suharto feels that Viet Nam is no threat to Indonesia, and that ASEAN should do all it can to try to get Viet Nam out of the Soviet orbit. Suharto feels that Viet Nam should act as a buffer against what he perceives to be a major threat from the PRC. *Sitthi* said that he had described Suharto's attitude to Huang Hua and that the Chinese had stated that Indonesia has nothing to fear from his country. (C)

The talk turned to Sihanouk. *Sitthi* stated that following Sihanouk's June visit to Singapore, the Thais will allow him to enter Thailand and to visit refugee camps at the Thai border. It was agreed that this would inject a new note of political leadership into the Cambodia scene. *Dr. Brzezinski* said that the PRC must also think in political terms regarding Cambodia. *Sitthi* agreed and stated that Huang Hua had promised to meet Sihanouk in Beijing. (C)

*Dr. Brzezinski* asked about Burma's attitude. *Sitthi* responded that it has become more favorable, as Ne Win does not want Thailand to be destabilized. (C)

The meeting broke up at that point, with *Sitthi* expressing his great pleasure at the fact that he and *Dr. Brzezinski* held such similar views of the Soviet global challenge, and the more particular problems presented by Viet Nam's occupation of Cambodia. (C)

---

### 187. Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Bangkok, June 24, 1980, 1401Z

26453. Subj: Thai Diplomatic Moves In Response To Clashes With Vietnamese and Request For US Air Support.

1. (S-Entire text)

2. Deputy Foreign Minister Arun provided us a rundown of Thai diplomatic moves in response to armed clashes on the border.<sup>2</sup> The Thais would be circulating a document to the General Assembly denouncing Vietnamese aggression, proclaiming Thailand's right to protect itself and referring to the possibility of Thailand calling for a Security Council meeting if events warranted it. The Thais had called in the Vietnamese Ambassador but so far he has failed to show up. The Thai Ambassador in Hanoi has been instructed to lodge a protest with the SRV. *Sitthi* in Kuala Lumpur would seek to line up firm ASEAN support for the Thai position.

2. Arun expressed appreciation for U.S. political support as reflected in the Department's statement on the incident.<sup>3</sup> He revealed that Congressman Billy Evans had called asking what the U.S. could do. He had discussed this with Prem who had replied that Thailand would welcome additional statements of support, accelerated deliveries of military hardware on order and the movement of U.S. Air Force

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 74, Thailand, 6/80. Secret; Niact Immediate; Nodis Cherokee.

<sup>2</sup> The Vietnamese incursion into Thailand began on June 23. See Documents 90 and 91.

<sup>3</sup> Christopher and Hodding Carter met separately with reporters on June 24 to express U.S. concern. (Michael Getler, "Viet Assault on Thailand 'Deeply Concerns' U.S.," *Washington Post*, June 25, 1980, p. A23)

units closer to Thailand or into Thailand itself. Arun said he was now officially passing these requests to the USG. Ambassador spoke to Foreign Minister about half hour before this conversation with Arun. Sitthi didn't mention these requests, although he may be getting instructions to do so with the Secretary at K.L.<sup>4</sup>

3. Arun said it was too early to predict where this would all lead. The Thai military told him that the mass media and foreign correspondents were exaggerating the incident. He said that the Vietnamese had shown no inhibitions about using force and he put the clashes in the context of a pattern of increasing Vietnamese belligerence as indicated by last week's sinking of a Thai patrol boat in the Mekong and the Vietnamese attack on Thai fisherman in the Gulf.

4. Ambassador's comment: Thai are confused and nervous. They are understandably fishing for support. We can satisfy them on first two parts of request, but I believe it is too early to begin moving Air Force units into Thailand. We still don't have a clear picture of what is happening or where it's going. Our intelligence about Vietnamese military movements is lousy. We should wait and see how situation develops.

5. As we see it so far, Vietnamese attack has limited objectives, but may well involve further incursions into Thailand. PAVN is operating under self-imposed limitations and serious SRV threat to Thai security has not yet been demonstrated. Despite their military predominance, SRV has its problems. It has flaunted international opinion, openly violated Thai sovereignty, and endangered thousands of Khmer. We should mobilize efforts to generate worldwide concern this score.

6. There has, nevertheless, been some Thai provocation in history of resistance support, and all this may spur PAVN to escalate activity. If SRV attacks continue and threat to Thailand comes more to fore, we will be faced very quickly with major credibility issue.

7. The latest Thai request was made in a low key and may be something of a trial balloon. Prem hasn't called me in and I do not intend to take the initiative in order to avoid stimulating more requests. We should finesse matter by concentrating for the moment on the other two requests. Secretary's planned statement will be very helpful.<sup>5</sup> KL offers opportunity to mobilize greater support. DOD should now be looking into some air deliveries of equipment. As a precaution we should consider moving carrier nearby if we have one and explore

---

<sup>4</sup> See Document 188.

<sup>5</sup> Telegram 165874 to Bangkok, June 24, transmitted a proposed statement for Muskie that condemned the Vietnamese attack. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800304-0727) Muskie's statement was read to reporters by Hodding Carter on June 25. See Department of State *Bulletin*, August 1980, p. 53.

options about possible Air Force movements. But we must be prepared to really move if there is considerable fighting of some duration.

8. Thai policy toward Khmer Rouge shows no sign of changing. Significant amounts of military equipment were delivered in past day or so. We should see what PRC has to say, but should not let them push us out in front.

Abramowitz

---

**188. Telegram From Secretary of State Muskie's Delegation to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Kuala Lumpur, June 27, 1980, 1458Z

Secto 4074. Subject: Secretary's Meeting With Thai FonMin Siddhi.

1. (C-Entire text)

2. Secretary Muskie met with Thai Foreign Minister Siddhi for thirty minutes on June 27. It was the Secretary's first bilateral in Kuala Lumpur.

3. Foreign Minister Siddhi said he was honored to be the first ASEAN Foreign Minister to meet with the Secretary after his arrival in Kuala Lumpur. The Secretary observed that Thailand has the toughest problems. The Secretary then noted that this was his first trip to the region in thirteen years and that many of the NATO Ministers whom he had just seen in Ankara<sup>2</sup> expressed satisfaction that he was coming to Kuala Lumpur.

4. The Secretary then asked that Marshal Siddhi bring him up-to-date on the situation on the Thai border. The Foreign Minister then proceeded to explain the events of recent days. He expressed the view that the Vietnamese' aim had been to test their will. He felt that the Vietnamese' action had been premeditated and they had in fact earlier made public warnings to the Thai not to proceed with their program

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 74, Thailand, 7/80-1/81. Confidential; Immediate. Sent for information Immediate to Bangkok, Beijing, Jakarta, Manila, Singapore, and Tokyo. Muskie was in Kuala Lumpur to meet with ASEAN Foreign Ministers.

<sup>2</sup> Muskie attended the NATO Ministerial meeting in Ankara June 25-26.



of repatriating Cambodians.<sup>3</sup> Siddhi said he felt that the Thai had acted correctly and that the repatriation scheme had been worked out entirely properly with the UNHCR. The Vietnamese criticism of the repatriation and the border relief effort did not deter the Thai. There are still Vietnamese forces in the area and the situation remains somewhat confused but so far 72 Vietnamese have been killed and 4 prisoners of war captured. Siddhi said he felt that the Vietnamese want to “choke” off all cross border feeding.

5. The Secretary asked if the Minister felt the Vietnamese were trying to stop the relief effort.<sup>4</sup> Siddhi said yes, the cross border portion of it. They want all aid to be routed through Phnom Penh. He said that in his meeting with Foreign Minister Talboys of New Zealand, Talboys had suggested that the ASEAN dialogue countries should condemn Vietnam collectively for choking off the relief effort. Siddhi further explained that several days ago the Thai Government had ordered a temporary suspension of all direct relief to Phnom Penh (direct flights from Bangkok, etc.). But the Thai Government had now resumed such direct shipments to Phnom Penh as a way of showing that despite Vietnamese disruption of relief efforts on the border, the Thai were still willing to provide direct humanitarian aid to Phnom Penh. Assistant Secretary Holbrooke observed that this had been a very generous move on the part of Thailand and had placed the onus on Vietnam for obstructing the relief effort.

6. The Secretary asked how many Vietnamese troops had been involved in the action. Siddhi responded that roughly 2,000 had been involved, plus another 10,000 are poised in that particular area. Ambassador Abramowitz explained that the unit involved was one element of Hanoi’s heavy division with nine–ten regiments.

7. The Secretary then explained that since leaving Ankara yesterday we have been working with our authorities in Washington to see what additional steps we might take. The Secretary then reviewed the additional military assistance referred to in paragraphs 3, 4, 5, and 6 of State 168797.<sup>5</sup> Siddhi expressed his gratitude noting that this was a demonstration of U.S. support and that he would cable his Prime Minister immediately. The Secretary then suggested that the specific details be reviewed by Deputy Assistant Secretary Platt (DOD) and

---

<sup>3</sup> On June 16, Thailand and the UNHRC agreed to proceed with a program of voluntary repatriation of Cambodians in Thai refugee camps. The Vietnamese Government opposed the program. (“Thais, U.N. Unit Agree On Refugee Repatriation,” *Washington Post*, June 17, 1980, p. A13)

<sup>4</sup> Reference is to the international efforts to provide primarily food aid to the Kampuchean refugees.

<sup>5</sup> Telegram 168797 to Kuala Lumpur, June 26, discussed additional military assistance to Thailand. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800308–0957)

the Thai delegation in the hope of ironing out any remaining details in the next two days. Mr. Holbrooke suggested, and the Secretary agreed, that without spelling out the details we agree that the press can be informed of our accelerated commitments. The Secretary also informed the Foreign Minister that we were urgently exploring the provision of additional FMS and that he hoped to be able to inform Thais of something shortly.

8. Mr. Siddhi mentioned that he was going to China on July 7 and he wondered if the Secretary had any message for him to convey there. The Secretary noted that Mr. Holbrooke would be going there at about the same time.

9. Siddhi then gave the Secretary a brief preview of some of the questions likely to come up at the meeting with the ASEAN 5. He said that the Indonesian Foreign Minister would ask about our China policy and ask us to commit ourselves to not arming China. The Ministers would not ask the Secretary to commit himself on the issue of DK seating although they will probe for evidence of U.S. concern for the region. Siddhi said that some of the other Foreign Ministers feel we neglect the region and place more importance on Afghanistan than on Cambodia.

8. The Secretary replied that his very reason for coming here was to show concern for the region. There were a number of subjects that he had come to listen about. He wanted to get a feeling for what their interests are. As for the D.K. issue, the Secretary said he planned to reserve judgment but he was prepared to listen to their point of view. He asked that we be given time to look over the situation.<sup>6</sup>

9. Siddhi ended by asking that we support the ASEAN resolution on Cambodia.<sup>7</sup> He also said that the Secretary's presence in the region was very important.

10. Secretary Muskie was accompanied by Ambassador Abramowitz, Assistant Secretary Holbrooke, Special Adviser Bernhard, and DAS Negroponte. FonMin Siddhi was accompanied by Asa Sarasin and Sakthip Kraithorn.

**Muskie**

<sup>6</sup> See Document 146.

<sup>7</sup> See footnote 2, Document 192.

## 189. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, June 30, 1980, 11:30 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

### SUBJECT

Thailand

### PARTICIPANTS

#### *State*

David Newsom, Under Secretary  
for Political Affairs  
Michael Armacost, Dep. Asst. Sec.  
for Bureau of East Asian &  
Pacific Affairs  
Daniel O'Donohue, Dep. Dir. for  
Political Military Affairs

#### *JCS*

Lt. Gen. John Pustay, Asst. to the  
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
General James Granger, Asst. Dep.  
Dir. for International  
Negotiations

#### *AID*

Dennis Chandler, Dir., Office of  
Philippines/Thailand/Burma  
Affairs  
Frederick Schieck, Dep. Asst.  
Administrator, Asian Bureau

#### *White House*

David Aaron

#### *NSC*

Donald Gregg, NSC Staff Member

#### *OSD*

Frank Kramer, Principal Dep.  
Asst. Sec. of Defense  
General T. C. Pinckney, Dir. of  
East Asia and Pacific Region  
Jerome H. Silber, Legal Counsel to  
the Dir. of Defense Security  
Assistance Agency

#### *DCI*

Ambassador John Holdridge,  
National Intelligence Officer  
for East Asia  
[name not declassified] Asst. NIO  
for East Asia

#### *OMB*

Edward Sanders, Dep. Associate  
Director for International  
Affairs

### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

At a mini-SCC meeting on aid to Thailand, the costs and benefits of shipping US arms to Thailand by US aircraft were discussed. The facts are that each C-141 flight costs approximately \$150,000, and that seven flights could carry the key elements of our expedited aid shipment. These would include:

- 18 105 mm howitzers
- 38 recoilless rifles (106mm)
- 1,000 M-16 automatic rifles

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of the Director of Central Intelligence, Job 81B00112R: Subject Files, Box 16, Folder 48: (SCC) Thailand. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room.

The cost of such delivery would be about \$1m. (S)

Those in attendance at the SCC meeting favored making this shipment by air, believing that this specific gesture of US support would help deter further SRV attacks on Thai territory. State is to forward a formal Presidential Determination paper<sup>2</sup> for signature. Following signature, Congress will be notified, and the arms delivered. (S)

---

<sup>2</sup> Presidential Determination No. 80-21 was issued on July 1. (3 CFR, 1980 Comp., p. 327) The White House issued an announcement on the airlift on July 1. See *Public Papers: Carter, 1980*, Book II, p. 1267.

---

## 190. Letter From Thai Prime Minister Prem to President Carter<sup>1</sup>

Bangkok, July 8, 1980

Mr. President,

I have learned with deep appreciation that, in response to our requests for accelerated delivery of military equipment purchased under the Foreign Military Sales program, you have personally approved an immediate airlift of small arms and artillery that are urgently needed by us in the light of the recent Vietnamese attack against Thailand.<sup>2</sup> This important action on your part is demonstrative of the continued, unfailing support the United States has shown towards Thailand, of which we are most appreciative.

It is still too early to predict how the current tense situation along the Thai-Kampuchean border will develop over the next few weeks. But with the presence of tens of thousands of Vietnamese and Vietnam-backed Heng Samrin troops along the border in apparent readiness to seal off the border to disrupt the crossborder feeding and implementation of the voluntary repatriation program for the Kampuchean civilians, we must remain in a state of absolute alert and preparedness. In this respect, the further expediting of shipments of military equipment to Thailand is a vital contribution.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 19, Thailand, Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda, 4-7/80. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 189.

By now the Secretary of State, Mr. Edmund Muskie, must have briefed you on our and ASEAN's thinking on the possible political solution of the Kampuchean problem, specifically the importance we attach to the continued support of the Democratic Kampuchea's representation at the United Nations. By advocating recognition of Democratic Kampuchea and endorsement of its credentials in the United Nations, we are not merely thinking about the continued international identity of Kampuchea, but have very much in mind what political leverage Vietnam and the Soviet Union would stand to gain should we waver in our rationalization of support we have given so far to Democratic Kampuchea. It is my earnest hope that Your Excellency will give this matter a careful thought so as not to allow the other side to steal the initiative or to benefit by default.

I am confident in the ability of the United States to assert a vital, positive role in our common strife for peace and stability in Southeast Asia. This in turn will have a favorable impact on other parts of the globe which are also being threatened by the spectre of political turmoil and confusion.

On this auspicious occasion of the 204th Anniversary of the Independence of the United States of America, I wish to extend, on behalf of the Government and people of Thailand, to Your Excellency, the United States Government and the American people, our heartfelt congratulations and best wishes for the continuing progress and prosperity of your country and people.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the renewed assurances of my most esteemed consideration.

**General (Prem Tinsulanonda)<sup>3</sup>**  
*Prime Minister*

---

<sup>3</sup> Prem signed "P. Tinsulanonda" above his typed signature.

**191. Telegram From Secretary of State Muskie Delegation to the Department of State, the Embassy in Burma, and the Mission to the United Nations<sup>1</sup>**

New York, October 1, 1980, 2157Z

Secto 8050. Subject: (U) Secretary Muskie's Bilateral With Burmese Foreign Minister U Lay Maung.

1. (C-Entire text).

2. Secretary Muskie held a meeting Sept. 30 with Burmese FM U Lay Maung notable for its extremely cordial atmosphere. The Secretary recalled that he had visited Rangoon on Thanksgiving day, 1965 and had a good meeting with Ne Win. U Lay Maung responded that Ne Win told him he remembered the visit with pleasure. The Secretary expressed appreciation for Burmese efforts to reduce the narcotics traffic, which he understood had been quite successful. The Foreign Minister thanked Secretary Muskie for the helicopters and other material support which the U.S. provide for the Burmese anti-narcotics effort and for crop substitution programs and he praised the cooperation the SRUB obtained from the U.S. Embassy in Rangoon. He explained the difficult terrain conditions making use of aircraft essential in the narcotics effort, and he also described the problems with the Burmese Communist Party along the Chinese border. He expressed appreciation for Mathea Falco's representations to the Chinese regarding their support for the BCP, which he said PRC representatives had mentioned to the SRUB.

3. The Secretary asked about Burma's relations with ASEAN. U Lay Maung said that Burma could not join ASEAN because its policy was one of strict neutrality and ASEAN was a Western-leaning organization. Similarly, Burma had left the non-aligned movement because it had lost its true neutral spirit. Burma's views on Kampuchea are similar to Thailand's, however, and the SRUB will vote in favor of DK seating because it does not approve of armed intervention.

4. U Lay Maung described the recent amnesty offered by the SRUB, including Ne Win's personal letter to U Nu inviting him to return from exile, and he listed the other groups which had turned themselves in under the amnesty.

5. The Foreign Minister asked the Secretary's views on the Iran/Iraq conflict. The Secretary described his meeting that day with Iraq's

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Muskie Subject Files, Entry P-10, Box 2, Memoranda, 1980-1981. Confidential; Immediate. Sent for information Priority to Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Singapore, Bangkok, and CINCPAC for POLAD.

Foreign Minister, in which he explained the great dangers which the U.S. saw in the current situation, particularly the potential for escalation. The Secretary stressed the significance of the U.S. decision to send an AWACS unit to Saudi Arabia. He emphasized that this was for defensive purposes only to help assure defense of Middle East oil fields.

6. Also present were Assistant Secretary Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary Falco, Ambassador Petree, Don Gregg of the NSC, the Burmese PermRep to the UN, and Acting IMBS Director Landberg.

7. Correction in text. Para 2 line 11 the word “provide” should be “provided.”

**Muskie**

---

## **192. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 6, 1980, 11:30 a.m.–12:10 p.m.

### **SUBJECT**

Summary of Dr. Brzezinski's Meeting with Foreign Minister Sitthi Savetsila of Thailand

### **PARTICIPANTS**

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs  
John Negroponte, Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asia and Pacific Affairs  
Roger Sullivan, NSC Staff Member for Vietnam  
Donald Gregg, NSC Staff Member for Thailand  
[name not declassified] Chief East Asia Division/CIA

Foreign Minister Sitthi Savetsila  
Saktiep Krairikoh, Private Secretary

The *Foreign Minister* opened the meeting by saying that the Thais faced a number of problems from the Vietnamese. *Sitthi* said that Vietnamese troops are coming closer to the Thai border and are placing political, military and psychological pressure on the Thais. *Sitthi* stated that his talk with SRV Foreign Minister Thach had resulted in nothing new and that the Vietnamese official had rejected all ASEAN proposals. *Sitthi* stated that Thailand will continue its present policy unless the Vietnamese show some flexibility. (C)

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 50, Thailand, 1980. Confidential. The meeting took place in Brzezinski's office.

*Sitthi* stated that after the expected positive UN vote on the DK credentials issue, Thailand and ASEAN will propose that a political conference be held on Kampuchea.<sup>2</sup> *Sitthi* said that he had been annoyed by Thach's report to Secretary General Waldheim that the Vietnamese would pull 10,000 troops out of Kampuchea if the Thais stopped support to the DK. *Sitthi* later told Waldheim that he had heard no such offer being made. *Sitthi* concluded his opening remarks by saying that he had urged Japanese Foreign Minister Ito to continue aid to Thailand, saying that what Thailand was doing was for ASEAN and Japan and not Thailand alone. (C)

*Dr. Brzezinski* stated his belief that Mr. Ito is a strong and knowledgeable official and added that he had also urged that the Japanese continue to support Thailand. *Sitthi* thanked *Dr. Brzezinski* for expediting arms in the past and stated that more might be needed in the future. *Sitthi* stated that Thai morale is better now than it was and that ASEAN is more closely united. *Sitthi* stated that Indonesia still harbors some fear of the PRC and that *Sitthi* had urged the Chinese to stop their support of local communist parties. (C)

*Dr. Brzezinski* asked if *Sitthi* expects more direct attacks from the SRV. *Sitthi* replied that he expected a continuing troop build up and some shallow penetrations into Thailand territory. *Sitthi* said that he had asked the PRC what they would do if the Vietnamese attacked Thailand again. The Chinese responded that their action would be determined by the gravity of the Vietnamese attack. (C)

*Dr. Brzezinski* asked if resistance in Kampuchea was increasing or decreasing. *Sitthi* reported that it was increasing and that Ieng Sary of the DK is optimistic about the ability of his forces to continue opposition. *Sitthi* stated that Kampuchea was devastated and that it might take 60 years to recover. He has thus urged that Japan and the European nations keep up their aid to the refugees. *Dr. Brzezinski* stated that the President has been very supportive of Thailand in talks with Japanese and European leaders. He agreed that shallow attacks from the Vietnamese are probable. *Dr. Brzezinski* said that the PRC will keep military units near the border of Vietnam as a deterrent move. He noted that it might take some time to "strike a balance with a revolutionary country such as Vietnam." He said that it was important for all ASEAN nations to improve their relations with the PRC. (C)

*Dr. Brzezinski* described the growing relations between the US and the PRC and said he felt that this was in the interest of the region.

---

<sup>2</sup> The UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 35/4A on October 14 accepting the credentials of Democratic Kampuchea. General Assembly Resolution 35/6, adopted on October 22, called for an international conference on Kampuchea. See *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1980, pp. 330-335.



*Sitthi* agreed with this but noted that the Soviets had sent advanced weapons to the Vietnamese. *Dr. Brzezinski* agreed with this, saying that the PRC had suffered a real shock when they attacked the SRV to administer their “first lesson.”<sup>3</sup> *Dr. Brzezinski* said that this attack had cost far more than the PRC had anticipated, and that they had discovered many inadequacies in their command and control structure. He said he thought that they had achieved the tactical goal of overrunning SRV territory, but that they had not achieved the strategic goal of forcing the SRV to pull out of Kampuchea. Turning to SRV reactions, *Dr. Brzezinski* said that they had been shocked in two ways

—That the attack had taken place at all

—That the Soviets had done virtually nothing to help them

*Dr. Brzezinski* added that PRC leaders have told him that the entire range of Soviet responses had been listed, and that the PRC had prepared an appropriate response to each one. (C)

*Sitthi* said that he would be going to the PRC soon again, accompanying Prime Minister Prem. (C)

*Dr. Brzezinski* asked that his best regards be passed to Vice Premier Deng. *Sitthi* said he would do this. He urged *Dr. Brzezinski* to have faith in the Thais. *Dr. Brzezinski* replied that he did have great confidence in Thai leadership. (C)

As *Dr. Brzezinski* ushered *Sitthi* to his car, *Sitthi* stated in private that the Thais will resume the flow of supplies to the DK forces in Kampuchea as soon as the dry season commences. (C)

---

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 43–45.

**193. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Thailand<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 17, 1980, 0024Z

332662. Subject: Ambassador Prok Briefed on Meeting With Son Sann. Ref: Geneva 15460.<sup>2</sup>

1. (S)–Entire text.

2. Thai Ambassador Prok called on EA/T Director Cleveland December 15 to ask if Department had heard anything back on DAS Negroponte's consultations in Paris. Cleveland gave highlights of Son Sann/Negroponte discussions without going beyond summary points in reftel. He emphasized that U.S. held out no hope for material resources to any Khmer resistance effort. Prok was particularly interested in why U.S. was holding discussions with Son Sann at this level at this time. Cleveland said it was part of our overall interest in considering all alternatives to a political solution in Kampuchea, and given the unacceptability to US of both the Heng Samrin and DK regimes, we wished to encourage third force options, especially Son Sann and Siha-nouk. He advised Prok not to give too much significance to timing of this meeting, pointing out that we had previous albeit lower level contact with Son Sann's people. Prok and Cleveland both agreed the recent visits of Prem and Lee<sup>3</sup> to Beijing had generated renewed interest in alternative political solutions to Kampuchea, with, however, little hope of achieving them.

**Muskie**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 74, Thailand, 7/80-1/81. Secret; Priority; Nodis. Sent for information Priority to the Mission in Geneva for Negroponte only and the White House. Printed from the copy that was received in the White House Situation Room.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 15460 from Geneva, December 13, summarized meeting with Son Sann. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P870149-0608)

<sup>3</sup> General Prem Tinsulanon and Lee Kuan Yew.

# Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and East Timor

## 194. Paper Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>

RPM 77-10344

Washington, March 30, 1977

### *Malaysia: Security Situation*

The internal security situation in Malaysia has improved markedly over the last year. There has been a decided drop in the number and severity of communist terrorist activities. The Malayan Communist Party (CPM) factions which in the past committed sabotage and assassinations inside Peninsular Malaysia have now been for the most part confined to their base areas along the Thai-Malaysian border. The current joint operations with Thailand aimed at eliminating the communist border sanctuaries will further reduce the threat to Malaysia.

East Malaysia is now also largely free from security problems. The communist guerrillas there have been reduced to a negligible force through government mopping up operations and surrenders due to the difficult living conditions in the jungle. The border with Indonesia is tranquil, reflecting the good relations prevailing between Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta.

Communal tension between the Malays and local Chinese populations, while never absent from the Malaysian scene has diminished since Hussein bin Onn became prime minister in January 1976. In contrast to the emotionally explosive Malay-first policies of previous Malaysian governments, Hussein has taken a balanced, moderate stance toward national development which has eased, if not submerged, Chinese resentment over the preference given Malays in government jobs and access to higher education.

### *Indonesia, Australia, and East Timor*

Indonesia has not been able to consolidate its control in East Timor and presently controls only the major population centers and lines of communication. However, the resistance of Fretelin forces in the countryside now appears to be diminishing. Some atrocities have occurred, but these are not condoned by the central government and some disciplinary action has been taken.

The Indonesian government has been sensitive to international reactions to the Timor operations, particularly in the United States and

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 80T00071A: Production Case Files, Box 10, Folder 12: Malaysia: Security Situation. Secret.

Australia. Jakarta presumed Australian and American understanding of the need to integrate East Timor into Indonesia<sup>2</sup> and is disturbed by the growing attention the public media of those two countries are devoting to the situation.

Renewed publicity by Australian political activists to alleged Indonesian excesses in East Timor has been particularly bothersome—complicating Australian relations with Indonesia. The recent testimony of the former Australian Consul in Timor, James Dunn, before the US Congress<sup>3</sup> has further excited Indonesian concern about the potential growth of both American and Australian opposition. Jakarta professes not to understand why Canberra cannot put a damper on the activities of Dunn and others. Strong Australian public disapproval of the Indonesian takeover has been a recurring dilemma for Canberra, which—in the interest of good relations with its populous northern neighbor—had informally signaled to Jakarta that it would acquiesce in Indonesian absorption of the former Portuguese territory.

---

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to the coup in East Timor in August 1975 and the December military intervention by Indonesia. See *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, vol. E-12, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973–1976.

<sup>3</sup> Dunn wrote a report alleging that Indonesia had killed thousands of civilians in East Timor. (“Indonesia Charged With Atrocities,” *New York Times*, March 13, 1977, p. 10)

---

## 195. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, September 27, 1977, 11–11:55 a.m.

### PARTICIPANTS

U.S.

President Carter

Vice President Walter Mondale

Warren Christopher, Deputy Secretary of State

David Aaron, Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Robert Miller, Ambassador to Malaysia

Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia

Michael Armacost, Staff Member, NSC

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Armacost Chron Files, Box 4, 9/24–30/77. Secret. The meeting took place in the Oval Office and the Cabinet Room at the White House. Hussein was on an official visit to the United States September 23–October 5.

*Malaysia*

Prime Minister Hussein bin Onn

Rithauddeen bin Ismail, Foreign Minister

Datuk Zakaria, Secretary-General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Zain Azraai, Ambassador to the United States

Tan Sri Thong Yaw Hong, Director-General, Economic Planning Division, Prime Minister's Department

Anitullah Karim, Counselor, Malaysian Embassy

Following the President's 20 minute private meeting with Prime Minister Hussein,<sup>2</sup> he indicated that he had conveyed his approval in principle to the sale of a small nuclear research reactor and related fuel, subject to the negotiation of adequate safeguards arrangements. The President described the private discussion in general terms noting that he and Prime Minister Hussein had exchanged views on our respective relations with Japan, China, Thailand, ASEAN, Taiwan, and Vietnam. He indicated that on the basis of this exchange, he judged that our approaches were compatible.

Prime Minister Hussein had, the President said, specifically expressed the hope that as we moved toward normalization of our relations with Peking, we would honor our obligations to Taiwan. The President indicated that while we are eager to see Japan and Australia play a more active and constructive role in Southeast Asia, they will not be our spokesman in the region. We will speak directly to the states of the area.

The President noted that they agreed that we share a joint interest in stabilizing the prices of commodities. He expressed his admiration for the superb economic performance of Malaysia, noting that we have much to learn from Malaysia's ability to sustain a very high rate of economic growth while reducing inflation to less than 3 percent. He emphasized the U.S. intent to retain a strategic and economic presence in Southeast Asia, and to place our access to defense facilities in the Philippines on a durable basis. He underscored the fact that our first priority in Southeast Asia is to consolidate our ties with friendly non-Communist governments in the area, but added that we also will seek to improve our relations with countries possessing other political and social systems. The President expressed appreciation for the helpful contribution of Minister Kadir of Malaysia in the Law of the Sea negotiations. He suggested that we still have a drug problem in Southeast Asia, and that we intend to continue applying our energy and resources to reducing this drug traffic. He mentioned that the Vietnamese refugee

---

<sup>2</sup> No memorandum of conversation of the private meeting has been found.

problem also touches both of our countries, and that we share a special interest in alleviating the plight of the "boat" cases.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, the President expressed his appreciation for the frank way in which Prime Minister Hussein had related his views. He invited Hussein to feel free to offer advice on any subject or call his attention to any problem through direct communication by letter or a call. The President then invited the Prime Minister to offer any views he had on these subjects or other matters.

Prime Minister Hussein referred first to the drug issue, acknowledging that this has become a matter of increasing seriousness to Malaysian youth, given the easy access to drugs in the region. His government, he said, has consequently undertaken a more energetic and systematic campaign to deal with this.

With respect to refugees, Prime Minister Hussein noted that Vietnamese refugees are coming to Malaysia in large and growing numbers. While his government was doing what it could to mitigate the plight of such refugees, there was a limit to the burdens they could assume. Hussein said that his main concern is with the longer term trend, since he feared that the number of refugees will continue to increase over time.

The President asked whether there was any prospect of getting other Southeast Asia governments to accept more refugees.

Prime Minister Hussein indicated that Singapore was reluctant to adopt a more liberal approach given its small size; Indonesia had limited resources; Thailand already has more than it could handle; Australia already has increased slightly the numbers of refugees it will accept.

The President indicated that we will try to do more ourselves while encouraging the nations in the area to step up their own individual and joint efforts to deal with the problem.

The President asked what specific steps the Malaysian Government has taken to deal with the drug problem.

The Prime Minister indicated they have arrested some smugglers, though for every one caught, there are nine or ten who are not apprehended. He noted the difficulties they face in this area, given the relative ease with which people can move in and out of Malaysia along the Thai border and along their long coastline.

The President asked if any poppies were grown in Malaysia and whether any processing of drugs took place there.

---

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 2, Document 153.

The Prime Minister indicated that no poppies were grown but some processing had occurred within his country. He added that his government applies very strict laws in this field, including the enforcement of the death penalty against serious violators.

The President indicated that if Prime Minister Hussein had any thoughts as to how we might cooperate further in this field, that he would welcome suggestions.

Warren Christopher noted that we have great admiration for the exemplary record by Malaysia in the field of human rights.

Prime Minister Hussein said he understood the strong feelings which President Carter had expressed on this issue. He described his own government as a democratic regime which governs with the consent of the people through representative institutions. Since 1966, he said, Malaysia has had an Internal Security Act which is necessary in the light of a continuing threat of subversion in Malaysia. He added that his government utilizes preventive detention measures sparingly, and has been careful to treat violators with restraint. He acknowledged that opposition politicians criticize this legislation, but the government must think first of the safety of the majority. In any event, he said, international groups are welcome to visit Malaysia to review the treatment accorded those who violate the Internal Security Act.

The President presented Prime Minister Hussein with an autographed copy of his book, *Why Not The Best?*, and a portfolio of photographs of the earth taken from cameras aboard one of our satellites.

---

## 196. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

New York, September 30, 1977, 5:30 p.m.

### SUBJECT

The Secretary's UNGA Bilateral with Malaysian Prime Minister Hussein (Topics covered included ASEAN, Thailand, US Policy in Asia including Philippine bases, USSR, PRC and SRV Medium Term Perspectives, Malaysian Political Developments, US-Private Investment and FMS Sales Credits.)

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Office of the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, 1976–1978, Lot 81D5, PCH Log, Nov 1, 1977 to Mar 25, 1978. Confidential. Drafted by Robert E. Fritts (EA/TIMBS) on October 3; approved by Wisner (S/S) on October 14. The meeting took place at One UN Plaza.

## PARTICIPANTS

*Malaysia*

Prime Minister Datuk Hussein bin Onn

Foreign Minister Dato Ahmad Rithauddeen

Datuk Zakaria bin Ali, Secretary General, Foreign Ministry

Ambassador to the U.S., Zain Azraai

Tan Sri Thong Yaw Hong, Director General, Economic Planning Division, Prime Minister's Office

Other members of the PM's party

*United States*

The Secretary

Under Secretary for Political Affairs, Philip C. Habib

EA Assistant Secretary Richard Holbrooke

Ambassador Robert H. Miller

EA/TIMBS Director, Robert E. Fritts

After amenities, the Prime Minister noted his interest in getting a better view of U.S. attitudes toward peace and stability in Asia. In doing so, he wished first to outline the Government of Malaysia's views which he had presented to the President.

*ASEAN*—A useful experiment in regional cooperation which after some years of "groping" had now identified areas of definite cooperation. ASEAN was based on economic, social and cultural interests and was non-military. Nevertheless, ASEAN showed an "accumulated concern" for the long-term stability and security of the region, which would be beneficial to "all" countries of the region. In doing so, ASEAN placed a premium on economic development in the pursuit of political stability and security.

For its part, Malaysia was doing "its best" to create conditions for stability based on its own national efforts. However, the U.S. could assist a great deal in Malaysia's national development effort particularly through such means as technical assistance. He had just spent six days in Japan and Prime Minister Fukuda understood this very well. Indeed, if Malaysia's development effort were to slow down, the impact on Malaysia would be "fatal".

*Thailand*—The Prime Minister wished to bring Malaysia's concern over Thailand to the Secretary's notice. The Prime Minister had mentioned this topic to President Carter as well as Prime Minister Fukuda. The approaches were being made with the concurrence of Prime Minister Thanin of Thailand. The Prime Minister hoped Thailand would receive some "understanding" from the U.S. and that the "past was not the cause" for an "apparent U.S. coolness" toward Thailand. In Thanin's view, he was having a difficult time "putting the country together". It was very much in ASEAN's interest that Thailand be stable. There had been recent welcome cooperation by Thailand in insurgency border operations. Thai goodwill was also important in



relation to other understandings, would be conducive to regional cooperation and minimize local problems. The Prime Minister hoped for a “friendly understanding” by the U.S. toward Thailand. Japan understands the matter in both economic and security terms and is committed to support ASEAN development efforts.

The Prime Minister noted his particular interest in the Secretary’s views toward Asia in the context of the Asia Society speech which had been cast in “very broad terms”.<sup>2</sup>

*U.S. Policy in Asia*—The Secretary characterized his Asia Society speech as a much-needed declaration by a senior U.S. official clarifying the views of this Administration toward Asia. The U.S. is and will remain (with the emphasis on *is* and *remain*) an Asian and Pacific power. Both he and the President fully support that view. In that regard, the future of our bases in the Philippines is frequently raised. We intend to retain those bases and Assistant Secretary Holbrooke went to Manila recently to see President Marcos and to reopen discussions.<sup>3</sup> The visit was “very satisfactory”. The Secretary had also spoken with Mrs. Marcos (heading the Philippine Delegation to the UN) and the two nations will resume full-time discussions when newly-appointed Amb. Newsom arrives in Manila in the third week of October.<sup>4</sup> Our intent (and we believe the Philippine intent) is for the bases to remain and we will work together to consummate the arrangements.

*ASEAN*—The U.S. attaches great importance to ASEAN and the progress made since its birth. We wish to act in “close harmony” with ASEAN in ways that meet the desires of its members. Our recent meeting in Manila with ASEAN<sup>5</sup> (and other contacts) demonstrate our wish to cooperate in a constructive manner in ways that suit ASEAN best. We also wish to receive helpful advice from ASEAN nations.

*Thailand*—The U.S. has not intended any “coolness” toward Thailand. Instead, we wish to have good relations with a strong and confident Thailand which would be to our (including Malaysia’s) mutual benefit. The President and Secretary intend to work toward that end as part of a policy of close and cooperative relations with all ASEAN members. The task requires thought and effort—but we are prepared to do it.

---

<sup>2</sup> Vance delivered his speech to the Asia Society on June 29. See Department of State *Bulletin*, August 1, 1977, pp. 141–145. See also *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. I, Foundations of Foreign Policy, Document 48.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 300.

<sup>4</sup> See Documents 304 and 311.

<sup>5</sup> The first U.S.-ASEAN Dialogue was held in Manila September 8–10. For Under Secretary Cooper’s statement at the conference, his press briefing, and the joint statement issued on September 10, see Department of State *Bulletin*, October 31, 1977, pp. 595–605.

*Malaysia*—Malaysia has great importance to the U.S. and we hope our friendly relations are of mutual benefit to Malaysia. He was interested in Malaysia's view on the region particularly the SRV and PRC roles over the next 5–10 years.

*USSR-PRC*—The Prime Minister replied that all his comments represented "general attitudes". Provided the SRV was not "forced", it would remain "as independent as any other country". Malaysia was not concerned over any direct SRV aggression for the next few years provided that regional states did not adopt an "antagonistic" stance toward the SRV. If the SRV were to "foolishly attack, Malaysia would fight". The situation also had to be viewed in the context of the uncertain development of USSR-PRC relations. In that regard, Malaysia's primary concern was the USSR which was "more active" than the PRC (the situation was different in Indonesia) "exerting an active political presence" in Africa and the Indian Ocean, and carrying out "undiplomatic" activities in rural areas of Malaysia. Official protests were only "temporarily effective" and the GOM must remain "vigilant". The PRC was "more clever".

*Political Development*—The Prime Minister then explained in detail GOM efforts to create national unity through extensive and "vital" policies of economic development, social services, education, information, health and communal harmony. He spoke at length on the loyalty of the vast majority of the ethnic-Chinese population noting that the 1969 riots had "proven" that most ethnic Malays and ethnic Chinese other than a few extremists were moderate and sensible. Malaysia's mistake had been to become complacent after 1960 simply because the insurgency had been "physically destroyed". Policies had been neglected and it was to Prime Minister Razak's honor that he had recognized and redressed these policies. There had been much "beneficial improvement" over the past year as well. Malaysia had learned its lesson and would "stick together or sink together".

*Investment*—The Prime Minister raised foreign private investment specifying that it was an important component of economic momentum for Malaysia and the progress of ASEAN. There was thus concern at U.S. policies which were "restricting" investment and he hoped the U.S. would not "prevent" joint ventures and other business activities. The Secretary replied that the U.S. had "no intention" of restricting the free flow or choice of investment which he confidently expected to expand to ASEAN in the years ahead. Tax laws would have an effect "from time to time" but would be dealt with carefully. There was no U.S. intent to discourage overseas investment—particularly in ASEAN.

*AID*—The Secretary then outlined his hope that the current review of U.S. aid programs would result in clarifying objectives and procedures to the extent that he and the President could shape a defensible

program which could be explained to Congress in a manner which would increase future aid. It would be “a hard job”. In addition, he believed the welfare of developing countries would be furthered by current international negotiations on commodities, common fund,<sup>6</sup> MTN, UNCTAD discussions and the IFIs. The U.S. energy policy was also of key importance, but there was “not much help” coming from Congress. There was thus a “whole host of possibilities for concrete action”. Progress required careful thought and all concerned must “avoid improvisation”.

*Security Sales*—The Prime Minister noted that Malaysia was “not unappreciative” of U.S. efforts in those fields as well as security assistance. The Malaysian “spirit” was not to accept free aid (“Our defense is our life”), but to purchase arms for its own defense as an element of national determination. He hoped, however, that the U.S. would assist with pricing and that terms (FMS) would be “reasonable”. The Secretary noted his understanding.

The Secretary expressed his appreciation for the visit and the President’s pleasure as well at meeting the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister smilingly thanked the Secretary for sending such “good American Ambassadors” to Malaysia.

---

<sup>6</sup> At the end of its fourth session in Nairobi, Kenya, in May 1976, UNCTAD agreed to the establishment of a Common Fund to finance a buffer stock program designed to smooth out primary commodity price fluctuations.

## 197. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

New York, October 1, 1977, 4:30–5 p.m.

### SUBJECT

UNGA Bilateral Talks With Singapore Foreign Minister Sinnathamby Rajaratnam

### PARTICIPANTS

#### *Singapore*

Sinnathamby Rajaratnam, Foreign Minister

Raymond Wong, First Secretary, Singapore UN Mission

#### *United States*

The Secretary

Philip C. Habib, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs

Mark Easton, EA/TIMBS (notetaker)

The Secretary welcomed the Foreign Minister and stated that he was looking forward to meeting with Prime Minister Lee on the 11th,<sup>2</sup> and knew that the President also welcomed the visit.

The Secretary noted that reports of the ASEAN discussions had been given to him by Under Secretary Cooper,<sup>3</sup> and Assistant Secretary Holbrooke and stated that we want to do what we can to support ASEAN.

In regard to the U.S. presence in Asia and the Pacific the Secretary stated that the U.S. intends to remain in Asia as he had previously outlined in his speech on Asia.<sup>4</sup>

He noted that Ambassador Newsom who has just arrived in Manila, will be continuing discussions with the Philippines in the near future regarding our bases there and that we hopefully will move forward. Assistant Secretary Holbrooke asked the Foreign Minister what his current thinking was re the US-ASEAN dialogue, noting that the Foreign Minister had characterized the US position as one looking at its own interests.

The Foreign Minister stated that he believed that we need a policy where U.S. global and ASEAN regional interests coincide. A new post-independence generation now exists in Asia, and it attributes national

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Office of the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, 1976–1978, Lot 81D5, PCH Log, Sept 17, 1977 to October 31, 1977. Confidential. Drafted by Mark M. Easton (EA/TIMBS) on October 3; approved by Wisner on October 14. The meeting took place in the Secretary's Suite at the One UN Plaza Hotel.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 199.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 5, Document 196.

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 2, Document 196.

shortcomings to its own leaderships rather than to former colonial powers. Now each regime must deliver. The political rhetoric of the past is not sufficient to keep national leaders in office—you see this in India and Ceylon. The next phase will be devoted to economic development, and in recognition of this, ASEAN states are already slightly modifying their nationalism for economic benefits. But regionalism will not work unless it is coordinated with the larger world economy. ASEAN is committed to the non-communist part of the international economy, of which the U.S. is the biggest factor. ASEAN must now get the U.S. involved.

The Secretary asserted that U.S. global objectives do coincide with ASEAN's and now we must consult with ASEAN to determine how we can help in a concrete fashion.

The Foreign Minister noted that in an earlier period Singapore had been interested in ASEAN primarily as a political shield, but that the emphasis had changed and Singapore was interested in U.S. assistance to regional projects. He noted that Japan was providing \$1 billion for projects that were a) peaceful b) regional and c) endorsed by ASEAN. He suggested this could be the U.S. approach. The Secretary observed that both Under Secretary Cooper's office and the Treasury were working on these issues.

When the Secretary asked the Foreign Minister's views on Pakistan, he replied that it was an example of a post-independence generation taking over. There may be a succession of new faces. It is possible that none will have the stature to govern the country, and that leadership will pass from individuals to movements.

**198. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the Department of State (Tarnoff) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 4, 1977

SUBJECT

Singapore Arms Transfer Requests

The Government of Singapore (GOS) wants to purchase a battery of the Improved Hawk surface-to-air missile system (I-Hawk) for about \$50 million to replace existing longer-range British Bloodhound missiles, which will become obsolete by 1981. Singapore is also requesting authority to coproduce, together with Thailand, the M-203 grenade launcher, a standard infantry small arm which attaches to the M-16 rifle (both countries already have the M-203 in their inventories).<sup>2</sup>

These requests contravene the President's conventional arms transfer policy directive.<sup>3</sup> Specifically, the I-Hawk is a recently developed advanced weapons system, and its transfer to Singapore does not seem to meet the requirements of Paragraph 2 of the President's directive relating to such systems. Although the I-Hawk is a defensive weapon, it is not militarily justifiable in terms of any likely threat. Singapore wishes to upgrade its air defense capability in large part out of concern that Vietnam might eventually engage in active support of socialist/revolutionary movements in Southeast Asia. Even given the sizeable number of aircraft in the Vietnamese inventory, however, its bombers and attack air power cannot be projected to threaten Singapore seriously.

The M-203 grenade launcher (like the M-16 rifle coproduction request by Indonesia) is technically a "significant weapon" under existing munitions control guidelines, and therefore the requested coproduction is prohibited under the President's policy. However, it must be considered at the lower end of the spectrum of military significance and sophistication; it is in standard use in the region and around the world.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 69, Singapore, 1/77-1/81. Confidential.

<sup>2</sup> In an October 6 memorandum to Brzezinski, Armacost outlined each agency's view on the transfer request. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Armacost Chron File, Box 5, 11/1-10/77)

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to PD-13. See *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. XXVI, Arms Control and Nonproliferation, Document 271.

While both sales would contravene the policy directive, there are arguments for making an exception under the provisions of the directive. Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew is already unhappy over certain U.S. actions in the economic field and uncertain as to our general policy toward both Singapore and Southeast Asia. Disapproval would have an inhibiting effect on expanded U.S. Air Force and Navy use of Singapore facilities such as berthing and bunkering for the 7th Fleet, and our ability to obtain approval for nuclear powered warships and P-3 Indian Ocean surveillance aircraft to use Singapore facilities. Further, it would tend to undermine the confidence of other Asian non-communist countries (including Japan) in our stated commitment to maintain U.S. interest in Southeast Asia, including a modest level of military support for ASEAN countries.

On balance, we conclude that we should adhere to the policy and deny both requests. Since the first fiscal year under our new policy is behind us, we believe now is the time to make the controls of that policy take grip. If they are approved, we will set a precedent making it more difficult to disapprove requests from other countries. Additionally, the more countries we permit to produce or acquire such items, the more difficult it is to control their re-transfer. Further, the dollar-ceiling may prove an elusive goal if we do not eliminate marginal cases, especially in view of the decision to account for the AWACS sale in FY 1978. We have been very responsive to Singapore's legitimate defense needs. New FMS agreements in FY 1977 will be about \$113 million.

If a middle ground is sought, disapproval of the I-Hawk and approval of the M-203 would appreciably reduce the damage to our relations with Singapore.

**Peter Tarnoff<sup>4</sup>**  
*Executive Secretary*

---

<sup>4</sup> Stephen Oxman signed for Tarnoff above Tarnoff's typed signature.

## 199. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 7, 1977, 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### PARTICIPANTS

#### *U.S.*

President Carter

Vice President Mondale

Warren Christopher, Deputy Secretary of State

Zbigniew Brzezinski, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

John Holdridge, Ambassador to Singapore

Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs

Mike Armacost, Staff Member, NSC

#### *Singapore*

Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew

Sinnathamby Rajaratnam, Foreign Minister

Goh Chok Tong, Senior Minister of State for Finance

Punch Coomaraswamy, Ambassador to the U.S.

Ram Chandra, First Secretary, Singapore Embassy

James Fu, Press Secretary

The President met privately with Prime Minister Lee from 11:30 to 11:55 a.m. in the Oval Office.<sup>2</sup> In the larger meeting in the Cabinet Room the President began by giving Prime Minister Lee a copy of *Why Not the Best?* and a portfolio of earth satellite photography. The President noted that in the private meeting he had informed the Prime Minister of U.S. willingness to sell Singapore production data for the M-203 grenade launcher. He had also informed Lee that sale of I-Hawk air defense missiles would contravene our arms transfer guidelines.<sup>3</sup> The President added that Lee had apprised him of the reasons for Singapore's desires for I-Hawks, and that he had agreed to review the matter further.

The President asked Prime Minister Lee for his assessment of recent developments in Southeast Asia, with particular emphasis on the attitudes and policies of Vietnam, China, and the Soviet Union in that area.

Prime Minister Lee asserted that the psychological climate in Southeast Asia is unsettled. In part this is because change is in itself unsettling; in part it results from uncertainties about President Carter and his new team, e.g. the emphasis on human rights, and the prolonged silence

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Armacost Chron File, Box 5, 10/1–14/77. Secret. The meeting took place in the Oval Office and the Cabinet Room at the White House. Lee was on an official visit to the United States October 4–12.

<sup>2</sup> No memorandum of conversation of the private meeting has been found.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 198.



about Asia by the Administration earlier in the year, except for the Korean troop withdrawal announcement.<sup>4</sup>

Lee noted that these anxieties have subsided recently. The Vance speech was helpful in affirming a continuing U.S. role,<sup>5</sup> but one which acknowledges new realities and is based upon greater expectations of self-help by the nations of the area. The most important requirement for U.S. policy, Lee maintained, is to preserve a climate of confidence and stability in Southeast Asia by making clear our intent to keep a strategic and economic presence in the region.

He suggested that there is a lurking fear that the Soviet thrust in Asia cannot be deflected merely by arms control proposals to stabilize the USSR's presence in the Indian Ocean. Acknowledging that the Soviets had encountered frequent setbacks in the past, Lee emphasized that the Soviets are persistent, and the determined Soviet thrust to achieve world supremacy must be matched by U.S. resolve to frustrate the Soviet's relentless drive for domination. "The Soviets are long-term players in the game, and I would like to leave Washington with the reassurance that the Americans, despite changes in style and in the relationship between the Executive and the Legislature, have the same resolution." It goes without saying, Lee added, that Southeast Asians would not expect American involvement in local guerilla wars.

Lee indicated that Singapore regards itself as being irrevocably committed to the Western world, but he described insistent Soviet pressures to establish more substantial ties with Singapore. First the Russians sought to secure berthing rights for navy ships. This was refused. Then they sought to utilize Singapore for the repair of merchant marine vessels. Singapore now contracts for repair services, but Lee has noticed that the Soviet trawlers that put into dock carry all kinds of modern electronic equipment. One cannot ever be sure of what kinds of activities they are engaged in. Singapore is not loathe to demonstrate its support for the United States. It has long provided access to its ship repair facilities and to its oil. Last year Lee said he was asked to take another step forward by allowing Orions and P-3C's to stage out of Singapore in order to maintain more efficient surveillance over Soviet activities in the Indian Ocean. The Soviets, he said, do not view this sort of cooperation kindly. Singapore is prepared to assume these risks, but would find them more acceptable if assured that the U.S. will be tenacious in pursuing its competition with the Soviet Union.

---

<sup>4</sup> On June 5, the administration announced that it had informed the South Korean and Japanese Governments that the United States would remove 6,000 American ground troops from South Korea by the end of 1978. (Bernard Gwertzman, "6,000 Ground Troops in Korea Will Leave By End of Next Year," *New York Times*, June 6, 1977, p. 1)

<sup>5</sup> See footnote 2, Document 196.

Lee then turned to the economic side of the equation, emphasizing that the most important objective for the Southeast Asian governments is rapid economic growth and a more equitable distribution of its benefits. If the needs of ASEAN countries for investment and trade are not recognized, efforts to compete strategically are meaningless. Lee commented that the Japanese have recently adopted a somewhat more forthcoming attitude toward economic assistance in Southeast Asia, but the Japanese cannot do it alone. Over the years the Americans have been most forthcoming, and their contributions in the future would be decisive. Lee expressed special concern that proposed changes in our tax deferral rules might discourage foreign investment. If such investments falter and growth is not sustained, he predicted an erosion of confidence, political confusion, and growth of local insurgencies, and temptations for Vietnamese adventurism.

The President replied that the U.S. has long been committed to competition with the Soviet Union, peaceful if possible, but with force if necessary. He expressed confidence that our military forces remain superior to those maintained by the Soviets, and he noted that we possess monitoring capabilities adequate for assessing trends in the East-West balance with some precision. A thorough analysis of the US-Soviet competition provides ample grounds for confidence that the U.S. retains a stronger relative position with respect to virtually every significant measurement of national power.

The President said he was proud that Singapore has cast its lot with the West, and he regarded Singapore as an important part of the West's economic, political and military strength. We need not only quiet displays of cooperation, but public demonstrations of our close relations—noting with satisfaction the prospect of cooperative arrangements with regard to the transit of P-3C's.

In economic terms, the President noted the value we attach to having U.S. companies invest heavily in Southeast Asia. He also noted a growing feeling that to the extent the U.S. Government encourages private investment, it should be encouraged principally in countries with low per capita income, i.e. those which need it the most. He suggested that Singapore could perhaps sustain a sizeable flow of American investment through bilateral treaties which would provide confidence against such contingencies as confiscation or inequitable tax treatment. As for tax reform legislation, the President indicated he could not predict how this would ultimately come out, but he welcomed the chance to hear the concerns of the Prime Minister. The President also noted his satisfaction with the recent conclusion of a US-Singapore civil air agreement.

The President invited Prime Minister Lee to offer his counsel and advice at any time. Expressing appreciation for Prime Minister Lee's

frank assessment of trends, he said it would be a pleasure to receive directly communication of any concerns he might have in the future.

The Prime Minister thanked the President for the invitation, and said he would take him up on it.

---

## 200. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 11, 1977

### SUBJECT

Various Topics

### PARTICIPANTS

#### *American*

Secretary Vance

Under Secretary Habib

Assistant Secretary Holbrooke

Deputy Assistant Secretary Oakley

#### *Singaporean*

Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew

Senior Minister of State for Finance Goh Chok Tong

Ambassador to the U.S. Punch Coomaraswamy

#### *United Nations*

The Secretary expressed his pleasure at finally seeing Prime Minister Lee. During his two weeks at the UN, progress had been made on some issues. The UN has more life in it than was generally assumed. The U.S. is now taking it seriously, appointing good people to represent us at the UN, and dealing with issues at the UN in a realistic manner. Mr. Holbrooke added that the President's unprecedented two days at the UN demonstrated our new attitude and had apparently made a good impression on the other members.

#### *U.S.-Singapore Relations and ASEAN*

Lee said he was at the end of this visit so there was really nothing to discuss, assuming the Secretary had been briefed on his meetings

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Office of the Under Secretary for Political Affairs, 1976–1978, Lot 81D5, PCH Log, Sept 17, 1977 to Oct 31, 1977. Confidential. Drafted by Oakley (EA) on October 17; approved by Wisner (S/S) on October 20. The meeting took place in Secretary Vance's office.

with other U.S. officials. Singapore has no problems as such with the U.S., bilateral relations are on an even keel. This is in part because Singapore steers clear of issues where there might be problems with the U.S. It could also be in part because Singapore had never benefitted from U.S. largesse, had always paid its own way, and so could relate to the U.S. honestly, without prejudices and without suspicion of being a U.S. stooge. Singapore's views of its present situation is analogous to that of a sapling which is growing but will still need support, props, for six to eight years since it cannot yet stand all by itself.

The Secretary said he was informed of the Prime Minister's earlier meetings and of his concern over tax deferral, new restrictions on OPIC, and the IMF gold sales. The Prime Minister's views will be carefully considered and Secretaries Vance and Blumenthal will talk to the President about tax deferral before a final decision is made. The Secretary said he was also aware of past concerns over the U.S. presence in Asia. We intend to stay in the region and remain an Asian and Pacific power. As Mr. Holbrooke had already told Prime Minister Lee, we have had encouraging talks with President and Mrs. Marcos on a new base agreement. The U.S. wishes to work with ASEAN in ways they find most suitable.

The Prime Minister said there would be six to twelve years to consolidate ASEAN or the centrifugal forces in Asia would tear it apart. An economic basis for the inter-relationship had to be established, the greater the economic ties the more difficult it would be for political change to break up ASEAN. Japan's financial help for ASEAN presses its members together. The U.S. should use its influence to help, making clear that if ASEAN acts in unison it will help; but if there is no such unison, the U.S. cannot help. Mr. Holbrooke said that Dick Cooper's recent talks with ASEAN had been a good beginning and the June 1978 talks in Washington would be very important.<sup>2</sup>

### *The SRV*

The Secretary asked Prime Minister Lee's opinion of Vietnam and U.S. efforts to normalize relations. Lee said that normalization and the establishment of diplomatic missions is necessary for the U.S. to play a moderating role vis-a-vis the SRV. But he had no idea on how to get around the chicken-and-egg syndrome on aid and normalization. The Secretary replied that the U.S. is willing to be patient. Lee said that if the U.S. engaged them in an ongoing economic relationship, it would be able to influence them to a degree. The Secretary said we hoped to succeed but it would take time. Lee replied that it does not pay to be

---

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 5, Document 196. The second U.S.-ASEAN Dialogue took place in Washington August 3-4, 1978. See Document 131.

eager. Singapore has not established diplomatic relations with Vietnam, has played it cool since 1975. Now the Vietnamese are seriously pursuing better relations with Singapore for economic reasons. The U.S. can send signals via the IBRD and ADB pending a direct relationship.

The Secretary noted the Administration's strong opposition to efforts to force the earmarking of funds for international financial institutions. What did Lee think of China?

*The PRC*

The Prime Minister replied that the less the new leaders in Peking are embarrassed by being called pragmatic, the better it would be. They are extremely sensitive about appearing to follow Mao's policies. If the U.S. compliments them, the USSR will rebroadcast it and they will be angry at both the U.S. and the USSR. Does the U.S. see normalization soon?

The Secretary said it will take time; it is our ultimate goal but there are problems between now and then. Mr. Habib said the Chinese are aware of our problems, but they are impatient and sending us little signals, applying a little pressure. Mr. Holbrooke said the PRC wants to see U.S. movement but will not press too hard for fear of jeopardizing relations with the U.S. which it needs as support versus the USSR. Teng told the AP that the PRC would take into consideration the special circumstances of Taiwan; this is a signal of encouragement. It becomes politically more difficult for the U.S. as time goes on. Habib said we might be able to do more with trade. The Secretary said we want a broader aspect to our relations with the PRC but what can be done with trade is uncertain.

Lee said the Chinese have infinite patience. It is too soon after Mao<sup>3</sup> to compromise on major, central issues such as the USSR or Taiwan. Their attitude is why embarrass ourselves on external issues. If we can get the technology they need without such embarrassment, okay. If not, they are ready to wait. After five years or so they may want to change their bargaining position. The PRC can't shift Mao's basic positions now but maybe later.

Habib noted they could get what they wanted from the West. Restrictions are not tight. The question is whether or not the U.S. can wait five years or so without seeing a shift in position. This Administration is committed to normalization on the basis of the Shanghai Communiqué, but the PRC probably suspects we are not fully committed. If we don't get there (normalization) it will cause trouble.

---

<sup>3</sup> Mao died on September 9, 1976.

*The USSR*

The Secretary said the U.S. has made considerable progress with the USSR in the past two weeks on major issues. He is convinced there will be a SALT agreement, opening the way for progress on other issues such as a comprehensive test ban treaty with the U.S., UK, and USSR next year. Trade does not look possible since Jackson-Vanik<sup>4</sup> will stay on the books.

There has been progress on the Middle East, but we have a long way to go. We are awaiting news of the Israeli Cabinet decision on the U.S. working paper on the Geneva Conference. Habib said that there would be negotiations, they would be serious and lengthy, and this process will ensure there is no explosion and no oil problem. The Secretary said there has also been some progress on Southern Africa and Nigeria is playing a helpful role. On the Indian Ocean, talks will be long. The base issue is tough since the USSR wants us to withdraw from Diego Garcia, but we will not do it. Maybe we can agree on a cap on forces in the long run but not right away.

Lee replied that the U.S. gesture should have been made and it makes sense to try to hold forces down, but he doubts the Soviets will alter their deployments and plans. They are really not interested in world opinion.

---

<sup>4</sup> Reference is to Title IV of the Trade Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-618), which denied most-favored-nation status to nations that did not allow its citizens to emigrate.

---

**201. Letter From Singaporean Prime Minister Lee to  
President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Singapore, October 26, 1977

Dear President Carter<sup>2</sup>

Although I had prepared myself, my meeting with you<sup>3</sup> was an experience quite out of the ordinary.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Armacost Chron File, Box 5, 11/1-10/77. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> Lee wrote the salutation by hand.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 200.

You had a hectic week, meeting many leaders from all over the world. Many, including those from the Middle East, had urgent and pressing problems. Then there were domestic issues like your energy legislation demanding attention.

I was astonished by your total and absolute concentration on the subjects we discussed. Your command of the facts on Singapore and on the ASEAN region left me thinking of a chess grandmaster playing against a dozen opponents simultaneously. The metaphor is imprecise. Quite a few of those you met, like me, were on your side.

ASEAN wants what the rest of the world wants—peace and stability, to work for economic and social progress. The best hope Southeast Asians have of achieving our human potential is through economic cooperation with the developed world. The benefits of adequate nutrition, clothing, medical care and education have long eluded a vast majority of our peoples.

Five countries have banded together in ASEAN to increase cooperation between ourselves, and to enhance economic complementarity between us and the industrial countries. The driving force for cooperative endeavour must be indigenous. The inputs of capital, technology, and know-how must come from outside, from America, Japan, Western Europe and Australasia. These inputs plus access to the great markets of the industrial countries can enable ASEAN to become productive, more quickly.

ASEAN governments, and our peoples, know from the experience of Indonesia, India and Egypt in the 1950's and 60's, that economic aid from and collaboration with, the Soviet Union cannot bring significant gains. Nor has the experience of Albania, Indonesia and several developing countries in Africa, shown China to be the power house or the model for modernisation.

I respected the frankness you placed on human needs, emphasising the needs of the most distressed, under which Singapore does not qualify. The world is not fair. But that America's President is seen to be making it more fair, is to win half the battle for hearts and minds in the great North-South debate. America can give a fresh lead to this search for a more just and equal world.

Prospects for developing countries are clouded by high unemployment and inflation in the West. There have been ever more menacing noises of protectionism from political and labour leaders in America and Western Europe. Exporting to Japan has always been difficult. Now the EEC is threatening quotas and restrictions unless we agree to restricting volumes on textiles and garments, and to exercise "voluntary" restraint on a whole range of electrical and electronic goods.

Worse, investments from the industrial nations are seen by labour leaders in America and Western Europe to be the exporting of jobs.

There are pressures for changes in tax laws to reduce the transfer of capital, technology and skills to the developing countries, and cut down competition. If these pressures succeed, international economic cooperation will take several steps backwards.

Developing countries must convince leaders and people of industrial countries that mankind's future depends on governments in the industrial countries resisting pressures for a retreat, however disguised or modified, into protectionism. Any retreat is to diminish hopes of building a more rational and productive world economic system.

It needs faith and courage to keep the world moving forward. The easy way is to respond to the national interests, reflexes developed through past crises. But they were crises in a world less integrated, less interlocked, and less interdependent, and through which civilisation survived by the skin of its teeth.

I believe that you, Mr President, have the strength and the courage to give the West, and the developing countries linked to the West, the will to make the present world economic order work, to improve upon it, so that rich and poor countries alike can do better out of international trade and cooperation. The world needs an international economic order which will enable governments and their constituents the opportunities to work and pay for the better life all peoples want. Mankind will do better in cooperation and competition. We can do with less of the antagonisms and animosities which have so clouded the minds of many in the North-South divide.

Warmest good wishes.<sup>4</sup>

Yours Sincerely,

**Lee Kuan Yew**

---

<sup>4</sup> Lee wrote "Warmest good wishes. Yours Sincerely," by hand.



**202. Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>**

RPM 77–10277C

Washington, October 26, 1977

*FRETILIN's Situation and Prospects*

The Revolutionary Movement for an Independent East Timor (FRETILIN) seems to have been plagued from the start by centrifugal tendencies which has weakened its leadership. Some members of its Central Committee fled the Indonesian invasion of December, 1975, and set up shop in Mozambique. Itinerant FRETILIN representatives seeking aid abroad have had little contact with the leaders of the struggle in Timor. The result has been de facto policy pronouncements on the part of those Central Committee members abroad which have apparently been at odds with the policy aims of the leadership in Timor. A recent leadership purge may help to unify FRETILIN, but its limited external support and Indonesia's superior military strength obviously preclude a FRETILIN victory. But the resistance movement in East Timor is likely to continue for the foreseeable future a political embarrassment to Jakarta and a continuing drain on its resources.

*Problems in the Leadership*

Prior to September, FRETILIN had two fronts: the government and soldiers within East Timor, and representatives abroad who sought diplomatic and military support. The recent leadership change appears to have been a purge of a faction—within and abroad—which was willing to attempt some accommodation with Jakarta. The leading advocate of this more moderate approach was the former FRETILIN President, Xavier do Amaral—removed from office in early September and now reported to be dead. It is likely that this change will result in a continued strident posture towards Indonesia at the UN and continued resistance in East Timor.

Although the present FRETILIN explanation for Amaral's downfall was treason, it is more likely that Amaral's desire for moderation angered the hardline element of the FRETILIN Central Committee. This conciliatory approach was imbedded in the draft resolution that Ramos Horta—a former member of the FRETILIN leadership council

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 80T00071A: Production Case Files, Box 9, Folder 35: FRETILIN's Situation and Prospects. Top Secret; [handling restriction not declassified]. A note on the first page indicates that the memorandum was prepared by the Office of Regional and Political Analysis in the National Foreign Assessment Center.

and a friend of Amaral's who has been demoted in rank—presented to the Committee of 24 at the UN last August. The resolution refrained from past attacks on Jakarta and called for both Indonesian and FRETILIN forces to observe a ceasefire and facilitate visits by independent observers.

In deposing Amaral, the more vehement FRETILIN leadership has achieved two objectives:

—It has consolidated power at home by expelling all overseas members of the Central Committee who were forced to flee following the Indonesian invasion of December, 1975. This change may help to erase the image of FRETILIN as a disunified government-in-exile and will probably result in a more coherently enunciated policy emanating from within East Timor.

—It has rejected any approach which gives the appearance of FRETILIN responsibility for the instigation of hostilities in East Timor.

If this new alignment of hard-line FRETILIN leadership is in fact unified—[4 lines not declassified] it will probably be able to prolong the struggle against the Indonesians.

#### *FRETILIN's Military Fortunes*

FRETILIN's military situation has deteriorated in the last few months—the dry season permitting more aggressive and wide-ranging operations by Indonesian forces which were augmented in late August. Nonetheless, though the Indonesian army now controls the towns and main lines of communication and will probably make further gains in the remaining three months of the dry season, they are not likely to eliminate FRETILIN resistance in the near future. In the past, FRETILIN has been able to strengthen its position during the wet season, and this pattern is likely to repeat itself again.

We estimate the armed FRETILIN guerrilla force to currently number between 500–1000, operating in scattered bands from remote rural bases. The latest reports of military casualties on both sides—relatively light but presumably working to Indonesian advantage given the greater strength of their forces—indicate that FRETILIN forces continue to mount effective guerrilla operations which take their toll on the badly-trained Indonesian forces.

Moreover, FRETILIN seems to have a reservoir of recruiting strength [1 line not declassified]. Jakarta's propaganda campaign for village support and its offers of amnesty to the guerrillas have had little apparent success—the pacification effort clearly hampered by the indifference or alienation of the local tribes.

#### *External Support*

FRETILIN's prospects are seriously hampered by the lack of external support. Although FRETILIN representatives have made the rounds

of communist and other third world countries in search of aid, there is no evidence that they have received anything but moral support. [*1 line not declassified*] FRETILIN's forces were receiving outside arms and equipment, and it is possible that small amounts of supplies are smuggled into Timor. Nonetheless, it appears that the FRETILIN guerrillas are largely dependent on arms and ammunition captured in attacks on isolated Indonesian units.

Beyond the radical third world, FRETILIN has found meager sympathy for its cause. Portugal, the former colonial governing power of East Timor, continues to call for UN intervention, but essentially is reconciled to Timor's incorporation into Indonesia. Among Jakarta's ASEAN neighbors, Singapore has abstained from voting on the issue in the UN, a reflection of its sensitivity to small countries being gobbled up by their larger neighbors but intends to vote with Indonesia this year. Pro-FRETILIN sentiment in liberal intellectual circles in Australia continues. Although Canberra has previously voted to abstain on the Timor question at the UN, Foreign Minister Peacock recently stated his government's determination not to let the Timor issue disrupt the cordial relations between the two countries.

---

**203. Letter From President Carter to Singaporean Prime Minister Lee<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 15, 1977

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter about our recent talks.<sup>2</sup> I was very pleased to welcome you to Washington and to exchange views on important issues. I understand that you also had productive exchanges with Members of Congress and others outside the Executive Branch who help shape American opinion and policies.

As a result of our conversation, I have a far better understanding of Singapore's singular economic success and of its specific concerns about the United States' policy. I obtained a deeper appreciation of the degree to which Singapore's interests are linked organically to regional and international economic cooperation, peace and stability—for which

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Armacost Chron File, Box 5, 11/11–30/77. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Documents 199 and 201.

the United States has long accepted significant responsibilities. I welcome your clear recognition of the basic causes of those economic problems which are of such deep concern to developing countries in general and to the countries of Southeast Asia specifically. I share your general diagnosis of international economic difficulties. Sluggish growth in the industrial countries creates an environment in which protectionism flourishes.

That is why I have taken measures to stimulate the United States' economy, and sought through the London Summit Meeting<sup>3</sup> to induce other industrial nations to do likewise. The United States is also intent on establishing a better equilibrium in international payments, so that the path of economic recovery will not be stifled by serious imbalances. For this reason, I am particularly anxious that the still-fragile state of the world's monetary system not be further strained by increases in oil prices. The United States is engaged in a most serious discussion of this subject with the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and with other consumers.

We will continue to work hard on these tasks—on which I very much appreciate your understanding and support—and I wish to assure you that we are deeply committed to resisting the demands for protectionism. But, as I am sure you realize, we may not always be successful in thwarting them unless we can make good progress in reducing all countries' trade barriers. A speedy and effective conclusion of the Multilateral Trade Negotiations should substantially reduce pressures for protectionism.<sup>4</sup>

I agree on the importance of sustaining a free flow of capital, technology, and management services from the developed to the developing countries. It was useful for me to hear directly your concerns about tax deferral legislation at a time when we are still developing our tax reform package. The State Department will soon communicate to your government our proposals for a possible investment treaty,<sup>5</sup> which could provide another means of bolstering confidence on the part of potential American investors in Singapore.

I have kept in mind your presentation of Singapore's desire for a more effective air defense system, such as a battery of the Improved Hawk missiles. In accordance with our discussion, I have reviewed the matter and have concluded that authorizing that sale now would not be consistent with the arms transfer policy which I announced

---

<sup>3</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vol. III, Foreign Economic Policy, Documents 27 and 28.

<sup>4</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vol. III, Foreign Economic Policy, Document 209.

<sup>5</sup> Not found.

earlier this year. I do want to confirm our approval of the sale to Singapore of production data for the M-203 grenade launcher as a special exception to the arms transfer policy on co-production agreements.

I very much appreciate your willingness to allow the staging of P-3 flights. As you requested we have discussed the matter with the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House International Relations Committee who foresee no problems or objections. We will have a specific proposal soon for your consideration.<sup>6</sup>

In addition, I understand that the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has been apprised of your most welcome intent to set aside a transit facility in Singapore for Indochinese refugees seeking initial asylum. We trust that the appropriate assurances will soon be forthcoming from the United Nations. You can count on the strong support of the United States Government.

The United States welcomes the new vitality of ASEAN and the recent beginning of an ASEAN-US economic dialogue. We look forward to the series of detailed consultations before the next session of the ASEAN-US talks, to be held in Washington in 1978. It may be that not all of the suggestions, whether from the U.S. or ASEAN side, will prove to be feasible. But we have initiated something of potentially great importance; it deserves to be nurtured.

Our conversation made me understand your reputation as a statesman who is an acute observer and analyst of the meaningful issues of our time. Your visit enhanced the already warm relations between Singapore and the United States. I look forward to working together with you, and I trust that you will continue to give me the benefit of your experience and your counsel.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>6</sup> Not found.

**204. Letter From President Carter to Indonesian President Suharto<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 14, 1977

Dear Mr. President,

I am writing to express my hope that you will support a freeze on oil prices at the forthcoming meeting of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries,<sup>2</sup> and to explain why I believe this is necessary in order to sustain world economic security.

I have become increasingly concerned in recent months over the outlook for the global economy. Many nations, in both the developed and developing worlds, suffer from persistent unemployment, massive trade deficits, large external debt, and low rates of growth. Pressures for protectionism are rising. International lending institutions are becoming more cautious.

If these conditions continue, the world economy could suffer lasting damage. Over the last thirty years, the nations of the world have cooperated to reduce trade barriers and to expand resources for development. They have created an environment which offers developing countries improving prospects for long-term growth. These gains could be eroded by economic stagnation and protectionism.

All our countries must work closely together in the critical months ahead to avert these setbacks. Our energy policies will be the key to the outcome. In my energy program, I have recognized the responsibility of the United States to reduce the growth of its demand for fossil fuels, and thus help prevent future shortages. At the Caracas meeting, the most effective contribution which your government and the other member governments could make to world economic recovery would be to freeze the price of oil, at least through 1978. I believe that a freeze would serve the long-run economic interest of all countries, producers as well as consumers. At this critical juncture, any increase in the price of oil in 1978 would strain the system of trade and finance on which we all depend.

Because this question of an oil price freeze is crucial to world economy recovery, it is at the center of my concerns in respect to both domestic and foreign policy, and I am grateful for the opportunity to share my views with you about it.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 19, Indonesia. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> OPEC met December 20–21 in Caracas. Similar letters were sent to other OPEC members.

I am pleased that under your leadership Indonesia and the United States have intensified their collaboration on political and social, as well as economic, issues. I look forward to continued close cooperation for the well-being and security of both our peoples.<sup>3</sup>

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter

---

<sup>3</sup> Underneath his signature, Carter wrote by hand, “Best personal wishes to you—J.C.”

---

## 205. Telegram From the Department of State to the White House<sup>1</sup>

Washington, April 20, 1978, 1509Z

101270. Following repeat Jakarta 4023 Action SecState Mar 29.

Quote Secret Jakarta 4023. For Assistant Secretary Holbrooke from Masters. Subject: Vice President Mondale’s Visit to Indonesia.

1. Now that the Vice President’s visit has been postponed,<sup>2</sup> several influential Indonesian friends have told me on a personal basis that in rescheduling the visit we should be aware that the original program, under which the Vice President would have had no official activities during his first morning here, had raised serious questions within the GOI. These sources report that, while knowledgeable Indonesians understand the fact that the Vice President needed at some point to catch up on his regular work and to relax, they still were deeply concerned that he was setting aside such a large portion of his short stay here. Some, according to my sources, even thought that in the Indonesian context it was at least a slight affront to Suharto and the Indonesian Vice President for our Vice President to spend his first morning here in seclusion just across the main square from the Presidential Palace. They hoped he would use his full time here to meet more Indonesians and hold further substantive discussions.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Cables File, Far East, Box 11, 4–6/78. Secret; Immediate; Stadis.

<sup>2</sup> April 11–13 were the original dates for Mondale’s trip to Indonesia.

2. I have explained once again to the Indonesians the reasons for setting aside the first morning and also the fact that his official program here under the earlier schedule would have been as long as that in neighboring countries. Nonetheless, the complaints, which are offered in a constructive manner by good friends of the U.S., persist.

3. We also have word that Malik, shortly after being installed as Vice President, reopened Indonesia's request that the Vice President and Mrs. Mondale and several key members of their party should stay at the State guest house. The Chief of Protocol volunteered to the DCM that Suharto had also reiterated the importance he attaches to being able to have the Vice President as his official guest. Knowing Indonesia you will understand that this is important in terms of Asian concepts of hospitality. We can expect this matter to be raised with us officially and strongly when the visit is rescheduled and should be prepared for it.

4. The Indonesians are delighted that the Vice President is coming to Indonesia. The visit will be most useful however these issues which have been raised work out, but the impact will be heightened if we are able to go at least part way to meet their concerns. In rescheduling the visit would it be possible for the Vice President to take his free time at the end of the Canberra visit or, as had been proposed at one point originally to the Indonesians, spend a night in Bali and be prepared to swing immediately into his official program on arrival in Jakarta?

5. I am sure that, in line with our talk in Hong Kong,<sup>3</sup> you have done everything possible to factor into the visit an invitation for Suharto to visit Washington. I want to underscore the importance which key Indonesians attach to this. An official invitation to Suharto together with the good talk he will have with the Vice President would go far to establish the personal relationship with the present administration which Suharto feels is so important. Masters. Unquote.

**Christopher**

---

<sup>3</sup> No record of this meeting between Holbrooke and Masters has been found. Presumably they met at the East Asia and Pacific Chiefs of Mission conference in Hong Kong January 6.



**206. Backchannel Message From Vice President Mondale to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

May 5, 1978, 1552Z

I believe I have a reasonable prospect of advancing our basic human rights concerns here in Indonesia if I can be responsive to their very deep security concerns—in particular, their desire to purchase a squadron of A-4 aircraft.

In response to my memo on this issue before my departure,<sup>2</sup> you indicated that you favored a “half yes”—that we would favorably consider the sale, but link final approval to human rights progress. I believe the following approach would be consistent with the thrust of your decision, but have more impact in paving the way for a positive response by the Indonesians on our human rights concerns.

I would agree in principle to the \$10 million sale, but I would not commit us to the equivalent increase in FMS credit the Indonesians need to make the purchase. I would also make clear that the possibility of increased FMS, involving as it does congressional action, would be affected by positive action on the human rights front—in particular, acceleration of release of political prisoners and admission of Catholic relief agencies into Timor. Such an approach would permit me to exploit a forthcoming attitude on their security concerns, but make clear that the practical steps required to consummate the sale—increased FMS credit—depended on their movement in the human rights area.

I am deeply concerned that, without the flexibility to make such a positive gesture in principle, this could prove to be a very sour visit. Indonesia is, strategically, perhaps the most important nation in this area, but frankly, I have little that is concrete to respond to either their economic or security concerns.

The A-4 sale is of great interest to them, but we should not exaggerate its magnitude from our standpoint. It does not introduce a new technological level of aircraft into the region, indeed the A-4 are inferior to the F-5's and are a low cost alternative for the Indonesians, who understandably are anxious to replace their very old F-86 aircraft.

I believe we made progress in the Philippines and Thailand on both security and human rights<sup>3</sup> and I believe it is important to our

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Subject File, Box 7, Backchannel Messages, Far East, 1/77–5/78. Secret; Sensitive; Flash.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 3, Document 318 and Documents 167 and 168.

overall interests in the region to take the necessary steps to move forward with Indonesia as well.

I therefore request authority to use my discretion to proceed along the above lines.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Brzezinski forwarded this message to Carter in a May 5 memorandum and Carter checked the Approve option underneath Mondale's recommendation. (Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Overseas Assignments—Trip Files, 1977–1980, Box 21, Vice President's Visit to the Pacific, 4/29/78–5/11/78: Indonesia Background [2])

---

## 207. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Jakarta, May 8, 1978, 1055Z

5938. Subject: General Impressions of the Political Impact of Vice President Mondale's Visit to Indonesia.

1. Summary: Vice President Mondale's May 7–9 visit to Jakarta served to remove several long-standing bilateral irritants, reassured Indonesians of our continued interest in the area, and instilled an important personal element in our relationship. Our concern for further development of human rights in Indonesia was underscored without, however, creating backlash against us or human rights activists. All available evidence thus far suggests that this view is shared by the GOI leadership and by both the pro-government and oppositionist press. End Summary.

2. The Vice President's party will be reporting on substantive matters undertaken during his May 7–9 visit to Indonesia. This cable is intended to provide my personal views of the general impact of the visit on our bilateral relationship, based on subsequent conversations with Indonesian leaders and on treatment of the visit in the Indonesian press.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Foreign Trip Files, Box 130, [Vice President's Trip to Asia, 4/29–5/10/78]: Indonesia—Diplomatic Trip Cables [2/14–5/23/78]. Secret; Immediate. Sent for information Immediate to Bangkok; sent for information to Canberra, Manila, and Wellington for the Vice President's party.

3. The Vice President's ability at the outset of the talks with Suharto to remove or substantially reduce several long-standing irritants in our bilateral relationship (the IRS tax issue,<sup>2</sup> doubts over providing A-4s,<sup>3</sup> and the LNG price escalation clause<sup>4</sup>) set a positive mood, which was steadily strengthened as the visit progressed. Minister of State Sudharmono, who is one of Suharto's closest confidants, told me that the President was delighted with the meeting and with the number of problems that had been resolved. Virtually the same comment was made by another officer close to the President, Major General Benny Murdani.<sup>5</sup> Local press reporting of the visit has stressed the IRS tax decision, agreement in principal to provide A-4s and the announcement of additional PL-480 rice, along with the Vice President's remarks on release of detainees.

4. Judging from reactions we are receiving, the Vice President's assurances of continued U.S. interest in the area were given added weight by the attention paid Suharto's personal concern (shared by other top leaders) that some military modernization is necessary for Indonesia's defense and for the morale of its forces. The response to the A-4 request was in particular helpful (although Indonesians are still worried over obtaining adequate funding for the project). The overall impact in this area was perhaps most dramatically signaled by the editorial turn-about of the government-controlled newspaper *Suara Karya*, which on the eve of the visit had complained bitterly that U.S. commercial interests in East Asia could not compensate for a reduced military presence and which captioned its post-visit editorial "Mondale Eliminates Doubt".

5. The playback we have received from the Vice President's comments on human rights and on the coffee meeting with non-official Indonesians (which had caused some prior consternation in official

---

<sup>2</sup> The IRS position on tax treatment applied to U.S. companies operating under oil production sharing contracts in Indonesia. More information is in telegram 10089 from Jakarta, July 29. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770272-0487) According to telegram 12972 from Bangkok, May 4, Mondale expected an update on the status of the IRS tax ruling. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780190-0563)

<sup>3</sup> See Document 206.

<sup>4</sup> Reference is to a December 1977 decision by the Department of Energy on importation of liquefied natural gas. More information is in telegram 311108 to Mexico City and Algiers, January 6. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, [no film number])

<sup>5</sup> A draft memorandum of conversation of the meeting between Suharto and Mondale is in Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Overseas Assignments—Trip Files, 1977–1980, Box 21, Vice President's Visit to the Pacific, 4/29/78–5/11/78: Indonesia Background. Telegram 6076 from Jakarta, May 10, summarized the major issues discussed. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780198-0490)

circles) has thus far been very good. Jusuf Wanandi, one of the two strong government supporters at the coffee meeting, expressed satisfaction with the give-and-take at the session and was undisturbed by oppositionist Buyung Nasution's<sup>6</sup> loud criticism of the GOI when press photographers were allowed in, which Wanandi described as self-defeating "grandstanding". Nasution in telephone conversation with us today expressed appreciation for the meeting and apologized for some of his less moderate comments. Muslim oppositionist Imron Rosjadi told press that Americans "can still be relied upon to keep an open mind", and this attitude was reflected in the oppositionist newspaper *Pelita*.

6. In view of the great importance President Suharto places on personal relationships, the most productive result of the visit in the long term may well be the warm personal element developed during the course of the talks. Sudharmono emphasized to me that the President had been impressed by the sincere interest and understanding shown by the Vice President in Indonesia and its problems. Ambassador to Washington Ashari also reported that the President had spoken warmly and favorably to him about his meeting with the Vice President. The concluding comments in *Suara Karya*'s editorial may sum up the overall GOI reaction to the visit: "Vice President Mondale arrived in an atmosphere of heartfelt anxiety; he departs leaving behind a basis to hope that America has not lost the characteristics which have made it great."

**Masters**

---

<sup>6</sup> Presumably Abdul Haris Nasution.

**208. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Jakarta, May 9, 1978, 1035Z

6004. Subject: Phased Release of Detainees.

1. We have queried Australian Embassy here on Australian press reports of GOI decision to proceed with phased release of detainees held for association with 1965 attempted Communist coup.<sup>2</sup> Australian EmbOffs inform us that two Australian correspondents had learned, probably from FonDept source that up to 5,000 prisoners would be released on August 17, Indonesian National Day, of whom up to 2,000 would be from Buru Island detention center. The accelerated releases were attributed to the fact that last year's releases had proceeded smoothly and releasees had had no trouble resettling or finding jobs.

2. Minister of State/State Secretary Sudharmono told Ambassador today (May 9) that the Australian report is basically correct and that there is agreement "in principle" along these lines. While noting that decision was not absolutely firm, Sudharmono expected "no obstacles to be raised." Comment: Sudharmono's remarks suggest that agreement has been worked out by the appropriate GOI officials but does not yet have Suharto's final chop.

3. A lower level source close to top military authorities said that Indonesia plans to release the 10,000 detainees this year in four stages. Any one group could include as many as 3,000 detainees or as few as 1,000, but the total for all four would definitely be 10,000. Our source said that at least one of the groups would be released before August 17.

4. We have been in direct contact with Vice President's party on this development and suggest Department not, rpt not, publicly confirm Australian reports until further instructions are received from Vice President.

**Masters**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Foreign Trip Files, Box 130, [Vice President's Trip to Asia 4/29–5/10/78]: Indonesia—Diplomatic Trip Cables [2/14–5/23/78]. Confidential; Immediate. Sent for information to Canberra; sent for information Immediate to Wellington for the Vice President's party.

<sup>2</sup> For documentation on the 1965 coup, see *Foreign Relations*, 1964–1968, vol. XXVI, Indonesia; Malaysia-Singapore; Philippines.

## 209. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 2, 1978

### SUBJECT

Meeting Between Vice President Mondale and Singapore Prime Minister  
Lee Kuan Yew

### PARTICIPANTS

#### SINGAPORE

Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew  
Mr. Bernard Chen, Minister of State for Defense  
Mr. Lim Chee Onn, Political Secretary, Ministry of Science and Technology  
Mr. Lim Siong Guan, Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister  
Singapore Ambassador Punch Coomaraswamy

#### UNITED STATES

Vice President Walter Mondale  
Mr. Denis Clift, Vice President's Office  
Mr. Nicholas Platt, National Security Council  
Deputy Assistant Secretary Robert B. Oakley, Bureau of East Asian & Pacific  
Affairs, Dept. of State  
Ambassador to Singapore Richard F. Kneip

Lee expressed his pleasure at visiting Washington and seeing the Vice President again. He would be seeing the Secretary of State in New York Friday.<sup>2</sup> The Secretary has been very busy on the Middle East.

The Vice President noted that Secretary Vance had also been very busy with SALT. These negotiations are taking longer than expected and the Soviets still need to make some concessions. We want an agreement but not at any price since we will not allow our defense to be placed in doubt. We are closer to an agreement after the talks in New York and Washington;<sup>3</sup> some progress has been made.

The Vice President discussed what a good trip he had made to Southeast Asia last May. The ASEAN meeting here had also been good,<sup>4</sup> and Prime Minister Kriangsak would come for a visit early next year.<sup>5</sup> We are making progress on base talks with the Philippines,

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Platt Chron File, Box 65, 10/78. Secret. Drafted by Robert Oakley on October 5. The meeting took place in the Vice President's office. Lee was in the United States on a private visit.

<sup>2</sup> October 6.

<sup>3</sup> Presumably reference is to the September 27–28 and 30 meetings. See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. XXXIII, SALT II, 1972–1980, Documents 215 and 218.

<sup>4</sup> Reference is to the second ASEAN-U.S. Dialogue, August 3–4. The August 4 joint press statement is printed in Department of State *Bulletin*, September 1978, pp. 24–25. See also Document 131.

<sup>5</sup> February 4–8, 1979. See Documents 171 and 172.

starting with my trip. Mrs. Marcos' unhappy experience with the critics of the Philippines in Congress were causing problems, despite the efforts the Vice President and President had made to explain the facts of Congressional life to her. Military-to-military talks are going well.

Lee observed that the overall situation in Southeast Asia is much better than at the time of his visit to Washington a year ago.<sup>6</sup> ASEAN is stronger and more cohesive, while the Communist countries are at odds with each other and likely to be in trouble for a long time. It is up to ASEAN and the West to take advantage of the situation so that ten years from now when the Communists may come out of their trouble, ASEAN will be far ahead. Aside from OPEC, ASEAN's growth rate is second only to such countries as Taiwan and Korea.

The Vice President asked how the U.S. should react to Vietnam's desire to normalize relations with the U.S. Should we be eager? Lee replied that the Vietnamese seemed to be the eager ones. The U.S. should not be eager but should not be lethargic. They need you more than you need them and they have met your terms. The Vice President asked if the new SRV desire for recognition was due to the Chinese factor, a wish to obtain U.S. support. Lee said he thought this was a marginal consideration. The Vice President asked whether, in view of the Hanoi-Peking troubles, the U.S. should proceed with normalization now, he said: "Go ahead; you are proceeding cautiously. There is no reason not to do so."

The Vice President asked whether U.S. businessmen were active enough in Asia. He said they were not. The Vice President noted that he had mistakenly voted for higher taxes on U.S. businessmen overseas. This was causing a loss of exports and needed to be corrected. What about the US-Singapore investment treaty? He replied that they had just received it. The Vice President expressed the hope that it could be agreed soon and apologized for the long delay on the U.S. side. He asked for a memo from the State Department on the treaty and the reasons for the delay.<sup>7</sup> He said he would see that his government gave an early response.

Lee asked about U.S. policy toward Africa, which seemed to be taking a lot of time. The Vice President explained that the new Administration first had to establish its credibility by identifying with the legiti-

---

<sup>6</sup> See Documents 199 and 200.

<sup>7</sup> In an October 11 memorandum to Brzezinski, Tarnoff explained the reason for the delay and provided a status report. (Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Foreign Countries, Box 67, Foreign Countries—Singapore (1978)) An approved U.S. draft treaty was given to the Singapore Minister of State for Foreign Affairs on February 21, 1979. (Telegram 1664 from Singapore, February 22, 1979; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790081–0266) Negotiations on the treaty began in January 1980.

mate aspirations of the black Africans, then to forge personal ties with the leaders of the front line states; and then to tackle problems like Rhodesia and Namibia. There has been slippage. Things are not going as well as they were last year with Rhodesia and there is a new tough government in South Africa.

President Carter entered and greeted Lee,<sup>8</sup> who congratulated him on Camp David. The President said that the Israeli and Egyptian negotiators would arrive on October 12 and a treaty should be signed without any serious obstacles. We can understand the problems of King Hussein. Maybe after Egypt actually signs the treaty, it will be easier for Hussein but he must be tough until then and insist upon prior agreement on full withdrawal and a resolution of the Palestine problem. The Saudis are being constructive. He noted that some progress has been made on SALT, and should make some more this year. The President then noted Lee's justified reputation as a world statesman. Ambassador Kneip recalled that the President had told him of Lee's reputation before anyone knew of his assignment to Singapore.

After the President left, the Vice President again referred to the problem with Mrs. Marcos. Public attacks on the U.S. do not help, Lee said, she has a streak of evangelism and cannot understand her limitations. She had thought she could convert Qaddhafi just as she thought she could persuade critical members of Congress. When it does not work, she becomes very angry. The Vice President asked if Lee could help. He said he would see what he could do.

---

<sup>8</sup> Carter met with Lee from 2:40 until 2:51 p.m. (Carter Library, Presidential Materials, President's Daily Diary)



**210. Letter From Singaporean Prime Minister Lee to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Singapore, March 1, 1979

Dear President Carter

Thank you for your letter of February 20,<sup>2</sup> sharing your thoughts on recent developments in Indochina.

It was good that you had impressed on the dangers of escalating the conflict upon both the Chinese Vice-Premier and President Brezhnev. Nevertheless, the Chinese have decided to go ahead with their punitive expedition.<sup>3</sup>

Whatever their reasons, the Vietnamese had invaded and are in occupation of Kampuchea.<sup>4</sup> This, as you have pointed out to President Brezhnev, had led to the Chinese punitive expedition. The United States has been seen to urge the parties to the conflict, China, Vietnam, and the Soviet Union which has a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with Vietnam, to act with restraint to avoid widening the conflict.

The outcome of this crisis should be such that no government will be encouraged to upset the stable and peaceful structure of independent nations in Asia. By her invasion of Kampuchea, the Vietnamese had established a precedent—one fraught with danger for the rest of South-east Asia. The danger is most immediate for Thailand.

Vietnam had changed the “ground rules” of inter-state interference. Hitherto such interference has been covert, through subversion, arms supplies and the providing of sanctuaries. The Chinese have challenged this revision in the ground rules by an ally of the Soviet Union. They have chosen to run the grave risk of inviting Soviet punishment of the self-appointed punisher. World peace having been endangered to this extent, it is best to ensure that the resolution of the crisis should be such that all nations are left convinced that intervention by force on another is neither safe nor profitable.

Singapore, like her partners in ASEAN, must stay conspicuously neutral and impartial between the Communist contestants. However, this does not mean that we do not see the dangers for Thailand, and

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 17, Singapore, Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, 9/77–2/80. Secret.

<sup>2</sup> The letter was transmitted in telegram 43143 to Singapore, February 19. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790078–0536)

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 43–45.

<sup>4</sup> See Documents 36–39.

for the rest of ASEAN. Singapore and her partners in ASEAN have expressed concern and asked that all foreign troops in Kampuchea and Vietnam be withdrawn.<sup>5</sup>

Sincerely

Lee Kuan Yew<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> See footnote 2, Document 40.

<sup>6</sup> Printed from an unsigned copy.

---

**211. Letter From Indonesian President Suharto to  
President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Jakarta, March 9, 1979

Your Excellency,

I avail myself of this opportune moment to extend to Your Excellency my warmest best wishes and to share with Your Excellency some thoughts on a question which for some time has figured prominently on the agenda of the current North-South dialogue.

As Your Excellency are aware, the Negotiating Conference on a Common Fund in the framework of the Integrated Programme for Commodities will reconvene in Geneva from the twelfth to the sixteenth of March 1979.<sup>2</sup>

The aim of this resumed session of the Conference, just as the preceding one held in November of last year,<sup>3</sup> is to reach agreement on some fundamental elements of the Common Fund which would serve as a basis for the elaboration of the complete Articles of Agreement of this new institution.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Platt Chron File, Box 66, 3/20-31/79. No classification marking. Printed from an unofficial translation.

<sup>2</sup> Negotiations on the Common Fund, held in Geneva March 12-20, resulted in agreement on a framework for the fund. Documentation on the U.S. position on the Common Fund is in *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. III, Foreign Economic Policy.

<sup>3</sup> The negotiations on the Common Fund took place in Geneva November 14-30, 1978.

As is known, the last Conference failed to yield full agreement between the developing and the developed countries, although informally important progress has been achieved on several of the major issues. This progress was made possible due to the increasing willingness on both sides to abandon the rigid positions previously held and to work towards a compromise, without sacrificing the fundamental objectives and basic principles which have always inspired the idea of establishing a Common Fund.

In these efforts towards conciliation between the two sides, Indonesia and the other members of the ASEAN have, I believe, contributed their substantial share, and the progress so far achieved in moving the divergent positions closer to each other is a matter of gratification indeed. Nevertheless, it must be realized that some fundamental differences in the respective positions remain, differences not simply of a technical nature, but indeed concerning matters of principle and conceptual approach. The document containing the "Conclusions by the President" on the outcome of the last session of the Conference in Geneva clearly reflects those differences.

In all candour I should observe that at present the point has almost been reached where any further concessions by the developing countries will inevitably result in the sacrifice of basic principles without which a Common Fund can not be expected to function as a key instrument in attaining the agreed objectives of the Integrated Programme for Commodities.<sup>4</sup>

I realize that especially for the United States, and perhaps also for one or two other advanced industrialized countries, there are still some aspects which appear difficult to accept based on certain technical considerations. This fact has undeniably been one of the major factors preventing the emergence of an early agreement.

If all sides are convinced of the fundamental interests which are at stake in the mutually satisfactory solution of this issue, then I believe, all of us would come to the conclusion that the proposals put forward by the President of the Conference in his Conclusions indeed represent a fair starting point from which to continue our further negotiations.

For, if this minimal starting point were to be reduced again, to the detriment of the interests of the developing countries, we would surely never be able to achieve agreement while at the same time it would make it impossible for Indonesia and the ASEAN to continue to work towards a compromise that would be equitable and fair to all sides.

---

<sup>4</sup> Adopted on May 30, 1976, in UNCTAD Resolution 93(IV).

Similarly, with regard to the current negotiations in UNCTAD to arrive at an international agreement on natural rubber,<sup>5</sup> it is primarily the United States Delegation which appears to have continuing doubts and misgivings about some of its principal elements, particularly the question of a floor-price.

I would therefore like to express the hope that the Government of the United States at the forthcoming negotiations could take an even more positive and forward looking stand so as to enable early agreement to materialize on these questions, in the interest of all countries, developed and developing, raw material producers and consumers alike.

Such a stand would be fully consonant with the pledge made at the Second United States-ASEAN dialogue held last year to pursue actively the Common Fund negotiations to a successful early conclusion and to play a constructive role in negotiations to conclude agreements on individual commodities.<sup>6</sup>

Please, accept Your Excellency the renewed assurances of my sentiments of friendship and highest esteem.

**Soeharto**<sup>7</sup>

*President of the Republic of Indonesia.*

---

<sup>5</sup> The UN Natural Rubber Conference held several sessions in Geneva during 1979, culminating in agreement in October on the text of the International Rubber Agreement. Documentation on the U.S. position on various commodities, including rubber, is in *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. III, Foreign Economic Policy.

<sup>6</sup> See footnote 4, Document 209.

<sup>7</sup> Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature and an indication that Suharto signed the letter.

**212. Message From the Malaysian Embassy to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, March 13, 1979

The Embassy of Malaysia presents its compliment to the Department of State and has the honor to forward herewith a message dated 12 March, 1979 from The Honorable Prime Minister of Malaysia to His Excellency President of the United States of America:

“Mr. President,

I am writing with regard to the crucial stage of negotiations on the Common Fund. Malaysia as a major producer of a number of primary commodities is concerned at the lack of progress in the negotiations so far.

2. Developing countries have moved a great deal from their original position in an effort to arrive at a compromise with Group B countries so that the Common Fund can be agreed upon to establish soon. There has been no meaningful response and I feel there could be serious consequences unless there is a change in attitude.

3. Malaysia looks to the U.S., as the leading member of Group B countries, to ensure a positive response to these concessions. Knowing as I do of your abiding interest for the betterment of relations between the U.S. and the developing world, I urge you to personally intervene at this crucial stage in order to achieve an early and successful conclusion of the Common Fund negotiations, which resume today in Geneva.

4. Please accept, Mr. President, the assurances of my highest consideration.”

The Embassy of Malaysia avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Department of State the assurances of its highest consideration.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Platt Chron File, Box 66, 3/20–31/79. No classification marking.

**213. Letter From President Carter to Malaysian Prime Minister Hussein<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, March 25, 1979

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you very much for your letter of March 9<sup>2</sup> giving your views on the Common Fund negotiations. I appreciate your good wishes and would like to reaffirm the importance that I attach to an effective Common Fund which would be of value to both producers and consumers of basic raw materials.

As you know, the United States and other industrialized countries agreed last November that direct capital contributions from governments should be a substantial element of the Common Fund's resources for buffer stocking purposes. And we agreed that a second window facility could finance certain non-stabilization measures for commodities of interest to the developing countries.

Our own proposal represented a major effort to accommodate the developing countries' concerns and, at the same time, to produce a compromise acceptable to the United States. I am gratified that at the recent negotiating session the elements emerged of a Common Fund<sup>3</sup> that will serve our mutual interests. Of course, a number of complicated issues have yet to be resolved. I look forward to the continued constructive participation of Indonesia in working out the final accord.

We believe progress is being made in the natural rubber negotiations.<sup>4</sup> We are prepared to address a number of the concerns of the producing countries and would hope that our own concerns will be addressed by them in a similarly constructive manner. Our objective continues to be the negotiation of a workable and balanced agreement that will be of benefit to both the producers and consumers of natural rubber.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I wish to express my continuing appreciation for the constructive efforts that your Government is making to promote peace and stability in your region as well as to achieve progress on such other issues as the Common Fund.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Platt Chron File, Box 66, 3/20-31/79. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 212.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 2, Document 211.

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 4, Document 211.

**214. Letter From President Carter to Malaysian Prime Minister Hussein<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, March 25, 1979

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

Thank you very much for your letter of March 12<sup>2</sup> giving your views on the Common Fund negotiations. In response, I wish to reaffirm the importance that I attach to an effective Common Fund.

Last November, the United States and other industrialized countries agreed that direct capital contributions from governments should be a substantial element of the Common Fund's resources for buffer stocking purposes and that a second window facility could finance certain non-stabilization measures for commodities of interest to the developing countries.

Our own proposal represented a major effort to accommodate the developing countries' concerns and to produce, also, a compromise acceptable to the United States. I am pleased that the elements of a Common Fund that will serve our mutual interests emerged at the recent negotiating conference. Of course, a number of complicated issues have yet to be resolved. I look forward to the continued constructive participation of Malaysia in working out the final accord.

I am also aware, Mr. Prime Minister, of the great interest that your country attaches to the outcome of the natural rubber negotiations. We are prepared to address a number of the concerns of the rubber producing countries and would hope that our own concerns will be addressed by them in a similarly constructive manner. Our objective continues to be the negotiation of a workable and balanced agreement that will be of benefit to both the producers and consumers of natural rubber.

Thank you again for your letter. As you know, I very much welcome the opportunity to keep in touch with you on important issues as they arise.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Platt Chron File, Box 66, 3/20–31/79. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 212.

**215. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 7, 1979

**SUBJECT**

Sale of I-Hawk Missiles to Singapore (C)

At Tab A is a memorandum from Cy Vance,<sup>2</sup> recommending that you reconsider your November 1977 decision denying the sale of I-Hawk surface-to-air missiles to Singapore.<sup>3</sup> At that time there was a difference of opinion on whether the sale would have been consistent with our arms transfer policy, and, since you approved an accompanying grenade launcher coproduction request, you decided against the I-Hawk sale. Cy and Harold now believe that the sale would not violate the arms transfer policy, and that foreign policy considerations argue strongly in favor of the sale. I concur with this assessment, as do ACDA and OMB.<sup>4</sup> (S)

In arms transfer terms, the sale would not constitute the first introduction into the region of a newly-developed, advanced weapons system: The Vietnamese possess an even more capable SAM inventory, and the I-Hawk, though certainly a sophisticated system, is over 10 years old and has a shorter range than the British Bloodhound it replaces. Further, the sale can be accommodated within the FY 79 arms transfer ceiling. (S)

As Cy points out, the foreign policy arguments in favor of the sale are much stronger now in view of the Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea, and the resulting desire of the ASEAN nations to improve their defensive capabilities. This sale would provide tangible assurance, both to Singapore and our other ASEAN friends, of continued United States interest in the security of that region.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That you approve the sale of I-Hawk missiles to Singapore, thereby authorizing notification to Congress of the proposed sale.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 47, Singapore. Secret. Sent for action. Carter initialed the top right-hand corner of the page.

<sup>2</sup> Not attached. The April 27 memorandum from Vance to Carter is *ibid*.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 203.

<sup>4</sup> Carter highlighted this sentence by placing a vertical line in the left-hand margin.

<sup>5</sup> Carter checked the approve option and initialed in the right-hand margin adjacent to the recommendation.



**216. Telegram From Secretary of State Vance's Delegation to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Bali, July 2, 1979, 1626Z

Secto 6127. Subject: The Secretary's Bilateral Meeting with Malaysian Foreign Minister Rithauddeen.

1. The Secretary met for half an hour with GOM Foreign Minister Rithauddeen prior to the opening of the US-ASEAN Dialogue afternoon July 2.

2. The Secretary and Rithauddeen agreed the Bali series of meetings were most timely in view of the situation in the region. The Secretary said we faced two hard issues: a) how to exert pressure on Vietnam with regard to refugees; and b) how to address the Kampuchea problem in order to bring about a lasting solution.

3. Rithauddeen agreed and noted that the ASEAN communique called for action on three fronts on these issues.<sup>2</sup> He said additionally Indonesian Foreign Minister Mochtar and he were willing to go separately to Hanoi for discussions if that would help. Rithauddeen said Malaysia was prepared to participate in the forthcoming UN conference in Geneva<sup>3</sup> "with or without Vietnam." The Secretary welcomed this, saying that if he could not go himself he would urge the Vice President to do so to demonstrate the importance we attach to resolving the refugee issue. The Secretary also said we favored a UN Security Council meeting shortly after the Geneva conference to deal with the political issues involved.

4. The remainder of the discussion focussed largely on Malaysia's hardened refugee policy. The Secretary and Holbrooke repeatedly stressed the importance of first asylum countries meeting their humanitarian obligations. They emphasized this would be critical to obtaining congressional support for the President's decision to double our program. The Secretary pointed out that some recent statements from ASEAN governments had had an adverse impact in the U.S. Rithauddeen described the increasingly difficult internal political situation the GOM faces, particularly from within its own major party (UMNO), which meets in General Assembly next week. He reiterated several

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Records of Cyrus Vance, 1977–1980, Lot 84D241, Vance Exdis Memcons, 1979. Confidential; Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information to Bangkok, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Singapore, the Mission in Geneva, and USUN. Vance was in Bali July 1–3 to meet with the ASEAN Foreign Ministers after their Ministerial session June 28–30.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 4, Document 176.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 4, Document 136.

times that the GOM greatly appreciates what the U.S. and other resettlement countries are doing to accelerate their programs, but that the GOM cannot change its policy until the refugee numbers decrease in Malaysia—something that has not happened in two years.

5. The Secretary raised the issue of setting up processing centers in the ASEAN region. Rithauddeen responded with ASEAN's idea of such centers elsewhere, e.g., the U.S. the Secretary cited the adverse cost factors involved, and the fact that refugees brought to such centers would count against the U.S. numbers. He said processing centers in the ASEAN region would thus be much more cost effective and practicable. The Secretary also referred to new Korean contribution \$5 million and the Japanese decision announced earlier in the day to double its contribution to the UNHCR, saying these funds should permit facilities to be established fairly rapidly.

6. Ambassador Clark noted we currently projected 10,000 resettlements from the region in July, 12,000 in August, hitting 14,000 in September. He added that we would take 4,100 from Malaysia alone in July. At the Secretary's and Holbrooke's suggestion, Ambassador Clark agreed to try to raise Malaysia's quota for July to help the GOM before its UMNO assembly. In response to MFA Sec-Gen Zaharia's observation that increased resettlements could lead to an increased outflow, Holbrooke and Clark firmly denied this, citing Hong Kong's skyrocketing Indochinese refugee population despite only 400 departures per month to the U.S.

**Vance**

**217. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, July 31, 1979, 2112Z

198839. Subject: Murdani Call on Vice President.

Confidential entire text.

Summary: In meeting with General Murdani of Indonesia, Vice President Mondale requested that Murdani convey to President Suharto keen interest of both President and Vice President in establishment large reprocessing center in Indonesia. End Summary.

1. On July 31 General Benny Murdani of Indonesia, accompanied by Ambassador Ashari and Under Secretary Newsom called on Vice President Mondale. Vice President welcomed Murdani, expressed appreciation for hospitality Vice President and Mrs. Mondale had received last year in Indonesia, and stressed keen and continuing US interest in success of ASEAN countries.

2. Referring to his own participation in Geneva meeting,<sup>2</sup> Vice President then invited Murdani's comments on refugee situation. Murdani acknowledged there had been some confusion at the time of the Bali meeting over the possible establishment of a large reprocessing center in Indonesia and said that he hoped this could be worked out. The problem, he said, involved Indonesian relations with Malaysia and Singapore and suggested that these had somehow been complicated by the establishment of a smaller processing center on Galang Island. Thought was being given to a larger reprocessing center in the eastern part of Indonesia but that President Suharto still had to be convinced of its appropriateness. Murdani said that ironclad guarantees that all of the refugees would be taken away were essential to Indonesian cooperation.

3. The Vice President said that an Indonesian move of this kind paralleling that made by the Philippines would be of great help. He assured Murdani that the US would do everything possible to guarantee that the refugees would be taken for permanent resettlement in other countries. He mentioned the US commitment to take 14,000 a month and the strong support in the Congress for this policy. When he suggested that this would represent half of all refugees to be resettled,

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790347–0187. Confidential; Priority; Exdis. Drafted by Newsom; cleared by Denis Clift, Holbrooke, Robert Clark (S/R), and Richard Castrodale (S/S-O); approved by Newsom. Sent for information Priority to Bangkok, the Mission in Geneva, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Singapore, Beijing, Hong Kong, and Tokyo.

<sup>2</sup> Mondale led the U.S. delegation to the July 20–21 conference in Geneva on refugees.

General Murdani said that all wanted to come to the US. The Vice President countered by saying that it was not unfair to ask that refugees in their circumstances consider satisfactory resettlement in other countries such as Canada and France.

4. The Vice President asked General Murdani to convey his views and that of the President on the importance of resolving the refugee issue and the importance of an Indonesian contribution of a further reprocessing center.<sup>3</sup> General Murdani said that he would do this.

5. The Vice President commented that he hoped that as a result of the Geneva meeting that Vietnam would begin to control the exit of potential refugees so that the flow could be in a more humane manner. General Murdani acknowledged that the number was now reduced but suggested that this may be because of weather conditions. He was not optimistic about long term Vietnamese cooperation.

**Vance**

---

<sup>3</sup> According to telegram 12637 from Jakarta, August 8, a refugee processing center opened on Galang Island in late 1979. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790362-0619)

---

## **218. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 6, 1979, 0115Z

313771. Subject: Holbrooke Testimony on East Timor.

1. Following is text of testimony of Asst. Secy. Holbrooke on East Timor presented before the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs (Mr. Holbrooke did not attend; testimony was presented by EA/TMBS Dir), December 4, 1979. Begin Text.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

I very much welcome this opportunity to discuss the current humanitarian situation in East Timor. The role of U.S. policy in seeking

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Molander, Box 79, Refugees (East Timor). Unclassified. Sent for information to Canberra, Wellington, and the Mission in Geneva.

to promote the welfare of the Timorese people, and what we are doing in cooperation with the Indonesian Government and international organizations to alleviate human suffering there. The welfare of the Timorese people is the major objective of our policy towards East Timor. It has accordingly been the basis of our handling of this issue with the Government of Indonesia and of our position on East Timor at the United Nations. We believe our approach is working as evidenced by the greater efforts on humanitarian relief being made by the Indonesian Government, international organizations, the United States and other governments. However, the needs are great and more must be done.

#### U.S. Policy Toward East Timor

Before outlining our understanding of the current situation in East Timor, I would like to comment briefly on the environment in which we believe East Timor should be considered.

I have previously (September 27, 1979)<sup>2</sup> reviewed for this subcommittee U.S. policies related to the dramatic events of this year in Southeast Asia. As you will recall, I stressed it is of vital importance that the nations of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) receive the support they need to maintain stability and confidence. With a population of 135 million, (fifth largest in the world), and the nation with the largest number of adherents to the Islamic faith, Indonesia plays a key role in the mutual cooperation and stability of ASEAN which is very much affected by the Kampuchean situation. Indonesia is playing an important role in seeking to prevent an expansion of that conflict and its tragedies into Thailand. In that context, Indonesia is following a humanitarian approach to the Indochinese refugee problem by offering and preparing a site for a refugee processing center on Galang Island, continuing to receive thousands of refugees, and carrying out a successful effort to transport Indochinese refugees from exposed and dangerous positions in the Anambas Islands to safer locations in Indonesia. The conditions under which the some 40,000 Vietnamese refugees live in Indonesia are among the best in Southeast Asia and are improving.

Our specific policy towards East Timor was reviewed in detail in the March 1977 hearing which you held, Mr. Chairman, jointly with the subcommittee on International Organizations.<sup>3</sup> Further hearings were held later in 1977 and in 1978. The complex historical events and considerations which guided this administration in reaching its policy decisions are on the record. Briefly stated, our policy has consisted of

---

<sup>2</sup> See Robert G. Kaiser, "Millions Facing Starvation in Cambodia," *Washington Post*, September 28, 1979, p. A34.

<sup>3</sup> For Oakley's statement at the March 17, 1977, hearings, see Department of State *Bulletin*, April 11, 1977, pp. 342–343.

three points—(1) The United States accepts the incorporation of East Timor into Indonesia; (2) we do not recognize that the people of East Timor have exercised their right of self-determination; and (3) we believe that our major focus must be the well-being of the Timorese people and that greater international humanitarian assistance as well as long term economic development efforts should be provided to supplement Indonesian Government efforts and resources.

The importance of this policy approach is reflected in the current situation. As we confirmed last September, about 200,000 mountain tribal people are now living in some 150 resettlement areas, located throughout the province. According to an earlier survey by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), about 60,000 people are seriously affected by severe malnutrition and disease, including malaria, parasites, upper respiratory infections and skin ulcerations. An estimated one-third (20,000) of the most seriously affected were in critical need of food and medical attention if they were to live. Our Ambassador in Jakarta, Edward E. Masters, and the Deputy Director of the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, Christian Holmes, both of whom are here today, visited East Timor in September and witnessed these conditions first hand. The United States, as a result, further expanded its assistance to the relief effort.

The current situation, although still serious, is improving as the Catholic Relief Service (CRS) and ICRC operations begun in September and October start to have an impact. Indonesian Government and Red Cross efforts and resources are also taking hold. The joint focus is on medical and malnutrition problems and the death rate is still relatively high. Furthermore, no one is completely sure how many people remain outside areas of relief administration and what their conditions are. Expansion of relief efforts, however, is underway.

#### Relief Programs

Although representatives of some of the relief agencies are here today, I would like to outline the totality of the current international and Indonesian efforts. Ambassador Masters, of course, is particularly familiar with the situation on the ground in East Timor.

Approximately seven governments including the United States and eleven international organizations and voluntary agencies, primarily the ICRC and CRS, either have contributed or are spending about \$15.8 million on relief programs in East Timor. I am pleased to say that the U.S. Government has been particularly supportive of the ICRC and CRS with funds and commodities and we have also actively assisted in encouraging the contributions of other governments.

ICRC—We understand that the ICRC is now working in six of its original eight target areas. The people have been registered and classified according to need—food only, food and medical assistance (20,000

people), and food and special full time medical care (5,000). They receive assistance either on a daily or weekly basis depending on the situation. Local Timorese volunteers who had some medical training or experience under the Portuguese are assisting with and will later carry on the programs. In that regard, one of the positive signs is that the ICRC has dropped or reduced its programs in two of its original target areas in Ermera. Because of the recent good crops, conditions there are reported to have almost returned to normal. We understand the ICRC is now trying to identify two new locations which need help in order to bring its target population from 40,000 back to 60,000.

CRS—Since a representative of CRS is available, I will not discuss their operation except to mention that their target population is larger and includes about 200,000 people. We understand that CRS has reached over 75 percent of the resettlement areas and that it is anticipated that 100 percent will be reached by the end of December. Some locations other than resettlement sites are also being identified and supported by CRS.

United States—As will be discussed by Mr. Holmes, the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance provided last June an initial grant (based on the ICRC's and CRS's surveys) of \$1 million to ICRC and \$671,000 to CRS. These initial contributions were followed by further grants as well as PL-480 commodity assistance. Our aid now totals about \$8.8 million in cash and commodities. AID has met all ICRC/CRS requests for assistance and expects to continue to be able to meet requests.

Indonesian Government—It is important to emphasize that these international programs are being supported and assisted by the Indonesian Government directly as well as through its own development efforts. The total planned Indonesian assistance to East Timor this year is about \$17 million which includes \$8.4 million in a special supplementary budget. Half of this latter amount is devoted to the resettlement areas and the other half is for much-needed activities such as road repair, food production, education and the repair of irrigation systems.

#### Origins

Turning from the current situation to the reasons behind it, we must look to events even before the conflicts began in 1975. The Portuguese colony of Timor was always poor and little was done to develop it economically or educate the vast bulk of the population. The majority lived in the hills practicing slash and burn shifting cultivation. Periodic food shortages were a fact of life. Poor economic conditions and primitive agricultural techniques combined with periodic drought are not unique to East Timor, but also exist on many of the neighboring islands.

Thus in 1975 the collapse of Portuguese authority, civil war between the Timorese political factions and the subsequent Indonesian intervention seriously damaged the already fragile economic balance. This is



confirmed by reports of observers who visited East Timor in late 1975, before the Indonesian intervention, who called attention to the possibility of food shortages, especially in areas which had faced famine periodically in the past. Sustained military activity in the following years exacted a heavy toll in both human and economic terms. During that period, large numbers of the civilian population were forced to move and abandon farming, either as a result of Indonesian operations or FRETILIN pressures, and the destruction of the primitive agricultural economy was completed.

It should also be noted that detailed information on conditions in East Timor has been until recently very difficult to evaluate. In the highly charged political atmosphere of the civil war and the Indonesian intervention, available information was used to support the political claims of one side or another. Few outside observers were able to enter the area in which security conditions were uncertain. Nevertheless, what information we did obtain pointed increasingly to the seriousness of the humanitarian situation.

Mr. Chairman, our joint visit to Jakarta in April 1977,<sup>4</sup> during which two members of your delegation—Congressman Goodling and former Congresswoman Helen Meyner—visited East Timor, was instrumental in focussing attention on the importance of private voluntary agencies assisting in humanitarian relief in the territory. One of their recommendations was that it would be helpful if the International Committee of the Red Cross were permitted to visit East Timor for the purpose of providing humanitarian relief. Under this administration, the objective of initiating international humanitarian relief assistance became the overriding consideration in our approach to East Timor.

It was also in 1977 that we saw the beginnings of the current problem of displaced people. In August, President Suharto proclaimed an amnesty and in the months that followed a reported 40,000 people left areas under FRETILIN influence for Indonesian controlled territory. To meet the needs of these people, the Government of Indonesia began to develop plans for resettlement and self-sufficiency of those leaving FRETILIN zones, as well as providing emergency assistance through the Indonesian Red Cross. During a visit to Timor in April 1978,<sup>5</sup> officers of our Embassy commented on the continuing movement of population into Indonesian controlled areas. In September, 1978, Ambassador Masters visited the area for two days.<sup>6</sup> Food, clothing and

---

<sup>4</sup> See Document 106. Lester Wolff was Chairman of the Subcommittee.

<sup>5</sup> Telegram 5366 from Jakarta, April 25, described the trip to East Timor. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780176-0234)

<sup>6</sup> Telegram 12189 from Jakarta, September 8, transmitted Masters's report of his trip to East Timor. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780366-0052)



medications were being distributed to the refugees by the Indonesian Red Cross and Indonesian military authorities who were coping with a problem of growing momentum. Ambassador Masters emphasized to Washington that the economic conditions of the province were worse than anticipated and that additional humanitarian assistance would be needed. However, at that time the Indonesian Government preferred to continue to rely primarily on its own efforts.

In late 1978, FRETILIN guerrilla strength in the hills was significantly reduced and more of the upland population shifted to the lowlands. Bad crops in 1978 and an even drier 1978/79 growing season caused a major drop in food supplies. By the spring of 1979, therefore, these factors had resulted in the current situation reaching its present dimensions.

I have outlined the evolution of the situation both to explain how people got to where they now are and to illustrate the difficulty in obtaining accurate and timely assessments. However, during this period, we continued to encourage Indonesian officials to accelerate their plans to allow international humanitarian organizations—such as the Catholic Relief Services and the International Committee of the Red Cross—to assist in the relief effort. In late 1978, the Indonesian Red Cross also came to the conclusion that it did not have adequate resources to handle the humanitarian problem and began to discuss the possibility of assistance from other donors. ICRC and CRS were invited by the Indonesian Government to make surveys in April and May of 1979 and were approved for relief operations in June. An ICRC team arrived in Jakarta in late July. Relief supplies began arriving in early September.

#### The Future

More will need to be done by all participants to continue progress in the relief and longer term development efforts. One of the problems in the relief effort, for example, has been and remains the lack of trained medical personnel. ICRC plans to add more medical teams and there is as well the prospect of others from different sources. We will, of course, support financing for additional medical personnel and services if and when requested by international organizations. We have also encouraged the Indonesian Government to make available additional medical personnel to work with the relief effort and believe such steps are now being taken.

Overall, we have responded effectively to past ICRC/CRS requests for support. We expect to receive more requests in the future and intend to support them. The current efforts by the Indonesian Government and the ICRC/CRS are reaching several hundred thousand people needing immediate assistance. Seeds are also being distributed in time for planting to start the way to self-sufficiency in resettlement areas.

However, we will have to be prepared for reversals, including crop failures and slow recovery. The rainy season will soon begin further hampering an already difficult situation. Moreover, more people may come out of remote areas in need of food and medicine. We must be prepared to respond. In the longer term, some of the development projects supported by our aid program in Indonesia may be extended into East Timor to treat the fundamental problems of poverty, disease and food shortages.

In conclusion, I believe that the United States in concert with others is playing an important and constructive role in the East Timor relief effort in accordance with our previous consultations with the Congress. I appreciate the Committee's interest in the effort and we will bring any major difficulties to its attention if they arise during the next several crucial months. End Text.

2. Additional copies of this testimony will be pouched.

Vance

---

## 219. Report Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>

PA 80-10186

April 1980

### Indonesian Land Problems: A Political Time Bomb *[portion marking not declassified]*

#### *Overview*

The regime of President Soeharto, already under domestic fire for its political and economic shortcomings, faces increasing restiveness in rural areas because of disputes over land control. Soeharto's political opponents, largely concentrated in urban areas, hope to exploit the land issue but have established few links with the peasantry. If they manage to bridge the gap, the land issue could become the catalyst for widespread unrest in Indonesia and threaten stability in this largely agrarian nation.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 81T00208R: Production Case Files, Box 3, Folder 9: Indonesian Land Problems: A Political Time Bomb. Confidential. This paper was produced in the National Foreign Assessment Center. The overview is unclassified, but the larger report is marked Confidential.

Land use problems are partly a consequence of population pressure, particularly on the overcrowded island of Java, but they also are a byproduct of government rural development schemes and the bureaucracies they spawn. The situation is worsened by land-grabbing on the part of the urban military and civilian elite who use their positions to acquire land in their ancestral villages or to speculate on land near sites of prospective government projects. In some villages, such outsiders, in connivance with local officials, control a major portion of the cultivated land.

Growing landlessness on Java has caused massive migration to urban areas and contributed to the erosion of traditional communal values and to the alienation of villagers from the government. Government attempts to prevent any activity at the village level by political organizations other than the government party, GOLKAR, may prevent political challenges over the short term while setting the stage for broader social and political upheaval. The only village centers to evade central government control are Islamic religious and educational institutions, traditionally a focal point for political activism under the guise of religious concern.

The deterioration of conditions in rural Indonesia has contributed to the recent spread of millenarian religious sects preaching the evil of the present age. Although still apolitical, in the past such movements have sometimes adopted antigovernment themes. The Soeharto government is concerned that its political opponents may try to exploit these sects.

The government has no policy to deal with land problems nor any functioning mechanism to settle the increasing number of disputes. Land reform is an emotional issue with the present leadership because the Communist Party used land reform in the 1960s as a slogan to mobilize the peasants against many of the same groups who now control the government. The government is thus quick to attribute any criticism of its handling of the land issue to Communist agitation.

Those who would be most threatened by any implementation of land reform are the very people Soeharto depends upon for support. Moreover, Soeharto himself is a large landowner and would not wish any scrutiny of how much land his family controls or how they acquired it. He would prefer to continue handling land issues with ad hoc, patchwork solutions in hopes this will be enough to prevent the rural situation from getting out of hand. His close advisers, however, speculate that the opposition may use land reform as a rallying cry during the national election campaign in 1982.

Land issues cut across many lines and could provide the glue to unify Soeharto's critics. Government unwillingness and inability to deal with the fundamental causes of the land problem have highlighted

more basic inadequacies of government institutions, focused attention on the corruption of the courts, and cast renewed doubt on the Army's self-proclaimed role as protector of the peasant. Because Soeharto himself has linked settling land issues with improving rural conditions, he has made land reform a legitimate subject for public debate which will make it difficult to prevent the opposition from using it as a political weapon. This, and government stalling on land legislation, increases the possibility for rural violence.

Land disputes will spread in the next few years as Soeharto's opponents seek to use peasant discontent as a political weapon for the 1982 general elections. Over the short term, these local disputes are unlikely to lead to a major rural revolution, but rather will become a more important factor in urban politics. Over the long term, government unwillingness to come to grips with land-related issues risks creating major socioeconomic pressures in rural areas that could cause nationwide instability and, combined with increased political opposition in the cities, threaten the regime itself.

[1 line not declassified]

[Omitted here is the body of the report.]

---

**220. Briefing Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs (Holbrooke) to the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Cooper)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 14, 1980

SUBJECT

Briefing Paper on U.S. Foreign Assistance to Indonesia

REF

E—Barney Rush Memo of May 28, 1980<sup>2</sup>

Our aid to Indonesia reflects the effort to rebuild our Southeast Asian policy (in the wake of Vietnam) around strong support for

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 26, Indonesia, 1978–8/1980. Confidential. Drafted by James S. Landberg (EA/TIMBS) on June 12; cleared by Anthony Albrecht (EA). A note at the end of the memorandum reads, "S/P has declined to clear this memo and will submit separate comments to you." The comments have not been found.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

ASEAN and its five member states and to assist Indonesia with its serious and potentially destabilizing long-term economic development problems. Current aid levels stem from Vice President Mondale's visit to Jakarta in May, 1978,<sup>3</sup> when he offered President Suharto increased PL-480 Title I in FY 78, said the U.S. would be prepared to consider increased aid in the context of the World Bank Study on Indonesia's rural sector, and pointed out the advantages of PL-480 Title III as a further source of support. Consequently, U.S. assistance increased by 46% in FY 78, to a total of \$196.6 million and remained at about that level in FY 79 and FY 80 (see attachment 1),<sup>4</sup> although the Title III program never materialized.

Because of Indonesia's improved balance of payments situation in IFY 79/80 (\$2 billion current account surplus and \$2.4 billion BOP surplus overall), and our own budget constraints, IDCA proposed several reductions in our assistance:

—Elimination of PL-480 Title I in FY 81. An inter-agency compromise eventually was reached on \$50 million in Title I, which will still result in a 17% reduction in overall assistance for FY 81.

—For FY 82 elimination of PL-480 Title I, reducing development assistance to \$50 million, and the phase out of aid completely in subsequent years. Deputy Secretary Christopher and Tom Ehrlich subsequently agreed on two development assistance planning levels for FY 82—\$50 million and \$100 million—and that the proposed phase out plans would be dropped.

The basic options that we see are:

1. Continue the level of PL-480 and development assistance at about the \$175–200 million level. I favor this for the reasons stated below;

2. Phase out PL-480 Title I completely, but continue development assistance at about the \$100 million level now planned for FY 81;

3. Phase out PL-480 Title I completely and gradually reduce development assistance. If this must be done, the AID Mission in Jakarta has proposed a \$100 million program in FY 82 to allow orderly phase down of ongoing programs in which AID and the GOI have invested much time and effort.

4. Phase out PL-480 Title I and reduce development assistance by half to \$50 million in FY 82, composed entirely of technical assistance.

---

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 129 and 206–207.

<sup>4</sup> Not attached.

IDCA has made such a proposal. A sub-alternative would be to shift gradually to an RDP-type technical assistance program.<sup>5</sup>

I believe there are strong reasons for continuing the current level of our aid based on Indonesia's development needs, the unique contribution of our AID program, and broad U.S. political/strategic and economic interests.

### *Need*

Indonesia is one of the world's poorest nations, with a per capita GNP of \$385, and about ten percent of the world's poorest people. Despite a successful family planning program, population growth is 2% adding to one of the world's highest population densities. Land pressures are described in a recent CIA study as a "political time bomb".<sup>6</sup> The GOI will clearly have to make a major effort to stay ahead of these rural problems if it is to avoid political instability.

Most observers also see serious macro-economic problems on the horizon, despite the current BOP surplus. The World Bank anticipates that current account deficits will reappear in 1982 and exceed \$6 billion annually by 1990. Increasing domestic energy consumption and stagnating petroleum production will result in Indonesia becoming a net oil importer in the 1990's. Scarcity of technical and administrative personnel, and weak or nonexistent institutions remain the major development bottlenecks. The May, 1980, IGGI meeting therefore endorsed the IBRD's recommendation that foreign assistance levels be maintained and increased gradually throughout the remainder of Repelita III (1979-1983)<sup>7</sup> to maintain the continuity of the development effort. Every IGGI donor increased its assistance pledge for 1981 except the U.S. and the U.K.

### *AID's Unique Contribution*

The AID program has innovative aspects and influence on Indonesian rural development policies which cannot be replaced due to close and long-standing relationships with senior Indonesian policy-makers. AID's technical and financial participation has allowed it to influence broader rural development policies through demonstration-type projects which can be adopted nationwide with Indonesian financing.

The AID-initiated family planning program is a spectacular example; population growth on Java/Bali declined from 2.4 percent in 1974

---

<sup>5</sup> Technically, IDCA has not formally proposed elimination of PL-480 Title I for FY 82, but it did for FY 81 and we assume this will be its position for FY 82. [Footnote in the original.]

<sup>6</sup> See Document 219.

<sup>7</sup> The third Indonesian 5-year plan.

to 2.0 percent in 1979. A more recent example is the GOI's agreement to an AID-financed Provincial Area Development program, which bypasses much of the central government bureaucracy. Under the program, AID is providing, on a pilot basis, credit and marketing mechanisms through local governments with the goal of establishing new institutional channels for assisting rural development. It was difficult to work out the arrangements for this; we doubt any other donor could accomplish it, and premature phase-out or conversion to a purely technical assistance program would probably result in GOI failure to adopt this concept nationwide.

These types of programs are not provided by other donors, which do not have influence with GOI policy-makers, nor sufficient numbers of language qualified personnel. Theoretically, they could be funded under a reimbursable development program concept, as I understand AID is doing with Saudi Arabia. Practically speaking, this would be unacceptable to senior Indonesian officials, who view Indonesia as a very poor country.

We also believe that a financial component in our aid program is essential to getting new innovative programs started, so that the GOI can see that they will work. Consequently, we do not favor a technical assistance-only program.

#### *U.S. Interests*

A decline in U.S. assistance will seriously damage U.S. interests in Indonesia and Southeast Asia. Indonesia has the world's fifth largest population, the largest Muslim population, a strategic location, a wealth of resources and it plays a key role in ASEAN. It has supported our efforts to free the hostages in Iran, supports the Moscow Olympics boycott, and we have compatible objectives regarding Afghanistan and Indochina. The GOI takes moderate positions in the NAM, the Islamic Conference, and OPEC. I personally believe that Indonesia will become more important to future U.S. interests, not less, and maintaining the real level of our assistance programs will be a crucial symbol of U.S. interest in and support for Indonesia.

The aid reductions proposed by IDCA, if accepted, would also undermine the credibility of the Vice President's statements to President Suharto just two years ago and would contribute to further questioning of the role the U.S. intends to play in Southeast Asia.

To plan major reductions in aid to the largest member of ASEAN is at cross purposes with our goal of supporting ASEAN's progress and stability.

I am attaching for your information several recent cables from Ambassador Masters regarding the deterioration in US-Indonesian relations threatened by our recent actions, including the reduction in

PL-480 Title I, the Japanese rice agreement and enforcement of our policy of U.S. warship transit through the Indonesian archipelago.<sup>8</sup> All of these issues are expected to be raised by Indonesia's Foreign Minister with Secretary Muskie at Kuala Lumpur.<sup>9</sup> A cable just received from CINCPAC testifies to his concern, also, about our relationship with Indonesia.

---

<sup>8</sup> Not attached.

<sup>9</sup> See Document 221.

---

**221. Telegram From Secretary of State Muskie's Delegation to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Kuala Lumpur, June 28, 1980, 0315Z

Secto 4078. Subj: Secretary Muskie's Meeting With Indonesian Foreign Minister Mochtar.

1. Confidential-Entire text.

2. Secretary Muskie on June 27 met with Indonesian Foreign Minister Mochtar.

3. Minister Mochtar began the discussion by noting that neither side in the Thai/Vietnamese conflict seemed completely dedicated to a settlement. This was especially true for the Vietnamese. When the the Vietnamese Foreign Minister recently visited Jakarta, Mochtar met him in order to keep the dialogue with the Vietnamese open. When Mochtar asked if Thach could make any positive statement which Mochtar could bring to his ASEAN colleagues, Thach responded that Vietnam would be willing to reconsider its position when the Thais "mend their ways." Mochtar said he "ended up with a zero," that Thach was unyielding.

4. The Minister noted that the question of timing of the recent Vietnamese attack against Thailand<sup>2</sup> was interesting. He said one the-

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Records of Edmund Muskie, 1980-1981, Lot 83D66, Box 2, Memoranda 1980-1981. Confidential; Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information to Bangkok, Beijing, Jakarta, Manila, Moscow, New Delhi, Singapore, and Tokyo. Muskie met with ASEAN Foreign Ministers in Kuala Lumpur June 27-28. See Document 146.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 187.



ory was Vietnam attacked before the ASEAN meeting<sup>3</sup> to test the group. Mochtar thinks this is far-fetched. His personal theory is that the Vietnamese were concerned about indications that India and ASEAN were moving closer together. Not only would this pose strategic difficulties for the Vietnamese, but it could also impede Indian movement toward recognition of the Heng Samrin government.

5. A Vietnamese aggression against Thailand caused ASEAN to toughen its stand against the Vietnamese and the Soviets. The Indians preferred not to be seen as working closely with a staunchly anti-Soviet group, and consequently the Indian Foreign Minister cancelled his visit to the ASEAN meeting. If his theory is correct, Mochtar added, then the Vietnamese succeeded. Mr. Holbrooke noted that another possibility was that the timing of the attack was tied to Thai actions to repatriate Kampuchean refugees. Mochtar agreed this was possible.

6. The Secretary said he had three issues he wanted to raise with Mochtar. First, he had been asked by Senator Inouye to raise the sea oil issue. The Senator was a strong supporter of foreign assistance, a widely respected and admired Senator, and Indonesia should see if it can find a way to be responsive to his concerns. Although the Secretary did not want to get into a detailed discussion of the specifics of the case, he did want the Minister to know of his concern about the issue.

7. The second issue discussed was rice sales. The Secretary and the Minister agreed the issue had a strong political content in both countries and had to be treated with great sensitivity. Ambassador Masters said we are now able to provide \$50 million in PL-480 for Indonesia in FY-81, that we will not interfere with any previous price arrangements between Japan and Indonesia for 150,000 tons of rice in 1980, that we will seriously consider later this year Indonesian rice needs in light of Indonesia's supply situation, and we agree to hold annual consultations with the Indonesians to see if we can develop orderly arrangements to avoid similar difficulties in the future.

8. The third issue was how we handle the transit of US warships through straits adjacent to Indonesia. The Secretary said we are willing to initiate a series of periodic briefings at the military level to provide information on military activities and plans in the region. While we cannot provide specific transit notifications, we can provide periodic general information on naval deployments. Mochtar responded that this seemed a good arrangement and he appreciated our help on this issue.

---

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to the Thirteenth ASEAN Ministerial meeting that took place June 25–26 in Kuala Lumpur.

9. Minister Mochtar closed the conversation by noting that the Soviet Union has goals beyond Vietnam. Its ultimate aim is to gain control of the sea lanes and the natural wealth of Southeast Asia. He had discussed this with Foreign Minister Okita and had pointed out that the Japanese will not, for their own reasons, build a strong navy which could help thwart Soviet ambitions in the region. He had therefore suggested that if the Japanese and the Americans made the necessary naval hardware available to Indonesia, the Indonesians will defend the region themselves.

10. Accompanying Secretary Muskie were Assistant Secretary Holbrooke, DAS Negroponte, Ambassador Masters, Special Assistant Raphel (note taker), and Executive Assistant Billings. Minister Mochtar was accompanied by MFA Director General for Political Affairs Sani, MFA Director General for Economic Affairs Noor and a notetaker.

**Muskie**

---

**222. Telegram From Secretary of State Muskie's Delegation to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Kuala Lumpur, June 28, 1980, 0318Z

Secto 4079. Subj: Secretary Muskie's Meeting With Singapore's Minister Rajaratnam and Dhanabalan.

1. Confidential—Entire text.

2. Secretary Muskie on June 27 met with Singapore Deputy Prime Minister Rajaratnam and Foreign Minister Dhanabalan.

3. Minister Rajaratnam opened the discussion by noting that he and his ASEAN colleagues have one major preoccupation at the moment—Vietnamese aggression against Thailand. He believed that the Vietnamese had hoped that disarray would spread among the ASEAN partners. Rajaratnam said this almost happened; the Vietnamese action in Thailand, however, has coalesced ASEAN as never before.

4. The Minister noted that ASEAN had taken three new and important steps. It had, for the first time, "named the culprit—Vietnam." It

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Records of Edmund Muskie, 1980–1981, Lot 83D66, Box 2, Memoranda 1980–1981. Confidential; Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information to Bangkok, Beijing, Canberra, Jakarta, Manila, Moscow, Singapore, and Tokyo.

has begun to call Vietnamese action in Kampuchea “aggression” rather than an “incident”, and had made an important moral judgment by condemning Vietnamese actions in Thailand.

5. Rajaratnam added that the next important question we face is the Kampuchean seat at the UN. Vietnam wants at least to have the seat declared vacant. The great majority of UN members do not understand the issue and consequently there is a chance that a number who voted with us last year may abstain this year. The other side will remain solid.

6. ASEAN looks to the United States to play a leading role in this question at the UN. A good tactic would be to link Afghanistan and Kampuchea, pointing out that both are the result of Soviet aggression: the former direct, the latter indirect. This tactic should enable us to get the support of Arab states which abstained last year. Also, since ASEAN was now supporting the Islamic position on Afghanistan, the Islamic states should reciprocate.

7. Rajaratnam concluded that the situation will continue unresolved in Kampuchea for at least the next ten years, and the United States must take the lead in helping to thwart Vietnamese ambitions in the area. The Soviet objective is not Indochina, but rather the strategic and economically more important area of the straits.

8. Secretary Muskie responded that we shared the Minister’s view of Soviet intentions. The President has recently spoken publicly about Soviet aspirations in Afghanistan and Southeast Asia.

9. Concerning the regional issues mentioned by the Minister, the Secretary said his visit was very useful since it would give him a feel for the situation in the area. He also must keep in mind how these issues are perceived politically in the United States. On Kampuchea representation, the decision last year was made only days before the vote. Consequently, there was no major public debate on the issue, even though feelings are high in the United States about the brutality of the Pol Pot regime. To make a decision now on how we will vote could cause political difficulties in the States and may even be counter-productive.

10. The Secretary noted he would report back to the President. He reiterated that it was important that ASEAN realize we are not indecisive on this issue. The vote will take place in September, and it would be premature to determine now how we will vote.

11. On the specific issue of Thailand, the Secretary said he told Minister Sitthi today that we will respond to the Vietnamese challenge to Thailand.<sup>2</sup> We will make \$2 million in grant money immediately

---

<sup>2</sup> See Document 188.

available for Thailand. We will accelerate the delivery of previously ordered arms to Thailand and will try to airlift as much as possible. The Secretary also noted he had suggested to the Malaysian Foreign Minister that the five visiting Foreign Ministers consider joining with their ASEAN colleagues in a public statement calling on Waldheim to visit the region as a way of increasing pressure on the Vietnamese.<sup>3</sup>

12. Rajaratnam said he thought a joint statement was a good idea. On Kampuchean representation, he said it was very important that we focus on the question of Vietnamese aggression, not the question of Pol Pot. The Secretary responded that our concern for the security of the area has been shown by the fact of his visit, our assistance to Thailand, his statement on Vietnamese aggression<sup>4</sup> and the suggestion of a joint statement on Waldheim.

13. Accompanying Secretary Muskie were Assistant Secretary Holbrooke, DAS Negroponte, Ambassador Kneip and Special Assistant Raphel. Accompanying Rajaratnam and Dhanabalan were MFA Permanent Secretary Nathan, Political Affairs Director See, ASEAN Affairs Director Aziz, International Affairs Deputy Director Kishore, and Singaporean Ambassador to Manila Baker.

**Muskie**

---

<sup>3</sup> No record of the meeting with Rithauddeen has been found. In addition to Muskie, the Foreign Ministers of Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada were in Kuala Lumpur.

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 2, Document 146.

**223. Telegram From Secretary of State Muskie's Delegation to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Kuala Lumpur, June 28, 1980, 0321Z

Secto 4080. Subject: Secretary's Meeting With Prime Minister Hussein Onn.

1. Confidential—Entire text.

2. Summary: The Secretary met for half an hour privately, June 27, with Malaysian Prime Minister Hussein Onn.<sup>2</sup> Following this talk the Secretary had a meeting with Prime Minister and seven Malaysian Cabinet Ministers. The Secretary informed the group of U.S. support for Kuala Lumpur as Rubber Council headquarters and undertook to look into Malaysian needs regarding tin agreement and into Malaysian concerns over U.S. opposition to World Bank and ADB assistance for oil palm projects. End Summary.

3. Following 25 minute tete-a-tete meeting with Malaysian Prime Minister Hussein Onn at the Prime Minister's request, Secretary Muskie and Prime Minister joined meeting in Prime Minister's operations room with Deputy Prime Minister and seven Malaysian Cabinet members: Minister of Trade and Industry and Deputy Prime Minister, Seri Dr. Mahathir Bin Mohamed; Minister of Transport, Datuk Lee San Choon; Minister of Works and Utilities, Datuk Samy Vellu; Minister of Finance, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah; Minister of Home Affairs, Tan Sri Haji Muhammad Ghazali Bin Shafie; Minister of Defense, Datuk Amar Haji Abdul Taib Bin Mahmud; Minister of Education, Datuk Masa Bin Hitam and Minister of Primary Industries, Paul Leong. Present on American side: Assistant Secretary Richard Holbrooke; Deputy Assistant Secretary John Negroponte; Executive Assistant, Leon G. Billings; Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Nicholas Platt; Staff Member, National Security Council, Roger Sullivan; Charge Breckon, and Embassy Kuala Lumpur Political and Economic Counselors.

4. Prime Minister Hussein Onn stated how pleased he and his colleagues were that the Secretary came to Kuala Lumpur to meet with him and the Ministers. They were glad to have the opportunity to exchange views individually and collectively. The Prime Minister hoped these exchanges would be of help in assessing thinking of ASEAN countries. He hoped the Secretary could look at issues not

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Box 69, ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, 6–7/80. Confidential; Immediate. Sent for information to Tokyo, Bangkok, Singapore, Manila, Jakarta, London, and the Mission in Geneva.

<sup>2</sup> No record of this private meeting has been found.

only global but also in a regional perspective, but emphasized the Malaysians were not confining their concerns to regional issues. The Secretary responded that he wished to reiterate what he had said in private: that he was in Malaysia because he regarded Malaysia and ASEAN as very important to the United States. He was speaking for the President as well as himself in making this statement. The Secretary said that it was a long trip from Ankara<sup>3</sup> but in a sense he was on his first trip of this nature symbolically tying the world together by leaving through the East and returning through the West. The Secretary noted that we all have memories of the Vietnam war; there is a tendency for some, in America as well, to think because we were untangled from that war that we had lost interest in the region. He said he had come to listen and to understand the perspective and judgment of Southeast Asians (he had visited the Indochina countries during the Vietnam war). Secretary understood that although the ASEAN countries share common objectives and views they often had different perspectives. He wished to say that the perspectives that the Prime Minister had given him privately would be of great value to him. The Secretary noted that the Prime Minister had indicated the Ministers might have questions to pose to the Secretary. Before this period began, he wished to be certain to inform the group that the United States would be supporting Kuala Lumpur as the site for the International Rubber Council headquarters. He pointed out that the U.S. relies on Malaysia for a large proportion of its rubber. In this context, he jokingly expressed the hope that Malaysia would not switch too much acreage from rubber to oil palm.

5. Foreign Minister Rithauddeen began the question period by noting that he understood the United States was trying to find a mutually satisfactory accommodation regarding tin. Minister Paul Leong added that he had recently spoken with Ambassador Smith in Geneva. He thought there were good prospects for a compromise. He also wished to thank the Secretary for announcing the U.S. support of Kuala Lumpur as the Rubber Council headquarters. The Secretary responded that he was reasonably optimistic that a tin agreement could be worked out. He was well aware of the importance of these issues to developing countries; of course there were always differences between consumers and producers on prices. He would make every effort on this issue.

6. Minister Leong added he felt that export controls should be retained in the tin agreement. The Secretary said Undersecretary Cooper had informed him of this issue. He was familiar with such

---

<sup>3</sup> Muskie was in Ankara June 25–26 for the NATO Ministerial meeting.

export control problems from his own state, e.g., Maine is an important U.S. manufacturer of footwear, yet U.S. beef producers find it more profitable to export hides. Thus he was aware of the competing pressures which can be generated by competing interests.

7. Finance Minister Razaleigh stated that since 1975 Malaysia had been having problems with the World Bank Executive Board regarding its proposals for palm oil projects. The trend at the World Bank appears to be not to consider applications for such projects. He hoped that the U.S. would permit Malaysia to avail itself of World Bank assistance. Palm oil production is most important for Malaysian employment levels. The Secretary responded that U.S. policy in this regard is strongly influenced by congressional attitudes. He would, however, look into the possibilities.

8. Finance Minister Razaleigh also listed the needs for Malaysian assistance in its defense procurement. They have now decided to purchase the US A-4 attack aircraft and will be needing backup (spare parts) for this new equipment. In like manner, the Malaysians would be purchasing warheads for bombs through Canada and required a U.S. backup guarantee. Secretary and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Platt said that Platt would pursue these issues in his meeting on June 28 with Malaysian Defense Minister.<sup>4</sup>

9. Secretary indicated he would appreciate an analysis of the state of the Malaysian economy. Razaleigh responded Malaysia felt its economy was healthy and expected seven percent real growth in 1980. They were trying to stabilize inflation at six percent per annum; unemployment was at six percent as well. Deputy Prime Minister Mahathir noted that the current U.S. recession could impact adversely on the electronic firms in Malaysia which were among the largest Malaysian employers. The Malaysian Government was watching the U.S. economy very carefully. The Secretary said that he understood the Deputy Prime Minister's concerns over the possible export of unemployment. He said that it was difficult to predict the direction of U.S. economy. The present recession was likely to be deeper than expected. U.S. policy objectives, significant in an election year, were to moderate the recession. But the fight against inflation must continue. Prime rate was now down from 20 to 11½ percent. Twenty percent prime rate was, in itself, inflationary.

10. Deputy Prime Minister Mahathir noted that Japanese Foreign Minister Okita in his talks had accepted the need for relocating production out of Japan to developing countries because of the high cost of labor and energy in Japan. He wondered whether the U.S. should be thinking in the same way. He considered that this was one way of

---

<sup>4</sup> No memorandum of conversation of this meeting has been found.

reducing inflation since there were many things which could be made more cheaply in Malaysia. These approaches had already been discussed within NATO and other Western organizations. The Secretary responded that the U.S. had already exported some of its industry totally. U.S. imports of softwear had risen from five percent to 60 percent of our total consumption today. It was important to understand that the American people would not want to become just a service economy. It was a question of balance. Certainly the concept of exporting our auto industry would not be an easy one to sell! However there was no question that the North must find ways of being of more assistance to the developing world. He noted that there had been considerable discussion on these issues at the Venice Summit.<sup>5</sup> He expressed his own view that unless our planet can serve the expectations of the less fortunate of our people the search for peace is being made without an awareness of the real problems involved. Assistance, however, must be carried out on a rational, evolutionary basis. Aid, for example, has not been able to keep up with energy prices in many developing countries, and too much of aid must be devoted to energy needs and not to development.

11. The Secretary concluded by expressing his appreciation of the warmth of his reception and the opportunity to have a private exchange of views with the Prime Minister to which the Prime Minister reciprocated.

12. Comment: Embassy recommendations regarding Malaysian concerns over World Bank assistance with their oil palm project will be sent septel.<sup>6</sup>

**Muskie**

---

<sup>5</sup> The G-7 Summit took place June 22-23 in Venice. See *Foreign Relations*, 1977-1980, vol. III, Foreign Economic Policy, Document 247.

<sup>6</sup> Not found.



**224. Paper Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>**

August 1980

**Downturn in Indonesian-US Relations: Perceptions and Implications**  
[*portion marking not declassified*]

[Omitted here is the summary.]

Recent US policy decisions regarding ship transit, rice sales, and military aid have raised doubts in Jakarta about the nature of the US commitment. US friendship and assistance to Indonesia have been key factors in the Suharto government's success. Indonesia, which believes superpower rivalry in Southeast Asia is growing, fears that Washington is abandoning support just when it is needed most to assure stability in the region. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Domestic concerns, particularly the elections in which Suharto will seek a fourth term, have heightened the significance Suharto attaches to US support. He believes his regime must survive into the late 1980s to prove the appropriateness of his strategy for achieving economic and political stability. Although the government-controlled party does not face a parliamentary election until 1982 and Suharto's term lasts until 1983, the highest levels of the government have an almost obsessive preoccupation with the election process. As a result, domestic and foreign issues that might otherwise be merely troublesome are seen as pitfalls, and potential weaknesses assume a sharper focus. [*portion marking not declassified*]

*Warship Transit*

The most serious affront to Indonesian national pride was the US decision last May that it would no longer provide notification of the passage of warships through Indonesian waters—revoking a courtesy begun in the early 1970s. Jakarta reacted with the unprecedented step of presenting a diplomatic note to the US State Department on 13 June<sup>2</sup> that clearly signaled Indonesia's consternation and disappointment over the decision. The Indonesian Defense Ministry, citing the ship transit problem, [*1 line not declassified*] canceled the scheduled visit by a high-ranking Indonesian military officer to the United States. [*portion marking not declassified*]

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 82T00150R: Production Case Files, Box 1, Folder 33: Downturn in Indonesian-US Relations: Perceptions and Implications. Secret; [*handling restriction not declassified*].

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

The US decision struck at the heart of Jakarta's claim of sovereignty over all the waters encompassed by the Indonesian archipelago. Jakarta plans to press for international recognition of this claim during the forthcoming Law of the Sea negotiations and sees the US reversal on ship transit notifications as a rebuff to Indonesian efforts to get the archipelagic principle accepted in international law. The Indonesians have pointedly reminded Washington that its new policy provides justification for Soviet warships to transit Indonesian waters just as freely and secretly. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The Indonesian Navy has an extremely limited patrol and surveillance capacity, primarily because economic development has taken precedence since 1965 over improving defense capabilities. This policy is gradually changing, however, stimulated by the Communist victories in Indochina in 1975 and the subsequent growth of the Soviet naval presence in the area. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The dispute over notification has been kept out of the controlled Indonesian press, but *[less than 1 line not declassified]* if made public, could be used by the radical nationalists and fanatical Muslims to arouse xenophobic hysteria to the detriment of the Suharto regime as well as the Americans. *[less than 1 line not declassified]* any disturbance in the stability of Indonesia would redound against US policy interests in Southeast Asia. *[portion marking not declassified]*

#### *Rice Supplies*

The ship transit decision came when Jakarta was just recovering from its dismay over adverse US policies regarding another hallowed Indonesian priority—rice. Even though its rice production may exceed a record 18 million tons this year, Indonesia is the world's largest rice importer, purchasing almost 3 million tons annually to feed its rapidly growing population of nearly 150 million. The government equates rice supplies with political stability and is already preparing to obtain sufficient rice stocks to prevent the possibility of embarrassing shortages during the national election campaign. Although elections are two years away, the Indonesians are determined to assure a huge stockpile. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Early this year the United States informed Indonesia that in 1981, the PL-480 assistance program, which provides part of Jakarta's rice imports, would drop from \$100 million to zero. The Indonesians subsequently discovered that Washington also was pressing Japan to limit its sales of rice at concessionary prices to Indonesia. Jakarta's technocrats, most of them US-trained and longstanding friends, complained bitterly about this apparent double blow—a unilateral cutoff of cheap rice, coupled with pressure on another US ally to limit sales—in an area where Indonesia is vulnerable. The technocrats pointed out that

Indonesia is a good customer, buying commercially some \$200 million of food from the United States in 1979 in addition to the \$100 million at concessionary prices. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Although PL-480 aid eventually was restored to \$50 million and US pressure on the Japanese ceased, the political damage had been done. Although Indonesians profess to understand US budgetary problems, they are miffed by what they see as US insensitivity to a crucial Indonesian political issue. The technocrats reportedly have instructed their government buyers not to purchase US commercial rice this year. [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *Military Assistance*

Jakarta considers US military assistance a barometer of US good will. The Indonesians do not want a security treaty with the United States, but they want assistance. They believe they had personal assurances from Vice President Mondale when he visited Suharto in May 1978 that Washington would provide adequate military support.<sup>3</sup> They therefore interpret recent reductions in military credits and military training programs as a betrayal of the symbolic links forged between Southeast Asia and the United States. Indonesia sees itself as the major partner in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and as the only one whose armed forces could rival Vietnam's. The Indonesian Armed Forces, however, are ill equipped with a conglomeration of obsolete, mostly Soviet, arms and have poorly trained personnel. Last year, Jakarta embarked on a major program to reequip and revitalize its military. [*portion marking not declassified*]

[*2 lines not declassified*] grievances may prompt Indonesia to close the US military aid mission in Jakarta at the end of the next fiscal year. The Indonesian Government already may have decided to ask Washington to withdraw US military advisers assigned to Indonesian military headquarters. The warning, while reflecting the depth of Indonesian feeling, serves as a bargaining chip in seeking a restoration of cuts in military aid. The Indonesian military, which prefers US equipment, still keenly wants to maintain its military supply links with the United States. Most of Indonesia's military leaders were trained in the United States and influenced by US military doctrine. For a variety of reasons, including cheap prices, the Indonesians buy military equipment worldwide, but they would prefer a steady supply of US arms, planes, and ships. Indonesia also is a proponent of achieving standardization of arms among ASEAN states; the Philippines and Thailand are already US equipped. [*portion marking not declassified*]

---

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 206 and 207.

*Consequences and Implications*

The Indonesians have little leverage and few options in seeking redress of their grievances with Washington. They want US trade, aid, investment, technology, and friendship. The relative importance of the United States as an influential aid donor has been declining in a financial sense and will decrease even more in the next few years. Indonesia's burgeoning wealth from oil revenues makes Jakarta increasingly able to buy goods and expertise. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Nevertheless, Indonesian officials attach symbolic significance to US assistance greatly out of proportion to its economic or security importance. Suharto believed he had achieved, through the Mondale visit, a relationship at an "intimate and special level." He is upset by the apparent crumbling of this perceived relationship and believes the blame lies in the inconsistency of US policy. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The sense of betrayal is heightened because the Indonesians believe that they have supported US policy interests in international forums, backing US positions in the United Nations and often acting as back-stage mediators for US interests. They have been supportive on Iran and Afghanistan and have espoused a moderate position on Third World issues, such as the North-South dialogue, and in OPEC. During the Vietnam refugee crisis, Indonesia acted with uncharacteristic swiftness to provide humanitarian support, despite limited resources. The Indonesians have responded to US initiatives on human rights by releasing tens of thousands of political prisoners over the past few years in an effort to counter Congressional criticism. They also have tried to comply with US pressure by allowing limited, but symbolic, foreign visits to assess conditions in East Timor, despite its sensitivity as a domestic problem. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Suharto's concern with what he sees as reduced US support is intensified because the reduction coincides with increasing criticism of his regime by a revitalized nationalistic opposition, which is looking for issues to exploit in the election campaign. Political pressure from such opponents and irritation with US policy could prompt Suharto to demonstrate his strength and self-reliance by striking at US interests in Indonesia and encouraging the xenophobia already displayed by some domestic news media. Suharto's government could retaliate by imposing tighter restrictions on US foreign investors, expelling press correspondents, assuming a more aggressive posture in OPEC, or stalling negotiations on pending capital investment projects. Suharto could also terminate US-Indonesian discussions on shipments of liquefied natural gas to the Pacific coast, for which negotiations have been under way since 1973. *[portion marking not declassified]*

Indonesia is in a strategic position astride the major sea lanes linking the Pacific and Indian Oceans, and US military deployments

depend on maintaining friendly relations with Indonesia to keep its straits open. Although unlikely, Suharto could create enormous difficulties for US strategic interests should he change his policy on overflights or unhindered passage of US ships. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Suharto's unhappiness with recent US policy decisions has not reached the point where a revival of anti-Americanism is imminent. Nevertheless, he may decide to limit access to his government by US diplomatic, business, and military representatives; good personal relations between those representatives and their Indonesian counterparts have been a key to implementing US policy goals in Indonesia. Although such a move would be detrimental to Indonesia's long-term interests, it is a tactic the Indonesians have used before. It also would be popular among many elements of Indonesian society who are critical of Jakarta's close economic and foreign policy ties with foreign, particularly Western, governments. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Deteriorating relations with the United States are unlikely to result in closer ties with the Soviets. Suharto and his military advisers are anti-Communists and distrust Moscow and its ambitions in Southeast Asia. The more likely response would be for the leadership to join a growing backlash against Western-style modernization by turning inward and succumbing to calls for more nationalistic policies. [*portion marking not declassified*]

---

## **225. Summary of Conclusions of a Mini-Presidential Review Committee Meeting<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 27, 1980, 5–6:30 p.m.

### **SUBJECT**

Indonesia

### **PARTICIPANTS**

*State*

David Newsom (Under Secretary for Political Affairs)

Richard Holbrooke (Asst Sec for East Asian and Pacific Affairs)

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Sullivan Subject File, Box 26, Mini-PRC on Indonesia, 8–9/80. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. No minutes of the meeting have been found.

Fred Brown (Office Dir for Indonesia)  
Robert Blumberg (Rep of Amb. Richardson)  
David Evans (Dir, International Security Operations, PM)

*OSD*

Amb. Robert Komer (Advisor to Sec Def on NATO Affairs)  
RADM Donald S. Jones (Under Sec for Defense Policy)  
RADM Jonathan Howe (Dir, Pol-Mil Affairs, Naval Oper)  
CMDR Dennis Neutze (Legal Adviser to Dep Chairman, Naval Oper)

*JCS*

BG James Granger (Dep Director, Pol-Mil Affairs)  
Capt. Gerald Schroeder (Action Officer for Indonesia)

*AGRICULTURE*

Dale Hathaway (Under Secretary)

*OMB*

Edward Strait (Dep to the Dep Assoc Dir, International Affairs Div)

*DCI*

Amb. John Holdridge (National Intelligence Officer, EA)  
[*name not declassified*] (Chief, East Asia Div)

*AID*

John H. Sullivan (Asst Administrator for Asia)

*ICA*

Charles Bray (Deputy Director)  
Norris Smith (Director, Office of East Asian and Pacific Affairs)

*IDCA*

Guy Erb (Deputy Director)

*TREASURY*

Fred Bergsten (Assistant Secretary)  
Sandra O'Leary (Staff Economist)

*USTR*

Jon Rosenbaum (Dir of Latin American and African Affairs)

*White House*

David Aaron

*NSC*

Roger Sullivan (Notetaker)

*SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS*

Under Secretary of State David Newsom chaired the meeting, the purpose of which was to assess the risk of deterioration in US-Indonesian relations, and to suggest actions we might take to reduce or eliminate irritants in that relationship. (C)

The meeting stressed the key importance of Indonesia as:

—the world's fifth most populous nation located astride strategic sea lanes;

—a moderate Moslem country which generally follows policies favorable to US interests;

—provider of 6 percent of US and 13 percent of Japanese oil imports;

—the most powerful member of ASEAN;

—a potentially important interlocutor with Vietnam;

—a major trading partner (\$5 billion at two-way trade) and site of large US investments in oil and mining. (C)

The meeting agreed that our decision to terminate in March 1980 our informal courtesy notifications to the Indonesian Government of US naval ship transits of Indonesian straits had become a major issue which threatened to damage seriously the good relationship we have carefully built up over the last 15 years. The Department of State will therefore take the lead in working out, in consultation with Ambassador Elliot Richardson and taking into account the reservations of the JCS, a procedure which will enable us to include specific information on ship transits in our periodic intelligence briefings for the Indonesian Government. It was thought this would assuage Indonesian resentment with minimum damage to our Law of the Sea policy. (S)

The meeting also concluded that President Suharto's resentment over our failure to invite him for a state visit during the past four years had reenforced his reaction to other US actions, such as termination of ship transit notification and declining security and economic assistance over the past four years. The Department of State will prepare a memorandum for the President recommending that we issue an invitation for a 1981 visit to President Suharto in the President's name as soon as this can be done. The Department of State is aware that in making this recommendation it will have to consider what other state visits it may propose during that same period. (S)

The meeting reaffirmed that Indonesia is eligible for concessional assistance, and that Indonesia is not being given the priority it deserves in view of its strategic importance in the allocation of our assistance resources. No effort was made in the meeting to discuss specific amounts of economic and security assistance that might be appropriate for Indonesia. The participants acknowledged that it was unlikely there would be new resources available for Indonesia, and that therefore the question of where cuts would have to be made to increase allocation to Indonesia would have to be studied further on an interagency basis. (C)

The meeting gave Indonesia due credit for the progress it has made in the human rights area, but recognized that Timor remains a public issue which we will have to take into account. (C)

**226. Memorandum From Secretary of State Muskie to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 16, 1980

**SUBJECT**

Proposed Invitation to Indonesian President Suharto for a State Visit

As reported to you previously,<sup>2</sup> a “mini-PRC” meeting on Indonesia was held on August 27<sup>3</sup> to assess the risk of deterioration in our relations with that important and friendly country, and to consider ways to resolve a number of problems which have arisen in our bilateral relations. Indonesia—the world’s fifth most populous nation, the world’s largest Muslim nation, strategically located, and a moderate member of OPEC, ASEAN, the Islamic League, and the NAM—has been a strong supporter on many matters of U.S. interest, including President Suharto’s public appeal for release of the hostages in Iran, participation in the Olympic boycott, and condemnation of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In 1977, you instructed State to give special attention to Indonesia, India and Nigeria as three major emerging nations.<sup>4</sup>

A number of bilateral problems have arisen, including our exercise of navigation rights through the Indonesian archipelago and declining U.S. security and economic assistance. The GOI has begun to take a more distant posture towards the U.S. which, if continued, could create serious problems for our strategic, political and economic interests.

Contributing to the GOI’s resentment has been their feeling that we have not given the Indonesian leadership—and particularly President Suharto—sufficient high level attention. The last visit to the U.S. by President Suharto was in July 1975, when he met with President Ford.<sup>5</sup> Suharto also met with President Nixon in 1970.<sup>6</sup> Suharto, who looks to the U.S. as a special friend, appears to believe that our failure to extend an invitation to him to visit during the past four years represents a serious slight.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 28, Indonesia, 1/77–1/81. Confidential.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 225.

<sup>4</sup> Not further identified.

<sup>5</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. E–12, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973–1976, Document 126.

<sup>6</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. XX, Southeast Asia, 1969–1972, Document 295.



An invitation from you to President Suharto to make a state visit to the U.S. during the first half of 1981 would be a useful and important step in preventing serious deterioration in our relationship. A later date could be perceived as U.S. interference in Indonesia's 1982 Parliamentary elections. I believe the invitation should be extended before the November election to forestall further, and perhaps less retrievable, problems with Indonesia. There would be no public announcement of the invitation until later this year. Precise timing of the visit itself would be determined by other Chiefs of State visits now under consideration and by President Suharto's other commitments.

Although Indonesia has been criticized for its human rights policies, in recent years it has made substantial improvements in this area, including (after pressure from the U.S.) release of all but 23 detainees from the 1965 attempted coup and, after 1979, a more enlightened handling of the East Timor problem. I believe human rights concerns with respect to Indonesia are not of such magnitude as to prevent us from inviting President Suharto to visit the U.S. We intend, of course, to continue to press for human rights improvements.

#### *RECOMMENDATION*

That you approve issuing an oral invitation through our Ambassador to President Suharto to visit the U.S. in 1981.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Carter did not approve or disapprove the recommendation.

---

#### **227. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 22, 1980

#### **SUBJECT**

Proposed Invitation to Indonesian President Suharto (U)

The NSC, State, and CIA have become concerned by a potentially serious deterioration in our relations with Indonesia. This down-turn

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, President's Files, Presidential Handwriting File, Box 22, 9/26/80. Confidential. Sent for action. Carter initialed the top of the page.

is still in the pre-crisis stage but without remedial action on our part, could lead to a situation damaging to our interests in Southeast Asia. (C)

As in other cases of this sort, the trend has been brought about incrementally. The resource crunch has forced us to make seemingly small cuts in PL480, IMET, and other Indonesian aid programs. The negative impact of these cuts has been larger than one would normally expect from the dollar amounts involved. Another issue has been our termination of notification to the Indonesians of US naval ship passage through their territory. This last problem, has, we believe, been rectified [*less than 1 line not declassified*]. (C)

Perhaps the most central issue has been President Suharto's growing desire to meet with you. Suharto met with President Nixon in 1970 and President Ford in 1975. Our failure to invite President Suharto during your first term, taken in conjunction with the aid cuts, and ship notification issue, has produced a situation in which we have less access to the Indonesian leadership, and the atmosphere in Jakarta has become noticeably cooler. (C)

State recommends that President Suharto be issued an oral invitation to visit the US at a mutually convenient time during the first half of 1981. (Tab A)<sup>2</sup> Issuance of an invitation now could have a pivotal effect on our relations and is in my view probably the single most effective thing we can do to arrest a significant decline. Indonesia has a fine record in terms of supporting our key policies and is potentially one of the most powerful nations in Asia. Its record in human rights has improved markedly in the last four years. Patt Derian, has commented that one of the things that she is proudest of is the improvement in the human rights of Indonesia. (C)

Attached at Tab B is a summary of Indonesia's recent human rights record, prepared at State.<sup>3</sup> (C)

#### RECOMMENDATION

In view of Indonesia's growing importance as a regional power, and because of its influence in the Moslem world, I recommend that you authorize the Ambassador in Jakarta to issue an oral invitation for Suharto to visit the US in the first half of 1981. Suharto would be asked not to publicize the invitation until a time agreed upon by both countries.<sup>4</sup> (C)

---

<sup>2</sup> Not attached. See Document 226.

<sup>3</sup> Not attached. The undated paper, entitled "Indonesia's Recent Human Rights Record," is in Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Indonesia, Box 28, 1/77-1/81.

<sup>4</sup> Carter checked the approve option and initialed in the adjacent right-hand margin. Suharto did not visit the United States until October 1982.

# Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and ANZUS

## 228. Letter From Australian Prime Minister Fraser to President Carter<sup>1</sup>

Canberra, February 4, 1977

Dear Mr. President,

I have been most interested in the views you have expressed on the question of strengthening restraints on nuclear weapons proliferation. For Australia's part we share the concerns you have expressed and fully support the objective of strengthening the non-proliferation regime. The importance which you have attached to this accords with my own assessment that there is a need for intensified efforts to reinforce the control regimes necessary to prevent peaceful nuclear development from giving rise to the proliferation of nuclear weapons capabilities.

I have noted, in particular, the emphasis you have placed on effective control of that portion of the nuclear fuel cycle concerned with spent nuclear fuel, reprocessing and plutonium. This corresponds with the emphasis of the first report of our own Environmental Inquiry and the Inquiry recently conducted in the United Kingdom. I am aware that there is a good deal of new thinking internationally on adequate control of reprocessing and plutonium management, including studies being conducted by the International Atomic Energy Agency. I shall be most interested in the way your policies evolve in coming months.

Apart from our general commitment to non-proliferation Australia's particular interest—and perhaps our scope in future to exert influence on international developments—relates to our potential as a supplier of uranium. Australia would certainly want nuclear material deriving from any uranium it may supply to be subject to stringent control. You may be aware that the Australian Government does not intend to take final decisions on the issue of future marketing of Australian uranium until it has received the final report of the Environmental Inquiry which is currently being conducted in Australia.

The first report of the Environmental Inquiry, which dealt with the more general issues involved in uranium export and nuclear power, stressed the need to ensure that effective restraints exist against nuclear

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 4, Australia, 1977. Confidential.

weapons proliferation and it stressed also the need for the fullest and most effective safeguards on uranium exported by Australia.

The Australian Government will be giving close consideration to these matters in the near future in the context of formulating a national Australian policy on nuclear safeguards. Naturally we wish to take full account of any new thinking as it develops in this area, especially to ensure that our policies and those of the United States and other like-minded countries, such as Canada, are mutually reinforcing. Australian officials already have held detailed and useful consultations with United States officials and I am sure you would agree that it is highly desirable that this be an ongoing process. I believe this constitutes a particularly fertile and important area for co-operation and for co-ordination of the policies of our two countries.

In view of Canada's well-known interest in this field and its position as an important nuclear supplier, I am sending a copy of this letter to Mr Trudeau.

Yours sincerely,

Malcolm Fraser

---

**229. Letter From President Carter to Australian Prime Minister Fraser<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, March 11, 1977

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

Thank you for your letter of February 4.<sup>2</sup> As you know, I am deeply concerned over the implications of further nuclear weapons proliferation for our common security and well being. International progress in dealing with the non-proliferation problem is one of the key foreign policy goals of this Administration. That is why I was so glad to get your letter of support.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 1, Australia, Prime Minister J. Malcolm Fraser, 3-12/77. No classification marking. In the March 10 covering memorandum from Brzezinski to Carter, Brzezinski wrote, "I am informed that the Australian Government wishes to release this correspondence when your reply is received. Fraser evidently hopes thereby to demonstrate to domestic critics that he is taking steps to assure that Australian uranium exports do not contribute to the problem of nuclear proliferation." (Ibid.)

<sup>2</sup> See Document 228.

As you are aware, we are currently making a comprehensive review of U.S. non-proliferation policies.<sup>3</sup> Among other things, we are actively examining ways to provide guaranteed fuel supplies to countries which are willing to accept constraints consistent with our non-proliferation objectives. This will help to reduce proliferation by giving nations an incentive to place their nuclear facilities under international safeguards and not to acquire sensitive nuclear facilities. As you noted in your letter, Australia's potential as a major supplier of uranium gives you a particular interest in this aspect of the subject. If the U.S., Australia, Canada and other like-minded countries collaborate on policies for the supply of natural uranium, we can play a vital role in reducing the threat of proliferation.

In view of your government's past support of non-proliferation and the importance I attach to holding early consultations between allies whenever possible, I would hope that your government would soon be in a position to arrange exploratory consultations here with appropriate U.S. officials so that we can have the benefit of Australian thinking.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to PRM/NSC-15, which is printed in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XXVI, Arms Control and Nonproliferation, Document 317.

## 230. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, March 11, 1977, 6:15 p.m.

### SUBJECT

Call on the Secretary by the Australian Ambassador

### PARTICIPANTS

#### *US*

The Secretary  
Richard Holbrooke, Assistant  
Secretary, EA  
Christopher A. Squire, EA/ANP  
(Notetaker)

#### *AUSTRALIA*

Alan Renouf, Ambassador

Saying that he regretted taking up the Secretary's time, but that the matter was considered most urgent in Canberra, Ambassador Renouf handed the Secretary a "non-paper"<sup>2</sup> which read verbatim as follows:

"I have come to plead that the Secretary of State should try to resolve the question of the Prime Minister's visit promptly. The matter may seem relatively unimportant but it is certainly not.

"We asked for agreement upon the dates as far back as 22 December 1976. We also asked for the dates 22 and 23 June which were, and which are still, so far ahead that they must be free. We also suggested that the Prime Minister would make himself free to make the visit at an earlier date to suit the President's convenience. Despite constant reminders, even to the President himself, we are still no further advanced.

"In view of this, and in view of the fact that all that is involved is a talk and a function, it is becoming a matter of increasing worry to the Prime Minister that the United States cannot give its agreement.

"The Prime Minister appreciated the offer of a visit within the first week of June. Unfortunately, this is just about the only period he cannot come as he has been committed for some time to be in London during that week as the guest of the Queen, together with all other Commonwealth Prime Ministers.

"Mr. Peacock, it is true, is coming at the end of this month<sup>3</sup> but to the Australian people there is nothing like a visit by the Prime Minister.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Office of the Secretarial Staff, Records of Cyrus Vance, 1977-1980, Lot 84D241, Nodis Memcons, 1977. Confidential; Nodis. Drafted by Christopher A. Squire (EA/ANP) on March 14; approved by William Twaddell (S) on March 25. The meeting took place in the Secretary's office.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 231.

In Canberra's view the Peacock visit is a prelude to the visit by the Prime Minister, not a possible substitute.

"The Prime Minister regards himself, with good reason, as Prime Minister of a country whose relationship to the United States is one of the closest, if not the closest. Australia has under Liberal-Country Parties Governments, such as that Mr. Fraser leads, constantly stuck with the United States through thick and thin. Mr. Fraser is also the Prime Minister of a government which, upon assuming office, immediately set out to repair and repaired the damage done to that relationship by the previous Australian Labor Government.

"Australia has memories of being taken for granted by the United States (in part her own fault). The present Australian Government is keenly aware of this and is determined that it will not happen again. The Government has also some apprehensions that because of the Trilateral concept, Australia may be only on the periphery of United States' interest. The delay in fixing the dates for the Prime Minister's visit is giving rise to worries in these directions in Canberra. It would be as well to set such worries to rest promptly and before they increase further. Resolution of this matter has therefore become a serious and urgent matter."

After having read it, the Secretary said that he would try to have the matter resolved over the weekend.<sup>4</sup>

The second matter, continued Renouf, concerned the Indian Ocean. Prime Minister Fraser was very interested in this subject, and frankly would have liked to know the matter would be raised with the Soviets, (as President Carter had stated explicitly in his news conference) in advance.<sup>5</sup>

The Secretary said he was sorry that prior consultation had not been possible. It was something frankly that the President had decided to raise at the last minute. The President's proposal was along the lines of demilitarization of the Indian Ocean region. If the Soviets were really serious in their United Nations offer on the subject,<sup>6</sup> this would be a means of finding out. The United States would like to hear what the Soviets really were talking about. If the Soviet offer appeared serious,

---

<sup>4</sup> March 12–13.

<sup>5</sup> Reference is to Carter's March 9 news conference. For his statement, see *Public Papers: Carter, 1977*, Book I, p. 348. Documentation on U.S. interest in the demilitarization of the Indian Ocean is in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XVIII, Middle East Region; Arabian Peninsula.

<sup>6</sup> In a February 15 memorandum submitted to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, the Soviet Union expressed willingness to consult on the disarmament of the Indian Ocean. (*Documents on Disarmament, 1977*, pp. 62–63)

the US would thereupon consult with all its affected allies before taking any further steps.

Ambassador Renouf noted that Australia had discussed demilitarizing the Indian Ocean with the Soviets some three years ago. The Soviets had said clearly that any demilitarization agreement must cover all installations in the Indian Ocean including the US defense-related installations in Australia.

The Secretary said that so far we just do not know what Soviet intentions were. The Soviets so often have taken the propaganda initiative away from the West in the past. This time we will show them we were open-minded, and call their bluff if it be bluff, or make them lay out their proposal in detail if they have a serious proposal. At least the propaganda initiative will not lay with the Soviets. We will not be dealing purely on the defensive. The President is positive on many of these types of initiatives, and is deeply serious on the disarmament question in general.

The Secretary in conclusion reiterated his earlier statement that he would try to get a resolution of the Fraser visit dates over the weekend.

---

### 231. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, March 25, 1977, 11:30 a.m.–1:45 p.m.

#### SUBJECT

Meeting and Lunch with Australian Foreign Minister Peacock

#### PARTICIPANTS

##### *US*

The Secretary  
Richard Holbrooke, Assistant  
Secretary, EA  
Christopher A. Squire, EA/ANP  
(Notetaker)

##### PLUS (AT LUNCH)

Charles W. Duncan, Deputy  
Secretary of Defense

##### *AUSTRALIA*

Foreign Minister Andrew Peacock  
Ambassador Alan Renouf  
First Assistant Secretary Rawdon  
Dalrymple  
Minister Philip Flood

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Records of Cyrus Vance, 1977–1980, Lot 84D241, Exdis 1977 Memoranda of Conversation for Secretary Vance. Secret; Sensitive; Limdis. Drafted by Squire (EA/ANP) on March 28. The meeting took place in the Secretary's office.



Philip C. Habib, Under Secretary  
of State for Political Affairs  
Admiral Stansfield Turner,  
Director, Central Intelligence  
Agency  
Robert Oakley, Deputy Assistant  
Secretary, EA  
Michael Armacost, National  
Security Council  
(Deputy Secretary of State Warren  
Christopher joined for a short  
time)

The Secretary said he had read reports of Minister Peacock's press conference of March 24, and very much appreciated how the Minister had downplayed the contretemps over the Indian Ocean. He noted that in Alan Renouf Australia had a first-rate Ambassador in Washington. Peacock said that Renouf had been his own personal choice. The Secretary added that in Philip Alston he knew that Australia would have a first-rate American Ambassador as well. Peacock answered that he had telephoned Alston last evening and spoken with him at some length. Peacock had been impressed not only in speaking to Alston but also by what he had heard about him as well. Mr. Alston had said that he hoped to reach Australia late in April. The Secretary said that we expected to be able to request agreement of the Australian Government around the first of next week. Peacock said he would personally hand the request to the Governor General, and expected to get a favorable answer within two days or so.

Mr. Alston, said the Secretary, was one of the four or five people in the country closest to President Carter. Apart from Charles Kirbo and perhaps one other person, the President was most comfortable with Philip Alston.

He would like to start with the hard question right away, said Minister Peacock. How did the Secretary see Australia in his thinking?

The Secretary answered that he had a twofold response to that question. In the Pacific, the US needed Australia's help and advice across the whole spectrum. But the US would like to see that help and advice reach far beyond the Pacific. Australia could and should participate in global problems, particularly the economic problems which today seem the most severe.

There is a limit to what Australia could do on the global economic side, answered Minister Peacock.

(At this point Deputy Secretary Warren Christopher joined the meeting).

Minister Peacock noted that he had taken the liberty of saying to Dick Holbrooke, who had asked if Australia would feel too bad if the

Secretary of State could not go himself to the ANZUS Council meeting, that Australia would certainly hope for Deputy Secretary Christopher instead.<sup>2</sup> While he could not answer for New Zealand which might be terribly upset, added Peacock, Australia certainly would not be upset. Australia would welcome Mr. Christopher, with whom he was doubly glad to meet right now. Again, Mr. Peacock added, he was very grateful for the fact that the Secretary had fixed it up for Prime Minister Fraser to meet with President Carter in June.<sup>3</sup>

To return to the North/South issue, continued Peacock, he would like to do more. Discussions were underway within the Australian Government. Australia should concentrate on the particular problems of her geographic region. This was Peacock's view, not necessarily that of his Government; she should take steps to act in Southeast Asia. Australia could make a contribution in many areas, but that could best be done in Australia's own geographic area. The countries of Southeast Asia see any steps which Australia might take as undoubtedly helping them in their dealings with Japan.

On the whole concept of trilateralism, continued Peacock, Australia has been somewhat troubled. Australia understood the European conglomerate leg, and the North American leg. But for the third leg, the US seemed to stop with Japan. In Australia's view this could be myopic, as to the real role Japan could play in the near future in Southeast Asia. Australia's relations with Japan were of singular importance. Australia recently signed a basic trade treaty with Japan, which was a first for both countries. The Australian Prime Minister had visited Japan. Australia and Japan had agreed to cultural exchanges, the Australian beef quota had been increased, and Australia had provided port access to Japanese fishing vessels which was a point of great importance to Japan. All in all, Japanese-Australian relations were very sound. Australia was, in short, an influence in her geographic area; she believed she could get things done in that area. But in Southeast Asia Australia realized that there was somewhat the same suspicion of Japan as there was of Australia.

What do you think we should do with regard to ASEAN, asked the Secretary.

ASEAN feels very uncertain of the United States, said Peacock. If Australia at times is uncertain, one can imagine how ASEAN nations feel. Peacock said he was to visit the Philippines, Thailand and Malaysia in two weeks time. It was terribly important that Australia and the US

---

<sup>2</sup> The ANZUS Council met in Wellington July 27-28. Christopher's report to Vance is in telegram 3151 from Wellington, July 28. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770270-0240)

<sup>3</sup> The meeting took place on June 22. See Documents 237 and 238.

keep in close contact with these countries. He would repeat what he told them last year, added Peacock. It was totally explicable that the US would not publicly discuss the area until after the 1976 elections. Peacock would tell them not to rely on the absence of US rhetoric about the area as the sole reason to worry (although he noted that there had been a reference to the area in the President's UN speech).<sup>4</sup> If the US was serious about sending an official out to hold talks, that would be a great reassurance for them.

The Secretary replied that the US would probably send Dick Cooper, as he had been talking with Deputy Secretary Christopher on North/South dialogues.

Peacock asked if the Secretary would be going to CIEC.<sup>5</sup> The Secretary replied that he would be spending most of the month abroad, at the NATO meeting, the economic summit, then at Geneva, meeting Assad with the President, Tehran.<sup>6</sup> After returning for his son's college graduation May 19 he would go back again to CIEC and the OECD.<sup>7</sup>

Peacock noted that he himself would be going to CIEC. This would be a first for an Australian Foreign Minister. In the past the Treasurer had always attended, but this time the Prime Minister had weighed in on Peacock's behalf.

What did the Minister think about Korea, asked the Secretary. Peacock noted that he had had a fairly thorough discussion on the subject with Phil Habib. Japan tended to cling to her hopes for rather long periods, yet it appeared that the US had finally just about convinced Japan before the Vice President's trip there.<sup>8</sup> Japan's next concern was that the withdrawal from Korea not be precipitous. It could be assumed that Japan was prepared to accept the removal of US ground forces from Korea now provided there was proper monitoring of North Korean intentions and deployments. Australia had assumed that at some stage withdrawal from South Korea would occur. There was always a danger when one was asked to give "a" view; it was the cumulative effect that really mattered, Peacock continued. Aid to Viet-Nam, withdrawal from South Korea, the bogging down of Philippine base negotiations, the redeployment of naval vessels to Europe and

---

<sup>4</sup> For the text of Carter's UN speech, delivered on March 17, see *Public Papers: Carter, 1977*, Book I, pp. 444–451.

<sup>5</sup> The CIEC met in Paris May 28–June 2.

<sup>6</sup> References are to the NATO Ministerial meeting May 10–11, the G-7 Economic Summit May 7–8, the meeting between Assad and Carter in Geneva May 9, and the CENTO Ministerial meeting in Tehran May 12–15.

<sup>7</sup> The OECD Ministerial meeting in Paris June 22–24.

<sup>8</sup> January 30–February 1.

the Mediterranean—taken all together these were causes for real apprehension.

What do you think about the Philippine base negotiations, asked the Secretary.

We hope that you make progress and are successful at a not too inflated price, said Peacock. It appeared, in fact Romulo had told the Minister late last year, that everything was going OK. But apparently Romulo was not keeping Marcos fully informed, and the agreement he thought he had reached with Secretary Kissinger proved to be only *ad referendum*, and unacceptable to Marcos.

What were US intentions with respect to China, asked Minister Peacock.

The US had merely said so far that its policies would be guided by the principles of the Shanghai Communiqué.<sup>9</sup> This has helped indicate to the PRC the continuity of US policy. The US had just started some negotiations on claims and assets. The Secretary said he planned to travel to Peking in late summer or early fall.<sup>10</sup> Dick Holbrooke and his group were putting together a strategic analysis. A major endeavor was to decide how the US should move along the road to normalcy. The security of Taiwan remained a major US domestic issue.

Australia had found that having a tangible presence in Peking was helpful, said Peacock, and more useful than talking from time to time with the Chinese Ambassador in Canberra. The Secretary said he had recently talked with the PRC Ambassador for an hour or so, and had explained to him what America's main purpose was in his visiting Moscow. The Secretary had also undertaken to brief Huang upon return from Moscow.<sup>11</sup>

Mr. Holbrooke suggested that if Minister Peacock had good contacts with the PRC Ambassador in Canberra, it would be helpful if Peacock would talk to him from time to time and reassure him of US intentions. It would only be natural if the PRC had apprehensions concerning US contacts with Viet-Nam, the Soviet Union, etc. Minister Peacock noted that former Australian Ambassador to Peking, Gary Woodard, was also good value.

The Secretary said that the US was now in the process of deciding on its new representative to Peking, and would have made its decision within the next couple of weeks. This would be an important signal to

---

<sup>9</sup> For the text of the Shanghai Communiqué, which laid the groundwork for normalization of U.S.-Chinese relations, see *Public Papers: Nixon, 1972*, pp. 376–379.

<sup>10</sup> August 20–26. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XIII, China, Documents 47–52.

<sup>11</sup> Vance was in Moscow March 27–30. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Documents 17–22.

the Chinese. The large majority of Americans, continued the Secretary, wanted to see normalization of our relations with the PRC. But at the same time they felt very deeply that the security of Taiwan must not be jeopardized.

Peacock said he would like to turn briefly to the Indian Ocean. He noted the President's second (UN) speech put the US and Australian views on the Indian Ocean in close harmony. It was of course obvious that Berbera was not just a Somali air base.

The Secretary said he was sorry that the President's first reference to the Indian Ocean had come out without anyone discussing it with Australia. President Carter felt that the USSR for a long time had been making a lot of propaganda points with nothing to back them up. He felt it was time to call their bluff, so he had taken that occasion, that is, the Indian Ocean occasion. The US would raise the issue in Moscow. If the Russians were really serious about their Indian Ocean statements the US would talk with them, but only in preliminary terms. The US expected, frankly, that they would say "get rid of Diego Garcia, since after all the USSR has no bases in the Indian Ocean area." If they are really serious, however, the US would consult fully with Australia and with all other littoral countries directly involved. Again, said the Secretary, he regretted the way that Australia was caught up by the Indian Ocean issue.

Unfortunately, said Minister Peacock, it came after Australia's particularly strong support for the US on Diego Garcia. The present Australian Government had, as a result, taken a serious pasting on this issue. This pasting had occurred not only editorially in the press, but also in Parliament.

The Secretary asked which in Australia's view were the main areas in which consultation between us should take place at a very early stage. Peacock said that NATO, and the European region in general, should be considered major arenas. He noted that he was also concerned about Africa. The Secretary replied that it would be a good idea to talk about Africa during lunch.

Peacock noted that Africa had an important domestic aspect for Australia. There were strong feelings about absorbing "20,000 fascists" from Rhodesia into Australia, should the need arise. But Peacock added he was more concerned about the total impact. It meant control and influence in Africa by the USSR. Australia had taken a strong stand on racial issues, as strong or perhaps stronger than any other nation within the Commonwealth. He feared, added Peacock, that the impact of the Southern Africa question could burst the Commonwealth wide open, which he personally thought would be a pity since the Commonwealth had unused potential for good. Turning back to the Pacific area, he said he could not get it clear in his mind exactly the sort of role

that US military and non-military aid programs would be expected to play in the region. It appeared to him that there would be real problems with the US Congress in this regard.

The Secretary confirmed that there would be real problems over Indonesia and the human rights issue. That was true also with Thailand.

Minister Peacock noted that they had covered together the cumulative effects on security in Southeast Asia. He could not see a great role there for US defense, in the military sense. Thailand was very weak; Malaysia had a longterm problem in its communal attitudes; and Australia really had no adequate reading on Cambodia. Australia could not see very far beyond the Suharto election in Indonesia, although they expected that Suharto would be returned. But what would happen there when Suharto finally went was uncertain.

Mr. Holbrooke asked the Minister for his views on the Mindanao rebellion in the Philippines. The Minister replied that here again he could not get an accurate reading. His own understanding, continued Holbrooke, was that the whole Philippines base negotiations were being deferred by Marcos until settlement of the South Philippines problem. That fact was healthy, he thought. The Philippine base agreement in any case did not expire until 1991. While we were not telling the Philippines that we were in no hurry, we were content to adhere to their deferred timetable.

Minister Peacock noted that the US seemed to be reconsidering the redeployment of its military forces. Australia would naturally be concerned with any shift, say, to the NATO area of the Pacific forces. Mr. Holbrooke hoped that the Minister was not saying that any shift at all would be destabilizing. That was not what he meant, answered Peacock, but it was the coupling effect he feared.

The Secretary noted that what changes, how and when they were made in force deployments were all terribly important.

Peacock said he apologized for raising the question of US aid to the South Pacific, which he realized was primarily an Australian-New Zealand area of responsibility, but he felt he could not leave Washington without alerting the US to the importance of being seen to take some action in this area. It was not a question of the US providing vast amounts of aid; he realized we had in mind an amount of \$2-3 million, although he would have preferred a somewhat larger sum. Australia had earmarked \$60 million over the next three years, in addition to other Australian aid to Papua New Guinea and Indonesia. There was certainly an element of blackmail when the small island states used Russian aid offers to procure US aid. But Australia felt the situation should in any case be watched very closely. The Prime Minister of Western Samoa, Efi, was no radical, but he was developing a Samoan entity. After he had invited the Chinese into Samoa, they rushed in in

large numbers to set up their diplomatic mission. Efi had now learned that a receiving state could set the size of another country's diplomatic mission. When the USSR got around to setting up a diplomatic mission in Apia, Efi had undertaken to slip Australia the names for whom the USSR wanted visa clearances. In turn Australia would pass the names sub rosa to the US for a security check. He felt, said Peacock, that if the Soviets got firmly established in the small Pacific island states the consequences within a decade could be serious.

The Secretary asked if Australia followed Micronesian events closely. Peacock answered that there was not really much interest among the public at large, but the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs followed the subject closely.

The Secretary noted that the US was now trying to get a firm handle on the situation which had gone on too aimlessly for too many years. Responsibility for Micronesian negotiations had been fragmented between the Navy, Interior and State. In the future the US would be following an integrated approach. It had been a very difficult period for the Micronesians; the primary negotiating focus would now, however, be in State.

Was the Palau superport issue of any major interest in Australia, Mr. Holbrooke asked. It was not, answered Peacock.

The Secretary noted that North Korea had recently made overtures about having talks with the US. We had made it very clear that we would not talk with them unless South Korea was also present. There had been some confusion in Japanese news stories over this subject, but the US hoped that it was straightened out now. Did Australia have relations with North Korea?

Formally, said Peacock, Australia had diplomatic relations, but had no mission now in Pyongyang, nor a North Korean mission in Canberra. The North Koreans had very recently put out a few feelers to re-establish mutual presences. A North Korean party wanted to visit Australia. The Minister himself would not receive this party, and it would be handled through a "friendship association." Mr. Holbrooke asked Peacock about the Pine Gap agreement.<sup>12</sup> Peacock said that had been covered in discussions with the Vice President. Presently Pine Gap was being operated on a twelve months denunciation clause, and he knew the US was reassessing its position. The Secretary noted that our judgment was to leave the agreement the way it stands. Mr. Holbrooke asked if the opposition party would make trouble over the

---

<sup>12</sup> Pine Gap was a joint U.S.-Australian defense space research facility. The agreement was signed on December 9, 1966, and extended on October 17, 1977. (29 UST 2759; TIAS 8969)



issue. Peacock thought not. While some in the opposition did not really understand the matter, those in the know had not caused any difficulties and had not divulged information about the installation.

(At this point the meeting was ended in the Secretary's office, and the participants, with additional persons, moved in to a working lunch).

The Secretary said it would be useful to talk about Zaire. Zaire was a rich state in its own right particularly in its potential. But the present situation in Zaire was somewhat cloudy. The US did not have its own information sources in Zaire, and had to rely on local sources. A lot of the information the US had received had proved to be wrong. It was very clear that former Katanga gendarmes were in the country and were supported logistically out of Angola. Whether Cubans were involved directly in the fighting or only in training and support roles was unknown. What was certain was that Zaire's troops were terrible fighters. The situation was very unstable. The US was supplying Zaire with non-lethal assistance. The Nigerians were playing a very helpful role.

Admiral Turner said he had little to add. Neto might possibly back off if guerrilla actions mounted from Zaire against Angola were curtailed.

The Secretary said that the US had talked to the Soviets through their Ambassador in Washington. We told Dobrynin that the Soviets would be expected to exercise restraint. If they did not, it was bound to affect bilateral US-Soviet relations. The Secretary added that he would raise the issue again during his Moscow trip.

Ambassador Renouf noted that Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda seemed to be worried about the Zaire situation, and particularly the fact that the radical belt was increasing in size in Africa. He asked if the Chinese were being slow to respond to African events.

The Secretary confirmed that the PRC was in fact only wringing its hands, and doing very little else. Mr. Habib noted that the Chinese could provide arms if they wished, and they had a capacity to do small things in East Africa.

Minister Peacock asked the Secretary for his thoughts on law of the sea (LOS) matters. The Secretary noted that he had talked with Eliot Richardson just before the latter's departure on a Far East trip. The Secretary realized that Richardson would not be visiting Australia this time, and asked if Peacock had any thoughts on LOS.

Peacock said that much depended on the US and the political will that the US could generate. He had been advised that Richardson was not as pessimistic as those in the previous administration seized with LOS matters. Richardson did not feel that the issues must be settled "by May or else". Australia's expert Lauterpach would stay in close



contact with Richardson, and was totally up to date on all aspects of LOS.

Minister Peacock asked how the Secretary expected the CIEC meeting in Paris to go. The Secretary replied that we must come up with concrete proposals enough not to end up in a bloody confrontation between the LDC's and DC's. The US had been working with the EEC on suggestions, also in preparation for the economic summit. The Secretary hoped by the middle of April to have concrete proposals which were both practical and from a political standpoint acceptable to the LDC's.

The Secretary said that within the next two weeks President Carter would announce that the US unilaterally would forego any reprocessing capacity in the US. This came as a result of a study under way since January. It should have major repercussions when the announcement was made. The President had finally decided to take this step only last night.<sup>13</sup>

Peacock asked if he could inform Prime Minister Fraser in strictest secrecy. The Secretary said he could inform Fraser, and noted that Australia was the first country to be informed of this step. Peacock expressed his thanks for that fact and for the information.

---

<sup>13</sup> For Carter's April 7 nuclear power policy statement, see *Public Papers: Carter, 1977*, Book I, p. 581–588.

---

## **232. Telegram From the Embassy in New Zealand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Wellington, March 31, 1977, 0608Z

1186. Department please pass to Secretary. For Secretary Vance from Ambassador Selden. Subject: Plea For an Early Visit to Washington by Prime Minister Robert David Muldoon. Ref: Wellington 0925.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, VIP Visit File, Box 11, New Zealand, Prime Minister Muldoon, 11/8–10/77: Cables and Memos. Confidential; Priority.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 925 from Wellington, March 15, reported that Muldoon hoped for a June meeting with Carter. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770087–1207)

1. Please permit me to bring to your personal attention my serious concern on learning today that Prime Minister Fraser of Australia is to see President Carter in June while Prime Minister Muldoon will not be scheduled until an indefinite time in the second half of this year. While I cannot give you the Prime Minister's reaction since he is presently in London, those closest to him in New Zealand are dismayed and frustrated at the lack of progress in arranging for the Prime Minister's Washington visit.

2. New Zealand press this evening are front-paging this frustration with additional comments out of Washington (likely New Zealand Embassy) that New Zealand getting the "run around" from White House staffers and discriminatory treatment over planned June visits for Australian PM Fraser but not for Muldoon. Press report quotes GNZ official in Washington as saying: Quote New Zealand and Australia have always been given equal treatment on things like this in the past but now the White House can't even come up with proposed dates for Mr. Muldoon's visit that we can talk about. Unquote.

3. One of the factors at work, as you are aware, Mr. Secretary, is the love/hate relationship existing between Canberra and Wellington with New Zealand as the smaller country feeling sometimes perhaps overly sensitive to the appearance of being subsumed in a larger Australian identity. This defensive New Zealand sensitivity about Australia has now been aggravated by the realization that Australia has stepped to the head of the line when Muldoon thought New Zealand would come before, or at least at the same time as Australia. When Fraser was seeing President Ford last year,<sup>3</sup> Muldoon agreed to wait and see the President in the early spring of 1977. When this was ruled out several weeks ago he was given the impression by his Embassy in Washington that both he and Fraser would see President Carter in June and he so announced in the press. Consequently, public understanding of what has happened will cause Muldoon's humiliation to be great. His supporters are already downcast, while his opponents, some of whom are quote ill-disposed towards the United States, will surely be gleeful. The public gibes against Muldoon, whose political image and, indeed, whose deepest inner convictions, are built on stalwart friendship with the United States, are certain to be nasty.

4. Against the background of the Prime Minister's open public admiration for the United States; and his actions since taking office in November 1975 to strengthen and refurbish New Zealand-American relations, this lack of progress at arranging for his visit is difficult for

---

<sup>3</sup> They met on July 27, 1976. See *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, vol. E-2, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973–1976, Document 62.

New Zealanders to understand. First and foremost was Muldoon's lead in the resumption of visits to New Zealand by American nuclear powered warships (NPWS), which had been barred since 1964. As you know, Mr. Secretary, two NPWS, the USS Truxtun and the USS Long Beach, did visit New Zealand in 1976, as Muldoon had assured and in spite of considerable public outcry. The result has been an undoubted strengthening of our ANZUS alliance with New Zealand and Australia. It should be kept in mind that it was Muldoon, not Fraser, who took the initiative in lifting this long-time ban on NPWS.

5. Moreover, it was Muldoon who took the lead in disavowing, along with Australia and the neighboring Pacific Island nations, the South Pacific nuclear weapons free zone which had been sponsored in the United Nations by the former NZ Labour government. However elusive in concept, the SPNWFZ bore adversely on navigation of the high seas and on the ANZUS alliance itself. Muldoon personally engineered the disavowal of these objectionable features of the SPNWFZ by all the concerned nations in this part of the South Pacific. [*less than 1 line not declassified*]

6. Further, the Prime Minister has taken the lead in seeking to check Soviet ambitions in the South Pacific island nations by concentrating the bulk of New Zealand's external aid to these nations, and by encouraging the United States and other friendly countries to help the newly independent nations towards the development needed to meet the aspirations of their peoples.

7. Mr. Secretary, the present New Zealand Government under Prime Minister Muldoon is as close to the United States as any country can be. The Prime Minister is an ardent admirer of ours and a courageous and skillful advocate of closer New Zealand-American relations. He is bound to feel desolate by being put off in this fashion. Certainly he will feel still further aggrieved at the fact that Fraser will have seen the American President twice in the past year while he is still waiting. In a conversation last year he told me he would not impose upon the President in the election year but would await an invitation in early 1977. This has remained his steadfast hope and plan for the past nine months.

8. Mr. Secretary, I respectfully urge that you do everything you can to arrange for Muldoon to see President Carter. If it could be arranged for Mr. Muldoon to meet with the President for a couple of hours on his way home from the Commonwealth meeting in London with a fuller, official visit to follow later in the year, I would speculate this would be much more preferable than no visit at all. While I do not know what Muldoon's reaction to such a proposal would be if it could be arranged, I would think it would do no harm (and perhaps much good) to explore it with the N.Z. Embassy in Washington. Two hours of the President's time would likely be sufficient for a discussion

of the substance of U.S.-N.Z. relations and certainly enough to preserve Prime Minister Muldoon's prestige in his own country.

Selden

---

**233. Telegram From the Embassy in New Zealand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Wellington, April 20, 1977, 0429Z

1442. Subject: Prime Minister Muldoon Delivers Speech About President Carter's Foreign Policy.

1. Following is verbatim text of speech delivered by Prime Minister Muldoon, April 19, before Auckland Division of the New Zealand Institute of Management.

"In Sydney a few weeks ago at the commencement of a journey which took me to seven different countries in three weeks, I made a comment which was widely publicized back home in New Zealand. I said that President Carter was the most powerful man in the world. He was also a peanut farmer from Georgia. Various political writers, opposition politicians, and even some of those most omniscient of journalists who have graduated to leader writer, have purported to see something derogatory in the plain statement of fact. Let me put it another way—it is a mighty long jump from the little town of Plains, Georgia, where brother Billy is a beer drinking petrol station attendant, and sister is a peripatetic evangelist to the White House in Washington, D.C., even if the journey was made by way of the Governor's mansion of the State of Georgia. Being Governor of a State of the United States is to hold an important public office, just how important depending on the size and nature of the particular State and the condition of its political system. If asked to name a few State Governors, most New Zealanders would perhaps come up with the name of Nelson Rockefeller, long time Governor of New York State. Maybe some would remember Ronald Reagan, Governor of the State of California, and about there most New Zealanders would stop. State Governors in other words are not normally international figures. Several years ago I wrote that

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 56, New Zealand. Unclassified; Immediate. Sent for information to Auckland, Bonn, Canberra, London, Moscow, Suva for Selden, and Tokyo.

‘unless America throws up a number of men of courage and genius in the next twenty-five years, I believe that the classical symptoms of the decline of a civilization will turn into a reality’.

I wrote this as a considered judgment in spite of my warm regard for the American people individually, and as a race, and in spite of my belief that the close friendship between our two countries, which has now existed for more than a quarter of a century since World War II, must be fostered and maintained because New Zealand’s future is inseparable for as far ahead as we can see from that of the United States.

Is President Carter one such man? It is much too early to say but at least one can say at present that he has some of the attributes. He has a basic personal Christian morality, as indeed had Gerald Ford. In spite of the intense spotlight of public and private investigation, which inevitably accompanied his Presidential campaign, no hint of political scandal has attached itself to him. He has shown a willingness to speak out on moral issues. He is a highly successful businessman, and his earlier Navy career was apparently a brilliant one. He became the political protege of a very interesting group of people of whom I shall have more to say later, but is he a man of genius who cannot only lead the most powerful nation on earth, but also the entire Free World? That is the question which is exercising the minds of the leaders of every country that I visited in the last month, and I mean every country without exception. What is clear, of course, is that his Presidential style is different. How much of that difference is due to a carefully thought out pattern, devised for domestic consumption, to meet the extraordinary circumstances of his election, and how much is due to political inexperience—that long step from Plains, Georgia to the White House—time may tell us. It is certainly not clear yet. The international impact, however, has been profound. There is uneasiness in the capitals of the world.

I was in Washington, D.C., on the night Vice President Spiro Agnew resigned,<sup>2</sup> and as I sat watching his television performance in the lounge of the New Zealand Embassy, with a group of distinguished American dinner guests, I was almost moved to tears. The performance was flawless, but it was then that I realized that the day of the old professional in American politics was over, and President Nixon’s subsequent downfall merely underlined the fact. The American people have found their Presidents to have feet of clay and public realization of this fact has accompanied a move by Congress to take back the balance of power which formerly, and up until the time of President Franklin Roosevelt, they had, so that we are unlikely in the near future to see the domination

---

<sup>2</sup> October 10, 1973.

of Congress by the administration which was so apparent during that period of about thirty years from the 1930's.

How does Jimmy Carter fit into this situation? He has no personal congressional base. As distinct from Gerald Ford, who was in fact a product of Congress. The American congressional club is similar to the political club in any kind of a democracy, and frequently political opponents who are, or have been, Members of Parliament can call for and obtain favors which would be denied to outsiders. There is nowhere where this system is stronger than in the United States where the whole congressional system is based to a very considerable extent, on favors given, received, and traded. President Carter then has to establish a congressional base or he will find that the growing assertiveness of Congress negates his policies before they get off the ground. An immediate example is his abandonment of the fifty dollar per taxpayer rebate which last week foundered on the rock of congressional opposition privately rather than publicly expressed.

In assessing President Carter's public statements we should recall that although in the early stages of his campaign he was set to win by a landslide, when the day came he just barely kept his nose in front. An analysis of his support showed that he had overwhelming support from the Negroes, the ethnic minorities, the labour unions, and to a lesser extent the eastern part of the United States generally. Backed against this, and finally almost matching it, Gerald Ford had the support of the White Anglo-Saxon American, and the overwhelming support of the western part of the United States.

More than in most recent Presidential elections, President Carter faced a divided country where a great deal of his opposition rested with the more affluent sector of the population and the decision-making sector of the population. Allied to the congressional situation then it would be little wonder if he devoted himself to a very considerable extent this year to widening the base of his popular support inside the United States. This, I believe, he is trying to do and on present indications I would think that he is having some success. One factor which impinges on this situation is the group that I referred to earlier who made him their protege, and that is the Tri-Lateral Commission. The Tri-Lateral Commission was the brain child of David Rockefeller, long time Chairman of the Chase Manhattan Bank, a brilliant and dedicated internationalist, and, I believe, an honorable man. Being concerned about the deteriorating relationship between the United States, Europe and Japan, he brought together a group of people, principally from the eastern elite, and funded Zbigniew Brzezinski to organize the Commission. A rough equivalent is PBEC, the Pacific Basin Economic Commission, which holds its annual meeting this year in Christchurch next month. PBEC has members from the states bordering the Pacific Basin.

The Tri-Lateral Commission has a somewhat similar membership from Japan, the United States and Western Europe. Jimmy Carter became a founding member of the Commission and has admitted that his education in foreign policy came from his membership in the Commission. Vice President Mondale is a member, and ten other leading Tri-Lateral Commission members have top administration posts, including Brzezinski, Cyrus Vance, his Deputy Secretary, Warren Christopher, Under-Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, Richard Cooper, Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Richard Holbrooke, Secretary to the Treasury Blumenthal, and various others.

'Tri-lateralism', as it is coming to be called, has inevitably produced fears that President Carter's foreign policy may be exclusively directed East and West to the industrial nations of the Northern Hemisphere, and may be inadequate to encompass a global strategy, and particularly the affairs of Africa, South-East Asia and the South Pacific. This is a question which cannot yet, I believe, be answered with accuracy. In the American scene it may in total be a good thing in that a dedicated and charismatic individual, with strong moral principles, has been promoted to office by a wide ranging group of business and financial leaders, with roots in America's most powerful economic partners, Japan and Western Europe. In New Zealand, it is fair to say, there would be some disquiet if the membership of PBEC not only promoted the Prime Minister for office, but provided the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Finance, and the permanent head of the Prime Minister's Department. It may be that this is the reason why the first comment on the new Carter policies that I was able to get from an old friend who is a senior member of a Wall Street firm of high repute was favorable and confident—a view that was supported by other American bankers that I have met subsequently. Japanese members of the Commission, however might not be quite so sympathetic. When pressed by Prime Minister Fukuda to use the term 'reducing' rather than 'withdrawing' in respect of the proposed run down of forces in Korea, and indeed 'reducing' was the correct term, President Carter adamantly refused. This suggests that he was looking to American public opinion rather than Japanese opinion, or indeed international consequences. Similarly, his two-bite comment on neutralizing the Indian Ocean, a large bite followed shortly by a step back to a smaller bite, may well have increased his popularity domestically, but it spread considerable alarm in those countries with a direct interest in the situation in the Indian Ocean. His 'moral foreign policy' pronouncement has doubtless assisted him in the United States, but again it has caused consternation and confusion in international diplomatic circles.

It is very clear that taken literally it is impossible, and indeed the President has already indicated that, for example, South Korea is a



special case, and that although the regime is oppressive its position is so important that American support must continue. His actions in respect of dissidence in the Soviet Union would have helped him considerably in the United States. They inevitably produced the rebuff that Cyrus Vance met in Moscow. It may be that the President had thought this thing through, knew that the rebuff was going to come, and accepted it as part of a longer term strategy, knowing that it would certainly not be the end of negotiations. That would indicate a political deviousness which has not yet been established as part of the Carter armory. The alternative that he did not expect the rebuff would indicate some degree of naivety.

The German Federal Republic can by no means feel as comfortable today as they have when dealing with previous American Presidents. The Western world is still asking Germany and Japan to diminish their rate of economic progress, and to increase their rate of inflation, in order to help remedy the ills of the rest of the Western world. Many Germans ask plaintively what good it does to weaken a strong economy in an abortive attempt to strengthen impossibly weak ones, and I must admit I have some sympathy for that point of view, particularly as Germany sits with the cold draught of Eastern Europe playing on the back of its neck from just across a common border.

I have no high hopes of the forthcoming economic summit. But I do know that unless the major industrialized nations can work together, and then work in concert with the OPEC countries, there is no chance of the world economy coming back into an acceptable situation, but instead we will continue to see the rich getting richer, the poor getting poorer, and the Soviet Union and its satellites benefitting from the inevitable explosions that will be produced. President Carter holds the key to a settlement in the Middle East. The State of Israel cannot do without American support. The Arab world has considerably modified its demands in the light of the growing weakness of Egypt and the constant wasting of treasure in a futile struggle. Unfortunately there again the President has apparently made a mis-step, but certainly not one that need have any long-term adverse affect. It is only when one assumes high office that one realizes the intense pressure of time in decision making and the fallibility of so-called expert advice. When that advice is coming from people who are new in government, however successful they may have been in their own fields, it is superseding the advice of the professional advisers, but then it would be quite remarkable if every decision that was taken was a correct and successful one.

President Carter will be in office for a least four years. Most of the heads of government that I have met in recent weeks would, I think, like to see him take a little time to settle down and get the feel of the



international scene from his new position in the White House, before moving too far or too fast. It appears clear, however, that the American domestic political situation makes it necessary for him to establish himself in the eyes of his own people. The dilemma is obvious.

I have spoken frankly to you about a situation which is of vital importance to the future of this country.

There may be some who would say that I have been too frank. Last year I was equally frank regarding our relationships with the Soviet Union, and I believe that a frank appraisal of these vital situations is what a country expects of its Prime Minister. Certainly, it is what this country is going to get so long as I am Prime Minister.

To sum up then, there is widespread concern among the friends of the United States as to the policies of the new administration. There is no reason that this time, however, to believe that as the new administration settles down those policies will not evolve in a manner that is helpful to the continuing task of the preservation of the Free World.”

2. Embassy’s comments will follow septel.<sup>3</sup>

**Killgore**

---

<sup>3</sup> Telegram 1458 from Wellington, April 21, provided the Embassy’s comments on Muldoon’s speech. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770252–0886 and D770138–0419)

---

## **234. Note From President Carter to Secretary of State Vance<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 14, 1977

To Cy Vance

Please delay the visit to U.S. of Prime Minister of New Zealand.

**J.C.**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Armacost Chron File, Box 3, 6/11–27/77. No classification marking. Carter handwrote the note.

**235. Memorandum From Michael Armacost of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 16, 1977

SUBJECT

Postponement of Muldoon's Visit

I have been discussing the President's request to Cy Vance<sup>2</sup> to delay Muldoon's visit with Dick Holbrooke and Bob Oakley. We all agree that Muldoon's injudicious remarks constitute a gross impropriety.<sup>3</sup> No one is disposed to reclama the President's decision. However, State would like to proceed in the following way: have Cy Vance convey to Muldoon during his bilateral at the OECD meeting<sup>4</sup> the President's displeasure with his repeated public remarks about him, and inform Muldoon that for the moment the visit is not on; indicate that we will make no public announcement of this at this juncture; suggest that when Warren Christopher is down there for the ANZUS meeting, he and Muldoon can discuss this matter further.

This would communicate clearly our displeasure, place the trip in limbo, and put the monkey on Muldoon's back to issue a private apology or public statement to make amends. It would not foreclose entirely the possibility of holding the visit on schedule, but would make clear to Muldoon that any prospect of a visit will require something of him before Christopher gets there. We could then decide in the light of any gestures Muldoon makes over the next six weeks whether to instruct Christopher to talk about later dates or proceed with the visit as originally planned.

I find this procedure attractive and recommend that we proceed in this fashion.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Armacost Chron File, Box 3, 6/11-27/77. Confidential. Sent for action. Dodson and Inderfurth initialed the top right-hand corner of the page.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 234. An unknown hand underlined the word "request."

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 233 and 236.

<sup>4</sup> An unknown hand wrote "this week" in the left-hand margin and drew a line to this spot in the text. The OECD Ministerial meeting was held June 22-24 in Paris.

<sup>5</sup> Brzezinski checked the approve option and wrote in the margin, "if Cy can be direct enough. Otherwise M[uldoon] might think the trip is still on." Aaron also wrote in the margin, "I agree," and signed his initials.

**236. Paper Prepared for Secretary of State Vance<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, undated

*Excerpts from Remarks by Prime Minister Muldoon*

*March 16 on arriving at Sydney Airport*

"Well, I haven't yet got to grips with Mr. Carter and I don't think that Mr. Fraser has either. We both want to go over and meet him. I mean he is the President of the most powerful country in the world; he is also a peanut farmer from Georgia. Now we would hope that in due time he would absorb the realities of America's role in the world, and Americans cannot retreat from their global responsibilities."

*April 8 on returning to New Zealand*

"He (Mr. Carter) talks about human rights, a moral foreign policy. . . . What does he mean?" Mr. Muldoon said in an interview with the New Zealand Press Association after returning from a seven-nation tour.

"Is America going to declare war on every government that is infringing human rights. . . .?"

*April 18 television interview*

"The point that I wanted to make and the point that I make again is that it is a very, very long step from Plains, Georgia to the White House. And I think President Carter realizes that as much as anyone does. And certainly every head of State that I saw around the world in the last month expressed to me privately the same kind of apprehension to a greater or lesser degree that I've been expressing in simply listening to the initial foreign policy statements of President Carter."

"What many people worry about . . . is that President Carter's foreign policy was learned, as he has said himself, from the Tri-Lateral Commission . . . concerning itself with the United States, Japan and Western Europe and being composed of senior people, influential people from those three areas . . . those three countries, if you like, taking the European Community as one. And there are those . . . and I'm one of them . . . and I believe Prime Minister Lee is another, who wonder whether, in absorbing the foreign policy aspects of Japan, the United States and Western Europe and their inter-relationships, President

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 56, New Zealand. Unclassified. Sent under a June 22 covering memorandum to Vance, in which Holbrooke wrote, "Attached are excerpts from New Zealand Prime Minister Muldoon's various offensive statements."

Carter is yet adequately knowledgeable about the Indian Ocean, about Africa and as far as we're concerned, about the South Pacific. That's one of the question marks that's very much in my mind at the present time."

"I don't think he's adequately expressed himself on the Indian Ocean. You see, he clearly favoured . . . and he gave two options . . . a de-escalation of strategic weapons in the recent SALT talks. They collapsed. They collapsed ignominiously and his latest statements have been, 'yes, we'll have another go', but if the Soviets don't want to come to the Party then 'we'll' move to build up our strength. Now, he's got an either-or policy and I'm not going to say that his policy is wrong but after trying to get the SALT talks off the ground, failing, he's now saying we'll have another try and if they don't succeed, well, you watch out Soviet Union, we'll just go and build up our weapons and we have the capacity. So his views in the Indian Ocean, I think, have clearly to be spelled out more clearly and in more detail than has been the case yet."

*April 19 speech<sup>2</sup>*

"In Sydney a few weeks ago at the commencement of a journey which took me to seven different countries in three weeks, I made a comment which was widely publicized back home in New Zealand. I said that President Carter was the most powerful man in the world. He was also a peanut farmer from Georgia. Various political writers, opposition politicians, and even some of those most omniscient of journalists who have graduated to leader writer, have purported to see something derogatory in the plain statement of fact. Let me put it another way—it is a mighty long jump from the little town of Plains, Georgia, where brother Billy is a beer drinking petrol station attendant, and sister is a peripatetic evangelist to the White House in Washington, D.C., even if the journey was made by way of the Governor's mansion of the state of Georgia."

"President Carter will be in office for at least four years. Most of the heads of government that I have met in recent weeks would, I think, like to see him take a little time to settle down and get the feel of the international scene from his new position in the White House, before moving too far or too fast. It appears clear, however, that the American domestic political situation makes it necessary for him to establish himself in the eyes of his own people. The dilemma is obvious.

"I have spoken frankly to you about a situation which is of vital importance to the future of this country.

---

<sup>2</sup> See Document 233.

"There may be some who would say that I have been too frank. Last year I was equally frank regarding our relationships with the Soviet Union, and I believe that a frank appraisal of these vital situations is what a country expects of its Prime Minister. Certainly, it is what this country is going to get so long as I am Prime Minister.

"To sum up then, there is widespread concern among the friends of the United States as to the policies of the new Administration. There is no reason at this time, however, to believe that as the new Administration settles down those policies will not evolve in a manner that is helpful to the continuing task of the preservation of the free world."

*June 12 comments in London*

"London (AP)—New Zealand's prime minister yesterday described President Carter's human rights campaign as 'abortive' and said selective application of sanctions against countries that infringe civil rights is not 'morally credible.'

'So far one feels that they've been abortive,' Robert Muldoon, the prime minister, said of Mr. Carter's efforts in an interview. 'He's fired the shots, but it's difficult to see where they landed.

'You are not going to get the Soviet Union to change their attitude to political prisoners and political persecution simply by talking about it in public,' Mr. Muldoon said, referring to the administration's support for Soviet dissidents. 'In fact, I don't think you're going to get it at all.

'There is no reason why you shouldn't try, but you simply have a repressive regime, and you're not going to restore individual liberty to the Soviet Union while that regime is there,' he said."

237. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, June 22, 1977, 7:45 a.m.

## SUBJECT

SecDef Breakfast with Prime Minister Fraser of Australia, 22 June 1977

1. A working breakfast was hosted by the Australians at Blair House at 0745 on 22 June. Those in attendance were:

*U.S.*  
 The Secretary of Defense  
 The Deputy Secretary of Defense  
 Chairman, JCS, General G.S. Brown  
 Assistant Secretary of State,  
 Richard Holbrooke  
 ASD (ISA) Mr. McGiffert  
 Deputy ASD(EA&PR) M.I. Abramowitz  
 Director, DSAA, General Fish  
 Ambassador Philip H. Alston  
 Military Assistant RADM  
 Holcomb

*Australia*  
 The Prime Minister  
 Foreign Minister Andrew Peacock  
 Secretary of Foreign Affairs,  
 Nicholas Parkinson  
 Secretary of Defense, Sir Arthur  
 Tange  
 Secretary of Prime Minister &  
 Cabinet, Alan T. Carmody  
 Ambassador Alan Renouf

2. After exchanging amenities, SecDef asked what the Prime Minister had sensed in his recent discussions with Europeans. PM Fraser responded with an expression of his nation's concern that a European war would entail shifting the US Navy from the Pacific to the Atlantic, thus leaving Southeast Asian sea lines of communication exposed. SecDef replied that few people believe that a conflict in Europe would be of long enough duration to implement such a shift. Moreover, one cannot predict that war in Europe necessarily means war in the Pacific. PM Fraser expressed doubt that conflict could be contained, even if it were as short as two weeks . . . doubt that any nation associated with the US could avoid becoming involved. SecDef speculated that a war in Central Europe could become stabilized and protracted, although that would not be as likely as escalation to thermonuclear war. The Soviets know that and we know it. Thus, war is deterred and conventional forces require new emphasis if nuclear blackmail is to be precluded.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330-83-0124, 1, Australia (LTC Douse) 1976. Confidential. Copies were sent to McGiffert and Holbrooke. Printed from a June 23 draft. Fraser was in Washington June 21-23 for an official visit.

SecDef observed that the alignment of forces is by no means as clear in Asia. PM Fraser agreed, saying that there is a real possibility of widespread protectionism within the Common Market which might put Japan in an untenable position. SecDef noted that, should Japan feel isolated either economically or unilaterally, there might be strong pressure on her to rearm. That is why the U.S. intends to remain a strong Pacific power (he noted the fact that 50-odd ships are routinely deployed to the Seventh Fleet, as opposed to 40-odd in the Sixth Fleet) and maintain the level of peacetime deployments.

PM Fraser commented that the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC) often wants quite the opposite of what she says . . . that PRC obviously wants the U.S. to be strong relative to the USSR. The Australians sense that the PRC would prefer the status quo—US in S. Korea, in Taiwan, in the Philippines—indefinitely. Even their longtime goal of reuniting China appears to be less important than a perception of the U.S. withdrawing out of weakness. SecDef replied that the dominant question becomes how and when the U.S. “normalizes” relations with the PRC. There followed a discussion of the perception of changing U.S. posture in Asia, starting with Vietnam in 1973, and the fact that Asians look at *actions* regardless of the words they hear. PM Fraser repeated (three times) his conviction that adjustments out of weakness should be avoided, that the U.S. posture in Asia has to be viewed as a whole, and orchestrated deliberately (and slowly). He noted general, deepseated suspicion of Japan throughout the Western Pacific. He asserted that PRC does not want conflict in Korea.

Mr. Holbrooke interjected a comment that SecState would soon make a public disclosure of U.S. policy in Asia, followed by ASEAN consultations in early September.<sup>2</sup>

3. PM Fraser raised the question of operating U.S. P-3C aircraft out of Singapore to enhance surveillance of the Indian Ocean. He said the Australians are still strongly in favor, and that their intention is to integrate their own reconnaissance with that of the P-3C. CJCS said we are pursuing the Singapore option as an alternative to operations out of Thailand. Mr. Abramowitz reported that PM Lee of Singapore is withholding approval pending resolution of the “Congressional brawl” he expects, but that formal approval is not required in any event. Both SecDef and Fraser agreed that the option should be pursued and exercised.

---

<sup>2</sup> Vance addressed the Asia Society on June 29. For the text of his speech, see Department of State *Bulletin*, August 1, 1977, pp. 141–145. See also *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. I, Foundations of Foreign Policy, Document 48. The first U.S.-ASEAN Dialogue was held in Manila September 8–10.

4. PM Fraser then touched on the question of offsets for the \$600M Australia is committed to for frigate and C-130 procurement. SecDef summarized impediments to offsetting those costs—U.S. rules, which are being overcome, and the non-competitiveness of Australian industry in high technology cases—but said we would continue to work at the problem.

5. Raising the topic of human rights, PM Fraser observed that he would not like to see the U.S. refuse to resupply ASEAN countries with arms . . . thus opening the door to the Soviets. SecDef noted that, even though the dollars involved are small, such FMS transfers will have to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

6. Indian Ocean demilitarization talks, just beginning in Moscow, were discussed and the asymmetry in U.S. and USSR objectives were acknowledged.<sup>3</sup> PM Fraser observed that Australian concern focused on the fact that littoral nations were, presumably, only onlookers in the matter. He said they hope the U.S. will make no commitment which might preclude effective U.S. action in compliance with ANZUS Treaty.<sup>4</sup> He added that even a commitment to reach agreement would be of concern.

7. PM Fraser asked SecDef for his assessment of the global balance. SecDef responded at length, concluding that military action in the Pacific/Europe/Middle East was less likely than combined political, economic, and military pressure. He noted that the Soviets have not yet achieved control of the Mid-East oil lever, and they may not. How successful we are in moving Middle East powers toward peace bears on that. PM Fraser agreed, saying miscalculation and hasty war were to be avoided at all costs. He asked about Yugoslavia contingencies. SecDef observed that a movement into Yugoslavia on the Soviets' part would stand a good chance of impelling an Allied build-up which would not be occasioned otherwise, whether or not conflict resulted.

The meeting ended on that note.

---

<sup>3</sup> The first round of talks of the U.S.-Soviet Working Group was held June 22-27. See *Foreign Relations*, 1977-1980, vol. XVIII, Middle East Region; Arabian Peninsula, Documents 108 and 109.

<sup>4</sup> The ANZUS Treaty was signed on September 1, 1951, and entered into force on April 29, 1952. (3 UST 3420; TIAS 2493)



## 238. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, June 22, 1977, noon

### PARTICIPANTS

#### *U.S.*

President Jimmy Carter  
Secretary of State Cyrus Vance  
Zbigniew Brzezinski, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs  
Philip Alston, U.S. Ambassador to Australia  
Jody Powell, Press Secretary  
Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs  
Michael Armacost, NSC Staff Member

#### *Australia*

Prime Minister J. Malcolm Fraser  
Foreign Minister Andrew Peacock  
Alan Philip Renouf, Australian Ambassador to the U.S.  
A. T. Carmody, Secretary, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet  
Sir Arthur Tange, Secretary, Department of Defense  
N. F. Parkinson, Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs  
David Barnett, Press Secretary

*President Carter:* I would like to repeat what I said during the arrival ceremony about my gratitude to you for visiting the United States,<sup>2</sup> and to affirm the importance of our historical ties. In all my travels, Australia has been one nation about whom I never have heard an adverse word. As an old submariner, I might add that I know how much our naval officers loved to stop off in your country. I regret that I never had the chance, but I hope to.

I might say that during our private meeting<sup>3</sup> we had a brief discussion of the CIA problem [*less than 1 line declassified*] Prime Minister Fraser suggested that this might be a propitious time [*less than 1 line declassified*] I agreed, therefore, that we should look into this. We also discussed our respective relations with Japan. I asked the Prime Minister for his continuing advice as to how we should proceed in developing our policies toward the Western Pacific. And I reiterated our appreciation for the gracious way in which he has handled a difficult political

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Subject File, Box 35, Memcons: President: 6/77. Secret; Sensitive. The meeting took place in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

<sup>2</sup> For Carter's and Fraser's comments at the welcoming ceremony that morning, see *Public Papers: Carter, 1977*, Book I, pp. 1140–1142.

<sup>3</sup> Carter met with Fraser from 11:32 until 11:55 a.m. (Carter Library, Presidential Materials, Daily Diary) No memorandum of conversation of the meeting has been found.

situation arising out of the allegations of CIA activities in Australia. Would you like to lead off, Malcolm?

*Prime Minister Fraser:* I wish to thank you again for the warm welcome you have accorded me and my party. We are delighted to be here. Mr. President, as you may know, Australia plays a somewhat lonely role in the world. We are a democratic nation surrounded by states which do not live up to our democratic standards. We have good relations with Japan, and are eager to see them play an active role in assisting the nations of Southeast Asia. There is one element concerning your policy in the Western Pacific that may not be adequately comprehended by those who live far away from the area. After your Korean policy decision,<sup>4</sup> “Harry” Lee of Singapore made some public statements that revealed some desperation. These may have been somewhat overdrawn, but they reflect very real concerns. He as well as all other Southeast Asian leaders want the U.S. to maintain strength and the appearance of strength in the region.

American decisions can be easily misread in Southeast Asia, as well as Japan, and China. When Andrew Peacock and I were in Peking a year ago, we had 8–9 hours with Hua Kuo-feng in formal meetings and in banquets. During that time, I never heard a critical word from the Chinese about U.S. policy. It was very plain that the Chinese wanted the manifestations of American strength to remain in Asia and the Pacific.

Concerning Taiwan, I returned with the impression that the Chinese can exhibit great patience on that issue so long as the United States takes a strong position on other key issues—above all, your dealings with the Soviet Union.

There is some relevant historical background to Asian concerns about American retrenchment. The British withdrawal from the area “east of Suez” was marked by frequent assurances of British steadfastness which were regularly broken. This has generated a certain measure of skepticism toward some U.S. professions of continuing interest in the Asian area—particularly among Lee Kuan Yew and others. From the standpoint of stability, confidence in the United States is a very important though intangible factor. I’m afraid, Mr. President, I have merely posed a problem; I have no answer to offer.

*President Carter:* I can answer that. We have been in Korea more than 25 years. In 1970–71 Nixon withdrew one division. That decision did not undermine the stability on the peninsula. It was never envisaged that our ground forces would remain permanently in South Korea.

---

<sup>4</sup> Reference is to the June 5 announcement by the administration about withdrawing U.S. ground forces from Korea. See footnote 4, Document 198.

We are, however, committed to the security of South Korea and are determined to preserve stability on the peninsula. Consequently, we will handle our withdrawal in a careful, prudent, gradual manner. Our 2nd Division only represents about 7 percent of the total ground forces on the peninsula. Its military importance as a factor in the balance has been declining. As our forces are withdrawn, we will build up South Korean ground strength commensurately. Already South Korea possesses a substantial industrial capability, and they are able to assume a larger security burden. We will help them overcome deficiencies in their defenses arising out of the withdrawal of the 2nd Division. We will be turning additional anti-tank weapons over to them. We will probably leave them some of the other more advanced weapons currently utilized by the 2nd Division, and train them to use them. After the withdrawal of the 2nd Division is complete, we will still have 7–8,000 forces in Korea to provide air cover which will be permanent commitment as far as I know.

President Park understands our policy, and he has accepted the timing of our withdrawal schedule. He understands that we will “back load” our withdrawal in such a way as to leave a heavy brigade until the last phase. Thus there will not be any weakening of our position during the process of transition. We have also talked about this issue with Prime Minister Fukuda and believe that the Japanese now understand and accept our policy. I hope you will help make these points to other Asian leaders. Above all, we will proceed gradually. We will help the South Koreans upgrade their own defenses. We will consult continuously with the South Koreans and the Japanese. We will retain air units on the peninsula.

Concerning China, as you know, Cy Vance will be going to Peking later this summer.<sup>5</sup> We would like normal relations with the People’s Republic. The accomplishment of normal ties with China would be a plus for the Administration. Americans have generally had warm feelings for China. This owes something to the role of our missionaries there. I believe the public is receptive to normalization. The problem, of course, is our treaty obligation to Taipei and the ability of Premier Hua to give peaceful assurances concerning China’s intentions toward Taiwan. That is an obstacle I don’t know how to resolve.

*Prime Minister Fraser:* It may be difficult to overcome that obstacle in the short term. In Peking I obtained the impression that the Chinese were grateful to Nixon for opening the door for a strategic dialogue and that their subsequent dissatisfaction reflects disappointment con-

---

<sup>5</sup> August 20–26. For the memoranda of conversation, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XIII, China, Documents 47–52.

cerning American follow-through on the consultations. I believe the Chinese may have issued the second invitation to Nixon in order to register the point that consultations with the U.S. were not developing adequately. They appear now to feel that the Soviets are getting more American attention and have sustained more serious communications with you.

*President Carter:* I don't know if the Soviets would agree to that characterization.

*Prime Minister Fraser:* In any event, communications are a part of the problem. Is there any great urgency about resolving the Taiwan question?

*President Carter:* The key point will come when we formalize diplomatic relations for at that point we will have to abrogate our Mutual Defense Treaty with Taiwan.<sup>6</sup> The People's Republic of China has not exhibited much flexibility on matters relating to the treaty. We are looking for a way to resolve this and will study the matter intensively before Cy goes to Peking. I hope he will make progress on the issue during his trip. Essentially, we are trying to regenerate a sense of movement in our relationship.

*Prime Minister Fraser:* I think it is possible that you might advance the relationship by putting Taiwan on the side.

*Secretary Vance:* That is not the message the Chinese regularly convey to us.

*Prime Minister Fraser:* What I mean is that the Chinese have never changed their principles regarding a settlement of the Taiwan problem. But they display no great sense of urgency about resolving it. In my discussions with them, their major concerns appeared to be U.S. positions on big issues such as Soviet policy. And they also expressed some uneasiness about the adequacy of PRC-US consultations.

*President Carter:* We intend to explore any evidence of flexibility they have on this question. Our objective is to abide completely by the principles of the Shanghai Communique. We cannot, of course, enter arrangements which certify that the PRC has the right to resolve the Taiwan issue by force.

*Zbigniew Brzezinski:* There are actually two issues. One is to make the relationship more meaningful by taking China more fully into account in our consultations and in our global strategy. The second issue is Taiwan. Clearly we cannot normalize just by consulting with the Chinese; but we can consult without normalization.

---

<sup>6</sup> For the text of the treaty, signed December 2, 1954, see Department of State *Bulletin*, vol. XXXI, pp. 895-899.

*Prime Minister Fraser:* You may indeed secure major benefits from your relationship without normalization. I would add that if the Taiwan issue is mishandled it would be very troublesome in Southeast Asia where mis-steps on this question could be regarded as a straight-out abrogation of treaty obligations.

*President Carter:* There may be many things we can do short of full-scale normalization.

*Secretary Vance:* Certainly we should explore those.

*President Carter:* I remember very well a telephone conversation that we had last July on this same subject. I believe that was practically the first time I had spoken with a Prime Minister.

On the Philippine base issue, I have every confidence that we will ultimately work out a satisfactory agreement. Kissinger, you will recall, offered an arrangement to the Filipinos last fall that involved a substantial sum of money. The Filipinos did not agree to it. They asked for more compensation. We have a variety of base agreements and alliances around the world, and we cannot afford to pay an exorbitant price for the use of bases when mutual benefits underlie our presence. We hope to continue the use of bases in the Philippines; and trust that satisfactory arrangements can be worked out.

*Secretary Vance:* The ball is actually in President Marcos' court. Because of the Mindinao problem, he has been otherwise preoccupied and has expressed no urgency about resuming formal negotiations.

*Prime Minister Fraser:* I believe he wants every last dollar he can get out of you, but would be appalled if the U.S. were to leave.

*Foreign Minister Peacock:* The bases are the second largest source of income to the Filipinos, and that is a real inducement for him to come to terms. During my recent discussions with Marcos he did indicate that he hoped to reach a new agreement with you in the relatively near future.

*Richard Holbrooke:* I was in Manila the same week as Andrew and would like to say that the impression I derived with my talk with Marcos is that he had moderated his attitude on the base issues substantially.<sup>7</sup> I believe the history of our past negotiation is a somewhat unsavory one and that some delay in resuming formal discussion has been healthy. I expect that a better negotiation will be possible as a result of waiting.

*President Carter:* I might add that during my earlier private discussion with Malcolm we talked about the huge Australian-Japanese trade, and the utility of a larger Japanese political role in Southeast Asia. We

---

<sup>7</sup> See footnote 3, Document 309.

agreed that the Japanese are reticent to adopt a more assertive role due to historic memories in the area and their sensitivity to residual fears of Japanese economic domination. But I told the Prime Minister that we are eager to see the Japanese take on larger responsibilities. Prime Minister Fukuda performed well at London. By all accounts he was more assertive in the Summit discussions than any Japanese Prime Minister in recent memory. I believe that the Japanese can use their enormous wealth for very constructive ends, and they should be encouraged to do so.

*Prime Minister Fraser:* The ASEAN meeting this summer could see Japan move into a new phase in its policy toward Southeast Asia. Certainly the ASEAN countries expect a more forthcoming Japanese attitude on aid.

*President Carter:* The Japanese should increase the quantity and quality of their aid.

*Prime Minister Fraser:* At CIEC the Japanese committed themselves to double their aid program over the next five years.

*President Carter:* Are there any bilateral problems that need discussion?

*Prime Minister Fraser:* The only problem I would wish to mention is posed by the U.S. request to add an additional air carrier on the route to Australia. Up until 1974 you had one additional carrier. It withdrew, however, due to lack of profitability. There would be unfortunate repercussions in your country and ours if another carrier is added.

*President Carter:* Last night we got a new Civil Air Treaty with the UK by the skin of our teeth. I did not know a great deal about that issue but I spent an inordinate amount of time dealing with it. Nor am I familiar with the issue you have raised. I will have to get someone here to advise me.

*Secretary Vance:* I will have to disqualify myself because I formerly represented Pan Am. Warren Christopher will also have to take himself out of it because he also represented the airlines. Dick Cooper will have to be your man.

*Prime Minister Fraser:* Can I go back to raise a point which emerged in the Commonwealth meetings which I just attended in London? In that meeting the Africans and the Jamaicans expressed themselves in quite moderate terms on Southern African issue. But there is a general expectation that Zimbabwe will be seated in the Commonwealth within the next two years. The UK has this as an objective. I must add that during the course of the meetings words were exchanged regarding the use of force. Some nations take perhaps too relaxed an attitude toward the use of force. Nonetheless, I believe that if there is no settle-

ment of the Rhodesian problem, force will be universally embraced by all the parties in the next couple of years. The whites in Rhodesia are very tough. They will not yield readily.

We regard progress on this issue as being very important if we are to avoid an inevitable drift toward a forceful resolution of the problem. Practical policy measures toward the Rhodesian problem were discussed a bit in London. There was some feeling that restrictions on oil supplies to Rhodesia could be an effective sanction. Aren't the OPEC nations violating the UN embargo rather freely? Would it be possible to tighten this up, in order to apply some additional pressure for settlement upon the Rhodesians? Whatever your views on this subject, I wish to say that we approve of what your Administration has done on the Southern African issue, and hope to see a continued strong U.S. role in promoting a settlement.

*President Carter:* Most of Rhodesia's oil is delivered through South Africa, is it not? We have put maximum pressure on South Africa. I don't know about whether we have addressed the OPEC countries directly on this subject. We have found some reticence among the Europeans about exerting heavy pressure on South Africa due to their large investments there.

*Secretary Vance:* Was there any discussion in London about a Commonwealth peace force?

*Prime Minister Fraser:* There were some corridor discussions on everything from the provision of electoral officers to a police force. But these discussions yielded no consensus. There was also a generally shared conviction that a leading role by the United States is important.

*President Carter:* We have been reluctant to take the leadership on this issue. We have offered full public and private support to the British, but think they should continue to take the lead.

*Prime Minister Fraser:* I'm not suggesting a change in that pattern, but I am endorsing a strong U.S. supporting role and anything you can do to inject some urgency in the settlement process. The longer the fighting goes on, the greater the danger of permanent scars on the relations between races and countries.

*President Carter:* Was there any mood to increase Commonwealth pressures on South Africa?

*Prime Minister Fraser:* Some of the Africans wanted aid to be channeled directly to the Liberation forces. The UK, Australia, and New Zealand were not amenable to this suggestion.

*President Carter:* How about more pressure on South Africa?

*Prime Minister Fraser:* There was some sentiment for this in private, but UK investments in that country are a factor.

*President Carter:* We have encouraged multilateral efforts through the UN; we have not devoted as much thought to attempting to do



more through OPEC. All of Rhodesia's oil goes through South Africa. Thus oil shipments to South Africa would have to be cut back by an appropriate amount on the supposition that Rhodesia would be the one to suffer.

*Secretary Vance:* We have talked in general terms about this with the UK, France, and Germany. The subject may come up Thursday morning<sup>8</sup> in Paris. The French are edgy about this. The Brits are likewise skittish, but do not rule it out. The Germans want to reflect further on it.

*President Carter:* We have not gone to OPEC at this point, have we?

*Secretary Vance:* Not yet.

*Prime Minister Fraser:* Originally this was raised in terms of a demarche to the oil companies, but upon reflection it seemed more plausible to approach the OPEC nations themselves.

*President Carter:* You understand that we are not too eager to encourage oil embargoes.

*Prime Minister Fraser:* I understand. There are dangers. But this is a subject that is worthy of study. On a different subject, I would note that the Africans were unusually forthright in condemning Uganda at the Commonwealth meeting. At first many did not wish to mention Uganda adversely in the communique. After some discussion, many changed their minds. Nigeria did not join the general consensus, but apparently on grounds that someone in Africa ought to be able to talk to the Ugandans.

*President Carter:* Unfortunately, Amin<sup>9</sup> dominated the headlines here during the London meeting.

*Prime Minister Fraser:* I was happy that he stayed away, for I feared the UK would have turned him away at the airport had he shown up.

One other subject I might mention relates to the Common Fund<sup>10</sup>—a subject about which there is much mythology. Despite such myths, if something is not done to stabilize commodity earnings, there will be trouble. I believe some sensible commodity agreements can be reached. Our experience with the International Sugar Agreement and the International Wheat Agreement has been generally favorable. We have a Wool Agreement that operates effectively within Australia. Thus it is possible to develop commodity agreements that work. Unless we make positive proposals to deal with the commodity issue, we will drift into another row with the LDCs. We Australians have been too

---

<sup>8</sup> June 23. Reference is to the OECD Ministerial meeting.

<sup>9</sup> Idi Amin, President of Uganda.

<sup>10</sup> At the end of its fourth session in Nairobi, Kenya, in May 1976, UNCTAD agreed to consider the establishment of the Common Fund to finance a buffer stock program designed to smooth out primary commodity price fluctuations.



reticent in putting proposals forward on this subject in the past. We now must act with a greater sense of urgency.

*President Carter:* As you know we have embraced the concept of a common fund. Secretary Bergland has been traveling in Asia for nearly a month trying to get a better feel for how to deal with the world food problem. We—along with you and Canada—have a chance to forge a useful alliance to deal with some of these commodity problems. Not to use food as a weapon, but to help devise constructive approaches between producers and consumers. As you know, we have participated in some successful commodity agreements, such as sugar and wheat. We are considering expanding our participation into other areas such as cocoa and copper and tin. As far as I know these have worked well. We do prefer approaching these agreements on a case-by-case basis. We have also been addressing the evolution of reserve of capital to finance such agreements. In London I listened to Schmidt's explanation of price stabilization measures, and I think his approach has promise.<sup>11</sup>

*Secretary Vance:* We need to address these issues in both the small and the larger developed country groups well in advance of the UNCTAD meetings in order to come up with something which is both positive and realistic.

*President Carter:* I would emphasize that we don't have any philosophical aversion to the common fund idea.

*Prime Minister Fraser:* We agree with your approach. We must get on to the formulation of realistic proposals.

*President Carter:* There is one other issue we might discuss before lunch; namely, the Indian Ocean. We are meeting with the Soviet Union now in Moscow on this question. Paul Warnke's instructions are to go no further than to stabilize the current situation before going on to consider any mutual reductions. We would hate to see the Soviets build up their naval strength in the Indian Ocean. For example, we don't want them to introduce attack aircraft into the region. This is a subject we don't know very well yet. We will be cautious in our discussions with the Soviets. We will take your views into account in formulating our policy.

*Prime Minister Fraser:* As you know, we are opposed to any arms race in the Indian Ocean. But we are also against any arrangements that would leave the USSR in a dominant position. We want close consultations with you on this subject. Beyond this, we are anxious to avoid any arrangements which might conceivably make it difficult for

---

<sup>11</sup> Reference is to the German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's remarks at the London Economic Summit May 7–8.

you to exercise your obligations under the ANZUS Treaty as a result of an Indian Ocean arms control agreement with the Soviet Union.

As I understand it, the French are actively engaged in the Indian Ocean and interested in this subject. Are their deployments in the Indian Ocean to be considered separately?

*President Carter:* I discussed this question with Giscard. In recent correspondence I suggested that he might wish to raise this issue with Brezhnev. I have no inclination to advise him, but it is a relevant subject for their discussion. Incidentally, the other question I raised was the comprehensive test ban. In any event I can assure you that we will be adequately cautious in our dealings with the Russians on this issue and we will see that we go over the precise language of any agreement with you before anything is signed.

Over the past four years, the Soviets have been making progress with propaganda ploys on disarmament, Indian Ocean arms control, and human rights in the past. We have tried to take these issues away from them in a sincere way. When Cy Vance went to Moscow in March,<sup>12</sup> we agreed to discuss this and a number of other issues with them seriously and we agreed to meet them halfway. We don't know precisely what Soviet motivations are in raising Indian Ocean arms limitation.

*Prime Minister Fraser:* There is no great difference between us on this question, provided we consult closely.

*Zbigniew Brzezinski:* Generally, I believe it is better not to get the French involved in these discussions, because the Soviets in that case would wish a trade-off between themselves and *all* others. It would be better for the trade-off to be strictly between these two major powers.

*Secretary Vance:* We will have a much better feel for this question after this week of talks. The Soviets have a very competent man heading their delegation.

*Zbigniew Brzezinski:* For starters, they have described Berbera as a "watering spot".

*Prime Minister Fraser:* The Soviet Ambassador in Canberra told me that Berbera did not even exist.

*President Carter:* The Somalians have also said this. We have great concern about the entire Horn area of Africa. The situation there is apparently deteriorating. The Yugoslavs enjoy constructive ties with Ethiopia, and have been quite helpful. But the most hopeful change in recent months has been the more assertive and more constructive

---

<sup>12</sup> March 27–30. For the memoranda of conversation, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Documents 16–23.

attitudes taken by the Saudis. They obviously have a great stake in peace, since in any serious disturbance they stand to lose the most. They have been very cooperative.

*Prime Minister Fraser:* At what point do you wish to talk about uranium?

*President Carter:* I am really very proud of the mutual commitment we have made to seek to reverse a tide that appeared only recently to be irreversible. I think the Canadians shared that attitude which you and I have expressed.

*Prime Minister Fraser:* We believe, Mr. President, that you have taken a very courageous stand in forcing the world to address this issue. It is an important issue for us. We now have a bargaining coin with the Europeans. There are some trade-offs here between our policy on uranium and European attitudes toward other trade issues, including modification of their Common Agricultural Policy. We are concerned about European protectionism. They want stability in the supply of uranium. We think the principle of stable access to supplies has a wider application, most notably in our desire for stable access to the European market for our commodities.

*President Carter:* We share a common feeling on this question. I would suggest that we move on to lunch and discuss this further there.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> Lunch was held from 1:03 until 2:15 p.m. in the first floor private dining room at the White House. No record of the discussion has been found.

**239. Letter From Australian Prime Minister Fraser to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 23, 1977

My Dear Jimmy<sup>2</sup>

Thank you very much indeed for your generous hospitality and the warmth and depth of our discussions. I greatly appreciated the opportunity to talk with you again.

I am encouraged by your policies and attitudes. I cannot state too strongly the importance of a constructive and active U.S. in world affairs. You have put democracies on the offensive where too often they have been defensive and reactive to events.

I believe your Presidency is providing a hope and an opportunity for free peoples.

The exchange of views that we had yesterday<sup>3</sup> will advance both our causes. I know for Australia's part these exchanges will make it possible to play a more constructive role in areas of shared interests.

Both my wife and I have enjoyed this visit. Again, thank you for your hospitality.

As a farmer, I should have known how many cattle we have in Australia. I studied philosophy more than mathematics at university. The number is in fact 32 million.

In conclusion, I would be pleased if you would accept the enclosed copy of *The Australian Landscape and its Artists*.<sup>4</sup> I trust that it will serve as a pleasant memento of our meeting.

My best wishes,<sup>5</sup>

**Malcolm Fraser**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 4, Australia, 1977. No classification marking. The letter is on the stationery of the Prime Minister's office in Canberra, but Fraser was still in Washington on June 23.

<sup>2</sup> Fraser wrote the salutation by hand.

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 237 and 238.

<sup>4</sup> Carter thanked Fraser for the book in a June 29 letter. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 4, Australia, 1977)

<sup>5</sup> Fraser wrote by hand, "My best wishes."

**240. Letter From the Australian Ambassador (Renouf) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 12, 1977

Dear Mr. President,<sup>2</sup>

Australia's Prime Minister, Mr Malcolm Fraser, has asked me to convey the following message to you:

"My dear Jimmy,

I thought I should write to tell you in general terms about my participation in what I see as an historic meeting between leaders of the ASEAN countries (Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines) and Australia, Japan and New Zealand, in Kuala Lumpur a few days ago.<sup>3</sup>

The meeting coincided with the 10th Anniversary of ASEAN and was the first occasion on which those five leaders had met as a group with Australia (and Japan and New Zealand). Indeed, it was only the second occasion on which the five had met amongst themselves, a fact which symbolizes the quickening pace and development of ASEAN as a vigorous regional organisation. The emergence of this new sense of purpose coincided with the communist victories in Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea and it was clear at my meetings that the concern about threat from communism remains an underlying motivation of the Association. Nevertheless, they were at pains to hold firm to their publicly expressed line that ASEAN is not and should not be a security pact.

I found my discussions with the leaders very valuable. I was particularly pleased with the frank, positive and constructive manner in which they were prepared to look at substantive issues. In many ways it was not an easy meeting for Australia because the ASEAN countries were pressing in a very single-minded way for major trade and tariff concessions. I believe we were able to make some progress in allaying misapprehensions about future Australian trade policies and to reassure them that we were sincere in our declared intentions of working to enhance our economic relationship with them. They accepted the fact that the timing of positive steps would depend to a large extent on the continuing improvement in our domestic economic position,

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 4, Australia, 1977. Secret.

<sup>2</sup> Renouf handwrote the salutation.

<sup>3</sup> The second ASEAN summit was held August 4–5.

but more particularly on the effects which the policies of the major trading nations had on us.

In more immediate terms I was able to announce significant expansion in the size and an improvement in the quality of our aid programs to the area directed specifically to their plans for accelerated industrial development.

Throughout all my individual and joint meetings each of the leaders showed a deep interest and concern about the United States' role in South East Asia. I would be less than frank with you if I were not to say that I detected a continuing note of puzzlement and lack of understanding of American policies. It was a puzzlement born of the different perceptions which countries of the region have of the American interest in their problems and a resultant ready capacity to misconceive intentions. Your policies towards Korea were a case in point. There is a special problem reflected in the near dilemma each of these countries have of wanting American strategic and political commitment to the area but not wanting it to be apparent. I was also a little surprised at the careful and precise way they have been examining recent United States statements on the region. From my own discussions with you I was able to reassure them in both a general and a particular way about the continuity and commitment of U.S. policies in the region. It is, nevertheless, a matter at which we will need to continue to work.

Throughout the meetings there were many references to the forthcoming talks between ASEAN and United States officials.<sup>4</sup> The ASEAN countries obviously regard this meeting as very important. They are taking it very seriously. It is difficult, and possibly not for me, to advise you precisely on what action is required. In general terms, however, the one thing I am sure of is that they are looking for greater understanding and concern from the major industrial powers of their problems, in particular, their need for improved markets for their labour-intensive and manufactured products.

My only other thought is to suggest that although the ASEAN countries see the talks as mainly economic, our own experience suggests that inevitably there will be a need to touch on the broader political considerations. Indeed the talks could provide a useful opportunity for the United States to express its broad support for ASEAN and to clear up some of the misunderstandings that are still apparent.

Andrew Peacock is also planning to write to Cyrus Vance about a matter which arose in my talks with Mr Fukuda, concerning mutual concern we have about the attraction which New Zealand is apparently

---

<sup>4</sup> September 8–10. See footnote 2, Document 237.

finding in proposals made to it by the USSR to enter into joint venture fishing operations in the New Zealand 200 mile zone.

Naturally I have instructed Australian officials to brief your officials in greater detail about any of the above matters, if they so wish.

With my warmest good wishes,

Malcolm Fraser."

Yours sincerely,

**Alan Renouf**  
*Ambassador*

---

**241. Letter From President Carter to Australian Prime Minister Fraser<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 23, 1977

Dear Malcolm:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter describing your recent meeting with the leaders of the ASEAN nations.<sup>2</sup> We too have been impressed by the serious, businesslike approach the ASEAN leaders have shown. ASEAN has come a long way as a force for increased cooperation, stability and growth. We intend to do what we can to support consultations and cooperation in areas of mutual international interest. Like you, we share an interest in the prosperity and stability of the area.

Your analysis is particularly useful to us as the U.S. delegation prepares for economic consultations with Ministers from the ASEAN nations next month in Manila. Our delegation will be led by Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs Richard N. Cooper. As you suggest, he will be prepared to discuss trade and other subjects of interest to ASEAN.

As you know from our talks last June, the United States is fully committed to retaining its presence and influence in Asia and the Pacific. I appreciate what you have done since we talked to make this clear to other Asian leaders. Cy Vance's June 29 speech<sup>3</sup> stressed this

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 4, Australia, 1977. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 240.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 2, Document 237.

point, and we will keep looking for other suitable means of reaffirming our commitment.

I know you are particularly interested in our plans to withdraw troops from Korea. I believe that Harold Brown's recent discussions in Seoul and Tokyo have significantly reassured the Koreans and Japanese about the strength of our security commitment and the means by which it will be implemented, including a substantial buildup of the military capabilities of the Republic of Korea.

One of the things Cy Vance will be discussing in Peking will be the Korean question. He will again emphasize our commitment to the security of the South and our hope that the Chinese will assist us in promoting a stabler, more peaceful relationship between the two Koreas. Our intention is to have a general tour d'horizon with the Chinese, including our relationships with the USSR and the situation in the Middle East and Africa, as well as a full exploration of the possibilities of normalizing relations. We will inform you of the results of the visit through Ambassador Renouf.

We welcome the constructive role Australia is playing in Asia, as well as the close cooperation between our two countries. I deeply appreciate your continuing views and counsel.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

#### **242. Letter From Australian Prime Minister Fraser to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Canberra, August 25, 1977

My Dear Jimmy<sup>2</sup>

Thank you for your reply to my letter of July 11.<sup>3</sup> I am pleased that Ambassador Robert Strauss is able to accept my invitation to visit

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 1, Australia, Prime Minister J. Malcolm Fraser, 3-12/77. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> Fraser handwrote the salutation.

<sup>3</sup> In his July 11 letter to Carter, Fraser responded to Carter's suggestion that U.S. Special Trade Representative Robert Strauss visit Australia to talk about trade problems and other bilateral issues. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 1, Australia, Prime Minister J. Malcolm Fraser, 3-12/77)



Australia. I look forward to hearing from him when he has settled on possible dates. We are also looking forward to discussions with him on world trade and bilateral matters. Our Ministers for Overseas Trade and for Special Trade Negotiations will have a particular interest.

The Government has completed its consideration of the findings and recommendations of the Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry. I intend to announce on 25 August 1977 that the Australian Government has decided that the development of uranium mining in Australia should proceed, subject to appropriate environmental and other regulations and controls and on the basis of a stringent regime of nuclear safeguards.

I am pleased to hear that progress is being made on the International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation. As to our own involvement, I have asked the Department of Foreign Affairs to coordinate Australian participation in the Evaluation. The Australian Atomic Energy Commission (AAEC) will remain the designated agency, but the Department of Foreign Affairs will be the appropriate channel for communication on INFCE for matters other than the purely technical. That Department will also participate in INFCE meetings from time to time, as will other Australian Government Departments.

I am very gratified to accept your support for Australia's membership in the London Suppliers' Group.<sup>4</sup> I consider that Australian membership is desirable, particularly now that we have decided to proceed with new uranium development and exports. Our officials will be in contact on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

**Malcolm Fraser**

---

<sup>4</sup> The London Suppliers Group, or the Nuclear Suppliers Group, founded in 1974, set guidelines for the export of nuclear material to states that did not possess nuclear weapons.

**243. Letter From President Carter to Australian Prime Minister Fraser<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 6, 1977

Dear Malcolm:

Thank you for your letter of August 25.<sup>2</sup> I am particularly pleased that your Government has decided to proceed with the mining and export of uranium. I believe the availability of Australian uranium will be a significant factor in pursuing our common nonproliferation interests, particularly in reducing pressures for reprocessing and the spread of the plutonium economy.

We are now inviting other countries to attend an International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation organizational meeting, to be held in Washington October 19–21. We look forward to active Australian participation. I hope your representatives will be able to lead or coordinate one area of follow-up work—perhaps fuel assurances.

We will, of course, be keeping you fully informed through the diplomatic channel as preparations for the meeting proceed. Similarly, we will be consulting closely with your Government concerning general nuclear supplier policies and further plans for discussions among the London Suppliers Group.

I want to express my thanks for your allowing Justice Fox<sup>3</sup> to visit Washington. While I did not meet him personally, I understand from those who did that their discussions were very useful.

I regret that it was not possible for Bob Strauss to visit Australia early this month as we had originally planned. As you are aware, however, he is trying to reschedule the visit and still hopes to be in Canberra some weeks from now. I understand he will be communicating directly with you concerning new dates.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 1, Australia, Prime Minister J. Malcolm Fraser, 3–12/77. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 242.

<sup>3</sup> Russell Walter Fox, Chief Judge of the Supreme Court of the Australian Capital Territory, headed the Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry.

**244. Telegram From Secretary of State Vance's Delegation to the Department of State and the Embassy in Australia<sup>1</sup>**

New York, September 30, 1977, 1402Z

Secto 10015. For S/S. Secretary's Bilateral With Australian Foreign Minister.

1. Summary: Secretary met September 29 with Australian Foreign Minister Peacock. During 25 minute discussion, Peacock focussed on Indian Ocean talks between US and USSR,<sup>2</sup> saying that any agreement which emerged from talks which seemed to limit US ability to defend Australia would cause GOA serious political problems. He called for joint efforts to allay any Australian domestic criticism. The Secretary assured the FonMin that Australian concerns would be taken into account in these talks. Peacock asked for US support in joining the London Suppliers' Group. The Secretary said he would try to determine at what stage the US would be able to push for such membership and would inform FonMin. In a discussion of the forthcoming UNCTAD meeting, the Secretary termed it vital that specific issues be addressed on which concrete progress be made; he urged that machinery be established for coordinating US-Australian policies for the UNCTAD meeting. ASEAN, China, SALT and East Timor were also discussed during the meeting. End Summary.

2. The Secretary met with Australian Fon Min Peacock in New York morning of September 29. Australian Assistant Secretary for IO Douglas Campbell, UN Ambassador Ralph Harry, and Assistant Secretaries Holbrooke and Maynes participated.

3. Indian Ocean talks: The FonMin said he wanted to focus on only a few key issues with the Secretary since he would be talking at length later with Holbrooke. A fairly critical problem was the US-USSR talks on the Indian Ocean. Ambassador Renouf had already had useful discussions on this issue with Paul Warnke and Les Gelb, but the FonMin wanted to stress the degree to which the talks could become a political problem in Australia. Chiefly at issue was the line delineating the eastern limits of the Indian Ocean. If this line included the west coast of Australia, the agreement would be seen in Australia as restricting

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Records of Cyrus Vance, 1977–1980, Lot 84D241, Nodis Memcons, 1977. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information to Wellington, Port Moresby, London, Singapore, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, and the Mission in Geneva. Vance was in New York for the UN General Assembly meeting.

<sup>2</sup> The second round of U.S.-Soviet talks was held in Washington September 26–30. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XVIII, Middle East Region; Arabian Peninsula, Document 115.

the ability of the US to protect Australia's security. This would give the GOA serious political problems, particularly from the military establishment and from Western Australia, which is a conservative state. We must have time, the FonMin said, to work this out together so that the talks do not involve any threat to Australian security. In particular we must take steps to disarm criticism, such as running joint US-Australian exercises on the west coast and having occasional US statements reaffirming the US defense commitment to Australia.

4. The Secretary said he was fully sympathetic to Australia's views and would make every effort to meet its concerns. He said that the talks would go very slowly. At the last round in Washington, the Soviets had demanded that we dismantle our Diego Garcia facilities, a condition to which we could not agree. For this and other reasons, the negotiating process will be very slow. The FonMin said he was pleased to hear this. He did not want to "pester" the Secretary on this issue, but anything which gave the impression that US was not taking Australian interests into account in Indian Ocean talks would pose serious political problem for GOA.

5. London Suppliers' Group: FonMin raised Australia's interest in joining the London Suppliers' Group, noting its recent decision to export uranium, its strong commitment to non-proliferation, and its active role in the IAEA. He felt that US support for Australian membership "at appropriate time" was in effect a signal to Australia that it was being asked to "forebear" for the time being. The Secretary said the immediate question was solving the guideline problem.<sup>3</sup> He promised to have his staff determine a specific time when we could go forward actively in support for Australian membership and would report back to the FonMin.

6. China: The FonMin asked for a run-down of US-PRC relations. The Secretary said that he had met last night with Huang Hua.<sup>4</sup> As for normalization, we had explained to the Chinese the problems we faced at home and asked them to be sensitive to these problems. We listened to their views and while we reaffirmed that our goal was normalization, we did not seek any specific agreements. The Secretary told the FonMin that we have a number of issues to get through Congress, and it would be difficult for us to tackle normalization and the Panama Canal Treaty at the same time. We will continue to pursue the dialogue, but chiefly through our Liaison Office in Peking. The FonMin said he had talked in New York to Hua, who evidently wanted

---

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to the guidelines for export of nuclear materials agreed to by the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

<sup>4</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1977-1980, vol. XIII, China, Document 62.

to use the Australians as a conduit to the US side. In answer to a question from Holbrooke, the FonMin said he felt that Huang was somewhat more “unpleasant” on the normalization issue than he had been last year and had focussed more pointedly on the Taiwan issue. In any event, FonMin said that the PRC was showering Australia with attention and was obviously trying to upgrade its relationship.

7. East Timor: The FonMin said that we must keep in close touch on the East Timor issue. Holbrooke said that the Indonesians understand that they have no real problem with the administration on this issue, and that their differences are with Capitol Hill. In answer to the FonMin’s question, the Secretary noted that this issue will complicate our military aid to Indonesia but not our economic assistance.

8. ASEAN: The Secretary had opened the bilateral with an expression of appreciation for the FonMin’s long letter to him on ASEAN,<sup>5</sup> which he and his staff had found useful and thought-provoking. The FonMin asked about the results of Cooper’s meeting in Manila.<sup>6</sup> Holbrooke said we and the ASEAN nations viewed it as an important first step toward a new relationship with the US. The FonMin said that the “vibes” he had received from ASEAN diplomats on the meeting were very good. He was glad that the US was taking note of the new cohesiveness in ASEAN and was prepared to deal closely with it. The Secretary said that in his discussion with Malik he had reaffirmed US intentions to play an important role in Asia and to work closely with ASEAN. In this regard, the FonMin saw that Australia attached importance to the Lee Kuan Yew visit to the US since he would be an important channel for carrying US views to other ASEAN nations.<sup>7</sup> Holbrooke noted that the Hussein Onn visit had gone very well, the bilateral with the President had lasted much longer than the time allotted,<sup>8</sup> and it was clear that the Malaysians were impressed with our intention to stay involved in Southeast Asia.

9. SALT: The FonMin asked about SALT developments. The Secretary said that progress had been made during three meetings with Gromyko; he was confident that the agreement could be reached on the secondary issues that remain. He had asked Paul Warnke to go to Geneva at the end of the week and to work on these issues.

10. UNCTAD: The FonMin asked whether the Secretary saw any prospect for progress at the UNCTAD talks scheduled for November. The Secretary said the G-77 had to make up their minds about where

---

<sup>5</sup> See Document 240.

<sup>6</sup> Cooper attended the U.S.-ASEAN Dialogue. See footnote 5, Document 196.

<sup>7</sup> See Documents 199 and 200.

<sup>8</sup> See Document 195.

they wanted to go. Decisions should be made to pursue certain concrete goals, otherwise nothing will be accomplished and there will be widespread dissatisfaction. The FonMin said the Australians had not clarified in their own minds what they wanted at the November meeting. The Secretary agreed that a clear-cut policy was necessary; he asked Holbrooke and Maynes to establish machinery for consulting with the Australians on our preparations for the UNCTAD meeting.

11. Human Rights at the UNGA: Campbell asked what the US hoped to achieve on human rights at the UNGA. The Secretary said the US may push for the establishment of the post of Commissioner for Human Rights; we had doubts, however, that the proposal would meet with any success at this session.<sup>9</sup> Maynes noted that the Australians had been very helpful to us on this issue and somewhat more progress had been made than had been expected. The Soviets, nevertheless, view the issue as one of East-West confrontation and have refused to lend any financial support to such a post. A decision on whether we actually make the Human Rights Commission proposal will be made in November, following further study and consultations.

12. The FonMin closed the meeting with a plea for close and continuing US-Australia consultation, particularly on the Indian Ocean and the London Suppliers Group issues.

**Vance**

---

<sup>9</sup> See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. II, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, Document 94.

**245. Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>**

RPM 77–10258

Washington, October 5, 1977

## SUBJECT

Papua New Guinea

1. A former UN trust territory administered by Australia, Papua New Guinea's size and economic potential give it a distinct edge over many other fledgling nations. Its several major islands add up to a land area comparable to that of Colorado and Utah combined, and it is rich in minerals. Exports of copper from one of the world's largest open pit mines is a major foreign exchange earner. There is room for considerable development in forestry and tuna fishing, as well as a hydroelectric power potential. Papua New Guinea's population of less than three million is remarkable for its diversity. Its many tribes and clans speak over 700 different languages.

2. Nudged into independence two years ago by a Labor government in Australia anxious to divest itself of an unwanted colonial role, Papua New Guinea has overcome its initial misgivings over standing on its own. It has coped effectively with its basic difficulties of deep divisions by language and clan, widespread illiteracy, and a dearth of trained and experienced personnel. Domestic policies have been characterized by caution and the application of basic common sense. The honest national elections last summer, which drew a large voter turnout, were a measure of Papua New Guinea's seasoning as a nation. Government institutions are still fragile, however, and not rooted in local society. One of the government's major tasks is to inspire primary loyalty to the nation rather than to the many clans.

3. Separatism is a troublesome manifestation of the island nation's ethnic diversity and long distances. The government has undercut the most serious secessionist movement—that of the copper-rich island of Bougainville—by granting it greater local rule. Concessions to Bougainville have, however, prompted demands for equal treatment from other regions. One of the government's continuing problems will be the maintenance of strong central control in the face of growing regional consciousness.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 80T00071A: Production Case Files, Box 9, Folder 20: Papua New Guinea. Confidential; [handling restriction not declassified]. Prepared in the South East Asia Section of the East Asia and Pacific Division of the Office of Regional Political Analysis, Directorate of Intelligence. Printed from an unsigned copy.

4. Papua New Guinea has been led since independence by Michael Somare, a 41-year-old former radio announcer and journalist. An outspoken critic of the Australian administration a decade ago, he has become distinctly moderate and responsible as he has developed an appreciation of the responsibilities of nationhood. Somare is generally given good marks for leadership. An appealing and articulate individual, his common touch and lack of pretense fits with the local temperament. In the sometimes contentious local political scene during the first two years of independence, his particular strength has been an ability to effect compromises through the "Melanesian way" of patiently talking out a dispute until all sides can come to agreement.

5. Somare's coalition government made a strong showing in the national elections last summer, but he faces a more assertive political opposition in his second term. The new opposition leader, Sir John Guise—who resigned as governor general last February to enter politics—is as fully skilled in parliamentary debate as Somare and has a more commanding presence.

6. The government is coming under increasing criticism for not meeting popular economic expectations. Unemployment is high, and an urban drift has spawned a crime problem. Despite some growing diversity in the economic base, Papua New Guinea retains a heavy dependence on Australian aid and copper revenues. The demonstrated political stability should be an incentive to the foreign investment that is needed for economic expansion, but outside money has been slow to materialize.

7. Papua New Guinea's foreign political orientation is strongly pro-West, and it has turned aside repeated Chinese and Soviet efforts to establish embassies. At the UN, it has maintained a moderate stance and has resisted overtures from radical African states. The country's foreign policy goals are modest, concentrated on the South Pacific. It has some aspirations to regional leadership but is low-key in pushing them.

8. Memories of shared World War II experiences linger in Papua New Guinea, and it would like closer relations with the US. The young nation seeks no US aid, but as a resource-rich country, it would like more private investment to help it attain its export potential. Prime Minister Somare is visiting New York next week as head of his government's delegation to the UN General Assembly session. In whatever talks he has with US officials there, he will undoubtedly try to elicit more US interest in his corner of the world.

9. Papua New Guinea's primary ties remain with Australia, although it is sensitive to intimations that it is still a colonial adjunct to its former administrator. Australian assistance comprises 40 percent of the national budget, and there is a continuing, although declining, presence of Australian expatriate government officers. Australian stall-



ing on discussions of the sea boundary between the two countries, now drawn to within a few hundred yards of the Papua New Guinean coast, has aroused nationalist rhetoric in Port Moresby and could damage the amicable relationship.

---

#### 246. Telegram From the Department of State to the White House<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 19, 1977, 0951Z

250787. For Brzezinski only. Following tel sent action SecState from Canberra Oct 19:

Quote Secret Canberra 7290. Nodis. For Secretary Vance from Ambassador Alston; please pass to the White House for the President and Dr. Brzezinski. Subj: A Presidential Visit to Australia.

1. Mr. President, in due course your quest for peace and world order will have to bring you into the Pacific area. I suggest that in early 1978 you undertake a trip to Tokyo, one or more of the ASEAN countries whose goals and aspirations we support, and Australia. A visit by you to these countries will emphasize beyond dispute America's firm resolve to remain a Pacific power. This telegram is in support of this proposition, and is in anticipation that you may be receiving, in the very near future, a formal invitation from your friend, Prime Minister Fraser,<sup>2</sup> who has told me he wants very much to have you come.

2. It is a decade since an American President visited Australia, the last such occasion having been Lyndon Johnson's quick trip in 1967 for the memorial service for his friend, Prime Minister Harold Holt.<sup>3</sup> Worse yet, the only preceding visit by an American President was Lyndon Johnson's official visit a year earlier.<sup>4</sup> Such a record of neglect does not speak highly for the United States, which has repeatedly said it considers Australia to be one of its closest friends and partners, a

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Cables File, Box 11, 9–11/77. Secret; Immediate; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> Fraser extended his invitation to Carter in an October 20 letter from Renouf. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 4, Australia, 1977)

<sup>3</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1964–1968, vol. XVII, Mainland Southeast Asia; Regional Affairs, Document 35.

<sup>4</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1964–1968, vol. XVII, Mainland Southeast Asia; Regional Affairs, Document 19.

treaty ally with whom we have fought four wars (including Korea and Vietnam), highly important to your efforts to avoid a premature plunge into a world plutonium economy, a country which is host to hundreds of American companies and thousands of American citizens living and doing business here, and a country which allows us to use its soil for strategically critical defense and intelligence facilities.

3. I know you understand the “kith and kin” argument, and will therefore not waste your time on it.

4. What is more important to us today than history and culture is the three-way partnership we have in the Western Pacific. Australia may be more important to Japan, in absolute terms, than it is to us (it ranks only 14th among our trading partners; 54 pct of Australia’s foreign trade last year, however, was with a single country—Japan) but that very importance to Japan is as significant to our own national interests as the purely bilateral US-Australian relationship. If our oft-repeated declarations about the need to strengthen the interdependence of nations in the international economy are to gain the support they require, surely the three-way partnership between Australia, Japan and the United States is one we should nurture.

5. Furthermore, it is in our interest to ensure that Australia realizes that we don’t regard her simply as a hospitable host for our economic and security needs. In the absence of the political attention that American Presidents unquestioningly give to our European allies, to Japan, Canada, Mexico, the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, China, and even Latin America, the Middle East and Africa, Australians sometimes begin to feel, and I think with justification, that we call them “our friends and allies” simply for the sake of their resources and our desire to use their country for joint defense and intelligence activities, without any real sense of devotion to the “partnership” we say we share.

6. I realize that there are innumerable competing demands for your attention, and I would never try to persuade you to take the time to come only to Australia—much as I would like to see you come only to Australia; rather, I believe your first trip into the Pacific should be to those places where your presence can most advance those interests for which you campaigned and won the Presidency—world peace and order, the spirit of partnership that the industrialized democracies share, as well as the hopes of those new nations, such as the members of ASEAN, which seek to provide both economic well-being and democracy for their peoples. For those reasons, I believe your very first visit to the Pacific should include both the nations who are our principal allies (Japan and Australia) as well as those emerging democracies like Singapore, Malaysia, and perhaps Indonesia and the Philippines, whose aspirations we would like to encourage.

7. In terms of timing, Australia soon faces national elections in which, for the first time since 1969, the United States is not an issue.

They will be held either in December or next May. Whoever wins, and I should say now that I believe it will be your friend Malcolm Fraser, will be Prime Minister for the remainder of your first term in office. A visit from you this spring, say February or March, would avoid getting caught up in Australian politics, and would cement the relationship which will exist during the remainder of your first term of office and through the entire life of the next Australian Government. But whenever the visit occurs, since your own considerations will have to be paramount, I believe very strongly that it should be during your first visit to the Pacific. Far from being just an exercise in public relations, a visit by you to Australia will pay off handsomely during your Presidency by smoothing the way for the cooperation and collaboration that makes Australian participation in our shared endeavors so important.

8. And so I ask that you stow these thoughts in the back of your mind, and that you direct your staff that when they begin working on your first trip into the Pacific, they avoid the temptation to overlook our Australian ally. American Presidents have neglected Australia for too long now, unfairly, no matter how valid the reasons or how pressing the other demands on time. We need to rectify this, and the President of the United States is the only one who can do the job.

9. Australians would welcome you; frankly, I cannot imagine your getting, anywhere in the world, a friendlier reception than the one I know would greet you here. And, your coming here would produce a measure of forgiveness for you having sent them a friend rather than a career diplomat.

10. Last but not least, Elkin and I would like to have you and your First Lady in our new home, which we believe you will find, if not quite so spacious as the White House, at least modestly comfortable.

Alston Unquote

**Vance**

**247. Letter From President Carter to Australian Prime Minister Fraser<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 31, 1977

Dear Malcolm:

Thank you very much for your invitation to visit Australia.<sup>2</sup> I know that a visit to your country would be a rich and rewarding personal experience for me. More importantly, it would underscore the close ties we share and our common objectives in regional and global affairs.

I greatly regret, therefore, that my schedule does not allow a Pacific or Asian trip during the early part of 1978. Please understand, however, that if a trip to Asia and the Pacific becomes possible later I will give every consideration to visiting Australia.

I do want to thank you for keeping me informed of developments in Australia that affect our ties, and for giving me your views on policies of my Administration that are of consequence to your government. I value very much the correspondence that has developed between us.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 4, Australia, 1977. No classification marking. In the right-hand corner, an unknown hand wrote, "Hand-carried to State for delivery by Armacost (per his request) 10/31 1:30."

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 2, Document 246.

**248. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 9, 1977, 9–9:30 a.m.

**SUBJECT**

Meeting Between Prime Minister Robert D. Muldoon of New Zealand and  
Secretary of Defense Harold Brown

**PARTICIPANTS**

*U.S.*  
The Secretary  
The Deputy Secretary  
U.S. Ambassador to New Zealand,  
Armistead Selden  
Dep Asst Secretary, East Asia &  
Pacific Affairs, Morton I.  
Abramowitz  
Deputy Asst Secretary of State,  
East Asia & Pacific Affairs,  
Robert Oakley  
RADM Thor Hanson, Mil Asst

*New Zealand*  
Prime Minister Muldoon  
Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Frank  
Corner  
Permanent Head, Prime Minister's  
Department, Bernard Galvin  
Director, Americas Division,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,  
William Plimmer  
Ambassador Lloyd White  
Defense Attache Harry Honor

1. Prime Minister Muldoon opened the meeting by stating his appreciation for the cooperation of the United States in defense matters and emphasizing the importance of ANZUS to New Zealand. He said New Zealand wanted to play an even more active part in ANZUS.

2. SecDef emphasized the importance the U.S. attached to ANZUS and the need for a close relationship among the United States, New Zealand, and Australia. He also expressed the importance of the Pacific to the US and our determination to remain a power in East Asia.

3. Prime Minister Muldoon said that one important role New Zealand saw for herself was to help keep the newly independent States of the South Pacific cooperative and “relaxed” about great power rivalry. He thought the States of the area were doing well.

4. The Prime Minister spoke of the resumption of US nuclear warship visits and urged the US to increase their frequency—that it was important in New Zealand to do so. The increase in NPW visits was necessary to accustom the New Zealand public to them so they take such visits as a normal occurrence. New Zealand would like a continuing combination of nuclear powered and conventional warships. Sec-Def expressed U.S. appreciation to Muldoon for allowing the resump-

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330–80–0035, 26, New Zealand 000.1–425.1, Jan 1977. Confidential. The meeting took place at Blair House. Prepared by Hanson on November 14. Muldoon was in Washington November 8–11 for an official visit.

tion of NPW visits and said we would do what we can to make them a more regular occurrence. The Prime Minister said that the question of radiation monitoring for these visits had recently been resolved.

5. Speaking of the New Zealand Army battalion now garrisoned in Singapore, the Prime Minister said that Lee Kuan-yew had told him privately that the battalion could stay or could go—that he was not adverse to having it remain there. From his point of view retaining the battalion in Singapore had the advantages of giving the opportunity to train in a jungle area, offering travel abroad for the soldiers, and also providing a good image for New Zealand in South East Asia because of the large number of Maori troops in the battalion. He went on to say that if the battalion did have to be removed, New Zealand would be looking for US help in finding another training location. SecDef responded that he thought the present arrangement was helpful to stability in the area. If it were necessary to withdraw the battalion we would be glad to look into joint US/New Zealand training opportunities; he mentioned Guam as a possible spot. He hoped it would not be necessary.

6. Prime Minister Muldoon said that New Zealand has a joint defense purchasing agreement with Australia that has the aim of promoting standardization of equipment within the two military forces. He said that the agreement is fine in theory but is not producing much for New Zealand because the Australians want to dictate all the purchases. The Prime Minister just offered this for information—with no request for help.

7. The Prime Minister spoke of the proposed New Zealand-USSR fishing agreement, making the economic arguments for the argument, and saying that New Zealand would probably have to license some Soviet fishing trawlers. He asked whether New Zealand should allow the Soviets any shore installations. SecDef said our only concern was that such installations could well result in intelligence collection and urged New Zealand to be mindful of the problem. We had extensive exchanges with New Zealand on intelligence and wanted to be sure these would not be compromised. He also mentioned that many Soviet trawlers are intelligence collectors. The Prime Minister responded that if the licensing agreement included a condition allowing boarding of the trawlers, it might discourage intelligence operations. He also spoke of the problem of communications security and made the point that there was no intention of giving the Soviets a base in New Zealand but rather just the use of repair facilities and the opportunity to take on supplies. Mr. Galvin emphasized that other types of Soviet ships are already coming to New Zealand (merchants and liners) and that New Zealand already has the capacity to deal with them and could easily handle the fishing trawler from any security standpoint.

8. The Prime Minister mentioned that US warships are warmly greeted in all Southern Pacific countries and made a pitch for more visits to Fiji, Samoa, and Tonga. The SecDef acknowledged the point and said that we certainly do not intend to ignore the South-west Pacific.

9. The Prime Minister asked SecDef if he had any comments on the Indian Ocean. SecDef responded that US/Soviet negotiations would probably resume next month<sup>2</sup> and that it is possible that US and Soviet interests may be close enough to allow a modest agreement to stabilize the present situation—that if neither want to expand their forces agreement may be easy. He also emphasized that whether or not an arrangement was reached the US is not going to lose interest in the area, given the importance of limiting Soviet expansion in the Persian Gulf area to the North. He said that in the future we might be able to negotiate a reduction of forces in the Indian Ocean but certainly not now. He asked for the Prime Minister's views.

The Prime Minister responded that New Zealand has a relaxed view as long as a reasonable balance is maintained—that the Indian Ocean is important to New Zealand and they want to see a continuing US interest. New Zealand is content to leave the details to the US. SecDef commented that it is interesting to note that the largest naval force in the Indian Ocean on a week-by-week basis is the French but questioned how long that might continue.

The Prime Minister asked about Diego Garcia and SecDef responded that it is a modest naval base limited to communications and fueling facilities—that we certainly intend to continue our presence there but have no plans to increase our activities.

**Thor Hanson**

*Rear Admiral, USN*

*Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense*

---

<sup>2</sup> The third round of negotiations was held December 6–10 in Bern. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XVIII, Middle East Region; Arabian Peninsula, Document 117.

## 249. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, November 9, 1977, 11:20 a.m.–noon

### PARTICIPANTS

#### *U.S.*

President Carter

Vice President Mondale

Cyrus Vance, Secretary of State

Zbigniew Brzezinski, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Armistead Selden, U.S. Ambassador to New Zealand

Dick Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs

Mike Armacost, Staff Member, NSC

#### *New Zealand*

Prime Minister Robert Muldoon

Frank H. Corner, Secretary of Foreign Affairs

Bernard V. Galvin, Permanent Head, Prime Minister's Department

W. Neil Plimmer, Head of Australia and Americas Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Lloyd White, New Zealand Ambassador to the U.S.

The President opened the meeting by noting that in their private Oval Office session he and Prime Minister Muldoon had discussed the international economic situation, particularly problems of inflation, unemployment, and balance of payments arising out of the sluggish state of the world economy.<sup>2</sup> The President expressed appreciation for New Zealand's generosity in opening its doors to over 400 Vietnamese "boat people". He observed that he had just received a copy of the Prime Minister's newly published memoirs, *Muldoon*, and was "retaliating" with a copy of *Why Not the Best?* He also gave Muldoon a collection of photos from U.S. space satellites, and indicated that these satellite services could perform a wide variety of functions and were available to New Zealand. The President noted that there were no serious differences of view between the United States and New Zealand, paid tribute to Prime Minister Muldoon's leadership, and invited him to inform him directly of any concerns he might have now or in the future about U.S. policies.

Muldoon said that New Zealanders have always regarded the U.S. as one of their three closest friends, and suggested that this was evident

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, VIP Visit File, Box 11, New Zealand, Prime Minister Muldoon, 11/8–10/77 Cables and Memos. Secret. The meetings took place in the Oval Office and the Cabinet Room at the White House. Brzezinski initialed the first page of the memorandum of conversation.

<sup>2</sup> Carter met with Muldoon in the Oval Office from 11:20 until 11:25 a.m. (Carter Library, Presidential Materials, President's Daily Diary)



from the fact that following the first visit of an American nuclear powered warship to Wellington in some years a public opinion poll revealed 70 percent popular approval despite earlier hullabaloo in the press.

Prime Minister Muldoon highlighted two issues: (1) New Zealand's trade relations with the U.S. and broader global trading problems and (2) emerging problems and opportunities in the South Pacific. New Zealand has always looked toward Polynesia, has a substantial Polynesian as well as Maori population, and plays a major role within the South Pacific Forum.<sup>3</sup> He noted that many South Pacific islands are moving rapidly towards independence. Those that have already achieved statehood remain weak economically. Many of these islands and/or island groups are moving toward the assertion of 200-mile economic zones; a map of the region with 200-mile rings around each vividly demonstrates the potential problems that will arise. Over the long term the cohesiveness of the South Pacific Forum will be extremely important. The United States, Muldoon said, should recognize the importance of the future of these small, poor states to its own interests.

The development of their fisheries capabilities will be fundamental to economic growth prospects and their ability to provide employment for very young populations. Muldoon noted that both the Soviets and Chinese are demonstrating a growing interest in this region. In that context as well, it is vitally important that these mini-states become economically viable. Muldoon indicated that he had spoken with European leaders about these South Pacific countries, and had found the West Germans particularly responsive. He acknowledged that at the moment there are no acute or pressing problems in the area, but he emphasized that we should take advantage of the current tranquility to build a solid base for future development.

The President expressed strong support for the South Pacific Forum, commenting that the cohesiveness of these island states would help prevent the Soviets or other outside powers from establishing excessive influence in the region.

In response to a question from the Prime Minister, Cy Vance informed him that we would soon send a resident Ambassador to Fiji for the first time.<sup>4</sup> Ambassador Selden added that Western Samoa is sending a High Commissioner here.

---

<sup>3</sup> The South Pacific Forum, comprised of the independent nations of the region, was established in 1971 to promote cooperation among the nations.

<sup>4</sup> John P. Condon was appointed Ambassador to Fiji in March 1978; he presented his credentials in Suva in April.

The President asked Muldoon what he could do to help encourage regional cohesion and economic development in the South Pacific. Muldoon avoided a direct answer, suggesting that it would be presumptuous for him to offer such advice; he proposed that Armistead Selden was better equipped to provide specific proposals. He added, however, that direct bilateral aid would be an ideal instrument for assisting the small personalized regimes in the area. West Germany, he said, was assisting the development of South Pacific shipping lines, training seamen, and extending technical assistance in the fisheries field.

The President said that he would have Cy Vance, Ambassador Selden, and Dick Holbrooke look into this and follow up with the New Zealand Government.

Prime Minister Muldoon turned the discussion to problems in the field of agricultural trade with specific emphasis upon the restrictive and protectionist practices of the Europeans. New Zealand's dairy products, he said, are being squeezed gradually out of the UK's market, particularly cheese. He added that they sell relatively few dairy products in the U.S. with the exception of casein.

The President suggested that he talk in detail with Secretary Bergland about this subject, and asked why New Zealand was not taking advantage of U.S. market opportunities to sell higher quality cheeses here.

Muldoon replied that New Zealand has for years concentrated on the production of a standard cheddar with the British but was gradually losing the market for this in the UK and in Europe.

The President acknowledged there are problems, but he noted the fact that the United States is a major purchaser of many of New Zealand's agricultural products.

Muldoon acknowledged this, particularly through imports of beef which amounted to more than 50 percent of New Zealand's beef production.

The President jocularly asked whether Muldoon thought we were taking too large a percentage of their beef. In a similarly light vein the Prime Minister acknowledged some misgivings about putting so many eggs in one basket from the standpoint of hedging against uncertainties, but clearly foresaw no large alternative markets on the horizon.

The President asserted that he saw no prospect of cutting back on the import of New Zealand beef, and assured Muldoon that if we bring in additional beef we will take New Zealand's interests into account in apportioning such increases. He added that we are attempting to press the Japanese toward more liberal policies toward agricultural imports. Australian Prime Minister Fraser, the President said, was using

exports of uranium to Europe and Japan as a lever to secure more reliable access to those markets for its other exports. The Japanese appear to feel this pressure, and they may in time lower some of the barriers.

Muldoon agreed that there is some evidence of movement by Japan toward somewhat more liberal trading practices, but progress is always made difficult by internal Japanese political considerations. He noted that Wellington intends to keep the pressure on Japan and he urged us to do likewise.

The President noted that Prime Minister Fukuda is anxious that we not overdo the pressures. He then asked Muldoon for his assessment of market opportunities elsewhere in Asia.

Muldoon described a quite relaxed New Zealand-China relationship. He had visited Peking last year; the Deputy Prime Minister traveled in China more recently. Prospects for expanded trade are rather bright with increases in New Zealand exports of newsprint and linboard particularly promising. He added that the conduct of Chinese diplomats in Wellington was impeccable.

The Soviet Union is a different story. New Zealand's trade with the USSR is substantial, growing, but quite unbalanced. New Zealand sells nearly \$140 million in agricultural products to Russia but takes a negligible amount of Soviet products in return. Currently the Russians are eager to fish in New Zealand's waters. Muldoon noted that his government intended to provide some opportunities to the Soviets in this field, but to keep them limited. Recently when a New Zealand diplomat was assaulted in Moscow, he (Muldoon) had demanded an immediate apology from the Russians. The fact that they responded expeditiously suggested to him that Moscow attaches some importance to cordial relations at this time. Nonetheless, he intended to proceed with caution.

Secretary Vance asked Muldoon for his reading of Soviet intentions in the South Pacific.

Muldoon asserted that this area represents a large space on the globe in which the Soviets have nothing going. They are attracted to the crill that are abundantly available in the Antarctic. Fishing interests, he thought, were preeminent at the moment. Muldoon added that New Zealand is eager to prevent the Soviet Union from establishing on-shore installations in any of the island states whose fragile political structures might leave them vulnerable to pressure.

The President said it was his understanding that the Soviets are eager to conclude a fishing agreement with New Zealand. He acknowledged that New Zealand can absorb a Soviet presence more effectively than neighboring mini-states. He indicated that our only concern would

be with intelligence activities which the Soviets might undertake. He added that we have no intention of interfering on this question. The decision is, of course, up to New Zealand.

The Prime Minister stated that the Russians would get nothing from an agreement which they do not now have. Passenger and merchant vessels already stop regularly in New Zealand ports. They will not be given on-shore facilities.

Prime Minister Muldoon then mentioned the possibilities of expanding wool exports to the U.S. Secretary Bergland had told him,<sup>5</sup> he said, that given the current concerns about energy, cotton and wool may become important substitutes for oil-based fibers in the manufacture of carpets. He said that New Zealand produces more carpet wool than any other country, and would be looking into opportunities to sell more here.

The President suggested that Prime Minister Muldoon contact industry and trade people in Atlanta before going there later in the week. These people could put him in touch with those knowledgeable with the tufted carpet industry people in Georgia.

At this point the President suggested that the party move to lunch where the conversation could continue.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> No memorandum of conversation of this meeting has been found.

<sup>6</sup> Lunch was held from 12:10 until 1:23 p.m. (Carter Library, Presidential Materials, President's Daily Diary) No memorandum of conversation of the lunch discussion has been found.

**250. Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 8, 1977

## SUBJECT

U.S. Australian Defense Officials Consultations

*1. Background*

a. Upon completion of the 9 January 1974 meeting between Australian Minister of Defense Barnard and Secretary of Defense Schlesinger,<sup>2</sup> both parties agreed to extend and strengthen bilateral contacts to include periodic meetings between appropriate ministers and officials concerning strategic and operational developments relative to the U.S. Naval Communications Station Harold E. Holt at Northwest Cape (NWC).

b. The first round of bilateral talks took place in the Pentagon 4–6 September 1974<sup>3</sup> and covered U.S. nuclear policy and nuclear balance, deterrent role of PACOM Polaris SSBNs, use of NAVCOMSTA Harold E. Holt in support of U.S. nuclear posture, and U.S. nuclear powered warship visits.

c. The second round of bilateral talks was also hosted by ASD/ISA in the Pentagon 10–12 May 1976.<sup>4</sup> This conference covered a wide range of defense policy and operational issues in the Indian and Western Pacific Oceans.

d. The third round of bilateral talks took place in Washington on November 14–15, 1977. The DASD/ISA hosted the meeting. See Tab A for the conference agenda, and Tab B for the Australian-U.S. attendees.<sup>5</sup>

*2. Discussion*

There was a striking contrast in attitude by the Australian delegation this year compared with 1976. They were satisfied with the global strategic balance with the Soviets and with United States policies toward Asia.

They were not worried about U.S. troop withdrawals from Korea and were confident that a satisfactory agreement would be reached

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330–86–0054, 1, AUST-US 1977 Defense Consultations. Secret.

<sup>2</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. E–12, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973–1976, Document 45.

<sup>3</sup> No record of these talks has been found.

<sup>4</sup> No record of these talks has been found.

<sup>5</sup> None of the tabs was found attached.

with the Philippine Government over U.S. basing there. There were no contentious issues raised nor were there any areas of serious disagreement.

The most heated discussions were with Mr. Gelb, Asst Sec State, PM, over Indian Ocean negotiations, arms control policies and over policy on Human Rights (see memo, Tab D). In contrast to the two previous consultations, the third meeting was scheduled for two half days. The remaining time of the two weeks spent by the Australian Delegation in Washington was devoted to meetings with various DOD and State Department Agencies. See Tab C for meeting schedule.

The first session commenced at 0930, Monday, 14 November 1977, in the Pentagon OSD Conference Room (1E801-RM2). After welcoming the delegates, Mr. Abramowitz turned the meeting over to Mr. Slocombe, the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, International Security Affairs, who presented an overview of U.S. defense strategy. Mr. Slocombe stated that the current nuclear balance between the superpowers dominates the US-Soviet relationship and strong elements of competition still exist between the two countries. In this competition, the U.S. has two clear cut advantages (1) a significant lead in technology, and (2) genuine Allies. To offset these advantages the USSR has built a huge nuclear force. It is very unlikely that the Soviet force will be used for a strategic attack against the U.S. but the possibility of such an attack must drive our defense preparations. The most vital defense task of the U.S. is to maintain the present strategic balance. The U.S. must also be able to respond at any level to control the situation. It is vital that neither the Soviets or our allies perceive the U.S. posture as inferior to that of the Soviets. We would prefer to maintain the current balance between our country and the Soviets through a SALT agreement, but the balance must be maintained by any means possible if such an agreement is not reached. If an agreement is reached along the line we desire in our SALT negotiations, we will: (1) keep the USSR far below the levels they would achieve in the absence of such an agreement; and (2) we will maintain the full range of technical options necessary to protect our European allies. Mr. Pritchett responded to this overview by stating that although Australia is a keen advocate of nonproliferation as a means to the end, they realize the importance of maintaining the nuclear balance that exists. Mr. Mathams questioned what effect the extensive Soviet Civil Defense (CD) program would have in upsetting the nuclear balance. Mr. Slocombe replied that the Soviet CD effort will have little effect due to two factors: (1) we do not target the civilian population; and (2) the best protection is evacuation and Soviet plans are little better than ours in that vital area. The great danger is that the Soviets may perceive that they have an advantage because of their CD efforts and attack. Mr. Mathams then asked if there

was a possibility that the Soviets could lock in the numbers of weapons in an agreement and later increase their technology to build an advantage over the U.S.? He was assured that the U.S. would not sit by and let this happen. The Australians also asked that if a SALT agreement freezes the nuclear forces, doesn't this give the Soviets an advantage in building their conventional forces? This is not foreseen as a problem, but again, the U.S. would not let this happen. Mr. Pritchett finished the session by stating that the Australians have a greater confidence this year in U.S. actions than last year. He also added, in response to a question, that he does not believe Pine Gap, or any other defense facilities used by the Americans in Australia, would be a campaign issue.<sup>6</sup>

Mr. Abramowitz led off the second period with a review of U.S. defense policies in Asia. He noted that a comprehensive review of our strategies, conducted since President Carter took office,<sup>7</sup> has confirmed the validity of our previous policies. This fact is obscured somewhat by two major announcements made prior to the completion of the study—the withdrawal from Korea and the Indian Ocean negotiations. The sequence of events in these two cases have caused some concern among our allies that there has been a major shift in our basic policy, which is not the case. Mr. Abramowitz then went on to discuss four countries—Korea, the PRC, Japan, and the Philippines.

The decision to withdraw major portions of our ground forces from Korea had its roots in two factors: (1) the exceptional growth in South Korea's military, technical, and economic capabilities; and (2) the U.S. cannot remain in Korea forever. The first factor is the principal one, but the second one is also significant. The U.S. recognizes the dangers of such a withdrawal, but a very good program has been developed to minimize the risk. This program includes: (1) back-loading the withdrawal to the 1981/82 timeframe; (2) significant U.S. increases to the South Korean defense capabilities; and, (3) the maintenance of U.S. air and sea power in the region both during the withdrawal and into the foreseeable future. What Congress will do to support the administration is still unclear and this factor could become a problem.

The Japanese attitude towards developing security forces is based on: (1) the Japanese do not feel threatened; and, (2) the U.S. fills the security void by providing protection. The Japanese attitude is changing and there will be a slow but steady increase in Japanese efforts to improve their defense posture over the next few years, but nothing spectacular.

---

<sup>6</sup> Malcolm Fraser won the national election for Prime Minister on December 10.

<sup>7</sup> Not further identified.

The Sino/Soviet split has had worldwide benefits. We have been able to reallocate defense resources and East-West tensions have been reduced. We would like very much to normalize our relationship with the PRC to perpetuate this trend, but Taiwan is still a major obstacle. Another obstacle is political. Administration setbacks with Congress regarding SALT, the Panama Canal, and the Korean withdrawal has slowed the Administration's plans. Normalization is a goal, but it cannot be predicted when this will occur.

We have a very strong desire to maintain our bases in the Philippines. We recognize that bases cannot be maintained in a hostile atmosphere and the issues will have to be negotiated. We have noted, however, a major shift in the Philippine attitude since last year. This year they are talking more in terms of mutual benefits. The principal issues in any negotiations are Philippine sovereignty of these bases and what it will cost the U.S. On the negative side—there may be congressional problems due to: (1) human rights issues; (2) high cost; and, (3) lack of conviction in Congress that the bases are of value in view of the lack of an immediate SEA threat. The outlook is not rosy, but hope exists that a settlement can be reached.

In discussing the PRC, it was noted that the PRC will require modernization to remain a major power and this modernization will require foreign assistance. The belief that the PRC is self-sufficient is a myth. The PRC will make major efforts to obtain dual use technology from the West and arms from Europe (but not the U.S.). The Chinese will use cash, rather than utilize foreign credits or investment. This modernization will require at least a decade and the Chinese will not put themselves in a position to be dictated to either politically or in the technical field.

MGen Fish arrived at 1155 and gave a presentation on President Carter's Arm Transfer Policy (of 19 May).<sup>8</sup>

The consultations adjourned at 1230.

The consultations on 15 November commenced at 0900 in the Australian Embassy. Membership was basically the same. Mr. Pritchett reviewed some of Australia's perceptions of the US-Australian relationship and pointed out that the lack of a clear threat to Australia made the formulation of an Australian force structure difficult. Australia has confidence in the superpower nuclear balance and there is no threat from any major power. Indonesia has neither the inclination nor the power to mount an attack on Australia and will not for at least a

---

<sup>8</sup> PD/NSC-13, Conventional Arms Transfer Policy, May 13, is printed in *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. XXVI, Arms Control and Nonproliferation, Document 271. For the text of Carter's statement on the policy, see *Public Papers: Carter, 1977*, Book I, pp. 931-932.



decade. Indonesia could be in the future either an adversary or an ally. Australia desires a medium technology defense force (not top level) for economy purposes with forces not built for a specific contingency. They realize that a war in Europe would have tremendous impact on allied assistance to Australian security. They realize that, even without a change in U.S. policies, the assignment of priorities could draw significant allied support away from Australia in a crisis.

Mr. Abramowitz then discussed several factors. He pointed out that the Soviet fleet in the Pacific performs a certain way because it is a defensive fleet due to U.S. presence. It was also pointed out that the Soviet Pacific fleet has more aviation and naval infantry than other Soviet fleets.

At this point, Mr. Pritchett wanted to make clear that when he stated yesterday that Australia had confidence in American policy, it was not a blanket approval. There are some aspects of concern. He also mentioned that the Australian defense goal is 3% of the GNP, a rather modest sum. The question was asked if the Melbourne, the Australian aircraft carrier, would be replaced. The Melbourne is presently programmed until 1985. He replied that the decision has not been made but may be made in the next 18 months. The cost of a new carrier replacement would be about 1/2 of the annual defense budget which makes it a significant decision.

The question was asked what changes would occur if the Australian Labor Party returned to power. Mr. Pritchett pointed out that the Labor Party did not neglect defense and that most of the current procurement was initiated under the Labor Party. The return of the Labor Party would, therefore, have little effect.

The Australians are enthusiastic about the steps they have taken to increase military cooperation with their Asian neighbors. This increased emphasis includes intelligence gathering, military exercises and exchange of military visits.

The Indian Ocean negotiations were reviewed by Mr. Lyle Breckon, Deputy Director of Office of Arms Control and Disarmament, State Department. Mr. Breckon stated that the third in this series of talks would be 1–10 December and that the U.S. objective remains stabilization of past and current levels.<sup>9</sup> The thrust of the talks is to form an agreement to limit future activities and reduce tensions. After this initial agreement we will then discuss possible reductions. We believe that we have a meeting of the mind with the Soviets on many issues but the U.S. will not agree to: (1) include allies; (2) include bases outside the area, or (3) expand the definition of the Indian Ocean outside the

---

<sup>9</sup> See footnote 2, Document 248.

actual area. Mr. Breckon assured the Australians that their concerns are being taken into account and that exercises with Australian forces and U.S. naval calls to Western Australian ports will be continued. It was also stressed that an escape clause will be included in any agreement to insure that our commitments to Australia under the ANZUS Treaty will be protected. Transit rights would not be affected by an agreement and we have not agreed to a restriction on any specific type of weapon systems. We have, however, made certain agreements which may lead to restricting certain weapon systems. In response to a question by AVM Jordan, Mr. Breckon stated that the Diego Garcia construction presently scheduled would be completed. Mr. Pritchett stated that since the next Indian Ocean Talks would be 1–10 December, these talks will have no political impact on the 10 December elections in Australia. The impact on Australian interests that result from these talks, however, has significant political impact on Australian politics. The Australians are, therefore, very sensitive to the agreements we reach with the Soviets.

### *3. 1978 Consultations*

In his final meeting with Mr. Abramowitz prior to returning to Australia, Mr. Pritchett expressed his appreciation and complete satisfaction with the consultations. Mr. Abramowitz recommended and the Australians agreed that the next round of meetings would be held in Canberra in about a year. This will enable Mr. Abramowitz' replacement to become familiar with our defense facilities in Australia and to meet Australian defense and foreign affairs officials.

**LTC George H. Douse**

*Assistant for Australia*

**251. Letter From President Carter to New Zealand Prime Minister Muldoon<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 27, 1978

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

I set great store by the very close and fruitful relationship existing between the United States and New Zealand. I have therefore asked Vice President Mondale to visit Wellington and to carry forward on my behalf the discussions we had with you and your colleagues in Washington this past November.<sup>2</sup> I found your visit here at that time extremely useful not only in furthering our bilateral ties but in deepening my understanding of the cooperative steps our two countries can take in the Pacific Basin and elsewhere.

The Vice President, who, as you know, has been playing a key role in foreign policy, is looking forward to discussing a wide range of political, economic, and trade issues. He will also be presenting our thoughts on such key problems as food and energy, issues to which your Government, I know has been devoting close attention.

I do hope to be able to make a trip to New Zealand at some time in the future. In the meantime, I will be looking forward with great interest to hearing the Vice President's report of his visit.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Overseas Assignments—Trip Files, 1977–1980, Box 22, VP's Visit to the Pacific, 4/29/78–5/11/78: New Zealand (5/9/78–5/10/78)—President Carter's Letter to PM Muldoon. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Documents 248 and 249.

**252. Letter From President Carter to Australian Prime Minister Fraser<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 27, 1978

Dear Malcolm:

I had hoped to be able to visit Australia this year, both to continue the very valuable discussions we held when you were in Washington<sup>2</sup> and to demonstrate the deep interest we have in the US-Australia partnership. However, a number of urgent domestic and foreign issues have made it impossible for me to undertake a trip to Asia and the Pacific area in 1978.

I have therefore asked Vice President Mondale to visit Canberra to meet with you and your colleagues. As you know, I rely heavily on Fritz, and he has been playing a crucial role in both domestic and foreign policy. He is looking forward to discussing with you a wide range of bilateral and multilateral issues, including such matters of deep concern to your government as world trade and related economic issues and our Indian Ocean talks with the Soviet Union. Fritz will also be presenting some thoughts we have on the urgent problems of food and energy, areas in which Australia can clearly play a vital role.

I very much hope at some point to be able to make a trip to Australia. In the meantime, I will look forward with keen interest to hearing Fritz's report on his visit with you.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Overseas Assignments—Trip Files, 1977–1980, Box 22, VP's Visit to the Pacific, 4/29/78–5/11/78: Australia (5/8/78)—President Carter's Letter to PM Fraser. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Documents 237 and 238.

**253. Letter From the Australian Ambassador to Thailand (Jockel) to Vice President Mondale<sup>1</sup>**

Bangkok, May 4, 1978

Your Excellency,

I have just been instructed by my Foreign Minister, Mr Andrew Peacock, to convey a message from him to you today. Copies of this message are being conveyed to your Embassy here and in Jakarta and to the State Department.

Message begins:

"I have welcomed the reports of successful discussions between our officials in Washington last week on the questions of operational, international and other initiatives which our two countries might take on Indo-Chinese refugee questions.<sup>2</sup> Officials provisionally agreed that Australia might take the initiative in discussing these problems with Malaysia while the United States might initiate discussions with Indonesia as part of a coordinated effort which we would undertake in conjunction with the UNHCR and the regional countries to deal with the refugee problems.

I understand that you intend to discuss the refugee question during your visit to Australia. I hesitate to raise aspects of the problem in advance of your visit but I have been informed that you will be discussing the Indo-Chinese refugee situation during your current visit to Southeast Asia. This being the case, we would like to ask your help on an aspect of the refugee problem which is currently affecting Australia most urgently. Our concern arises from reports, some unconfirmed, that there are up to 25 boats of refugees in or near Indonesian waters, all of which have Australia as their intended destination. If they are able to proceed there will be cause for concern that our mutual interest in resolving the refugee problem will be harmed.

There is a serious risk that the arrival of boats in numbers could become publicly unmanageable and that community opinion would turn against the policy of accepting refugees. With the United States, we are anxious to give a lead to international opinion aimed at resolving the central problem of moving Indo-Chinese refugees out of the Southeast Asian region in an orderly and humane way.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Foreign Trip Files, Box 131, [Vice President's Visit to Asia, 4/29–5/10/78]: Australia—[Diplomatic Trip Cables], [5/2–5/31/78]. Confidential. Mondale was in Bangkok May 4–5.

<sup>2</sup> A summary of the April 26–27 meetings is in telegram 111014 to Canberra, May 1. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780186–0116)

Australia has had discussions at senior level with the Indonesian Government over a period of months and has asked them to intercept Indo-Chinese refugee boats transitting Indonesian waters en route to Australia to enable the Australian authorities to process those boat people who wish to settle in Australia. Naturally, we wish to interview these people to establish that they are genuine refugees and that they are medically clear. The Australian Government has offered the Indonesians a guarantee that it is willing to accept all such boat refugees in Indonesian waters who are seeking to settle in Australia except those who have taken part in the seizure of a vessel.

The Indonesians have *not* yet given us a substantive reply and have in fact been providing food and fuel to enable the boats to continue their journey to Australia without delay. We have found that a number of the boat refugees who have arrived in Australia wish to go to the United States, France or other countries but had taken the risk of coming to Australia on boats because of the delays in the processing of refugees from the camps principally in Malaysia.

In addition to the undertaking which Australia has given to the Indonesians, it could be most helpful for Australia's representations if you could reinforce our position and the urgency with which we view the matter at the highest levels in Indonesia by assuring the Indonesians that any refugees that do *not* go to Australia will be accepted by the United States.<sup>3</sup> I know that there may be a problem for you in giving such an undertaking because your Administration is still waiting for the necessary parole authority. However, we have thought that, as the numbers, measured against your overall effort, would be relatively small, such an undertaking could well be feasible within the existing authority.

The Australian Government would accordingly be most grateful if you could in the spirit of the discussions in Washington last week, lend your personal support to our efforts to obtain from the Indonesians their agreement to permit the orderly processing in Indonesian centres of those refugees who enter Indonesian ports on the understanding that our two countries would guarantee the prompt onward movement and resettlement of all of them. Our minds would be greatly eased if we could feel that Indonesia was prepared to cooperate with us and stop the flow of boats to Australia. We could then get on with the tasks of further developing an effective program to handle the boat case people without hazard to themselves or to popular support for our policies. I am sure you will understand that I would *not* have made this appeal for your help at such short notice if we were *not* faced with

---

<sup>3</sup> Mondale visited Jakarta May 7-9. See Documents 206 and 207.

the serious and urgent problem of a large new concentration of boats capable of making a dramatic and disturbing new series of unauthorised arrivals.

I would only add that we will of course understand if you feel unable to respond to our request by speaking yourself to the Indonesians. We will in any event look forward to important discussions of the refugee problem during your visit to Australia next week.

With warm personal regards. Looking forward to seeing you in Canberra.

Andrew Peacock"

Message Ends

Yours sincerely,

(G.A. Jockel)<sup>4</sup>  
*Ambassador*

---

<sup>4</sup> Jockel signed "G. Jockel" above his typed signature.

---

## **254. Telegram From the Embassy in Australia to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Canberra, May 11, 1978, 0059Z

3619. EA for Assistant Secretary Holbrooke only. Subject: Vice President's Trip: Uncleared Memorandum of Conversation With Fraser.

Place: Parliament House, Cabinet Room.

Date: May 8, 1978—1040–1200 hours.

Participants:

US  
The Vice President  
Ambassador Alston  
R. Moe

Australian  
Malcolm Fraser, Prime Minister  
Douglas Anthony, Deputy  
P.M., and Minister of Trade

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Foreign Trip Files, Box 131, [Vice President's Visit to Asia, 4/29–5/10/78]: Australia—[Diplomatic Trip Cables], [5/2–5/31/78]. Confidential; Exdis.

D. Aaron  
J. Johnson  
D. Clift  
A. Eisele  
Asst. Sec. Richard  
Holbrooke  
M. Armacost  
Dep. Asst. Sec. M.  
Abramowitz  
Dep. Asst. Sec. E.  
Heginbotham  
Christopher A. Squire

Ian Sinclair, Minister of  
Primary Industry  
Peter Nixon, Minister of  
Transport  
John Howard, Treasurer  
Andrew Peacock, Minister for  
Foreign Affairs  
James Killen, Minister of  
Defense  
Michael MacKellar, Minister for  
Immigration & Ethnic  
Affairs  
Geoffrey Yeend, Secretary, P.M.  
and Cabinet  
John Stone, Dep. Secretary to  
the Treasury  
Sir Arthur Tange, Secretary,  
Department of Defense  
Nicholas Parkinson, Secretary,  
Department of Foreign  
Affairs  
Jim Scully, Secretary,  
Department of Trade &  
Resources

1. The Prime Minister welcomed the Vice President and stated the importance he attached to being able to discuss in detail various matters during the Vice President's visit. He felt that economic issues were central to Australia and the U.S. at this time. Paramount perhaps were successful trade negotiations, particularly those being conducted at the multilateral trade negotiations (MTN). The U.S., whether it liked it or not, had an enormous role to play in world economic matters. The Prime Minister added that later they might also get to bilateral matters, but first it would be a great help if the Vice President would describe his visits to the three countries of Southeast Asia he had just visited, and any observations he might wish to make.

2. The Vice President thanked the Prime Minister on behalf of himself, his family and his party. He was delighted to be in Australia. It was an enormous opportunity to come to Australia where there was such a close emotional connection between our respective societies which both began on the same principles of justice and human liberties. It was, added the Vice President, a great honor to be in Australia.

3. The purpose of this visit which the Vice President was making on behalf of President Carter was to underscore the continuity of the U.S. presence in Asia, and the constancy of that presence.



4. Saying he would comment briefly, the Vice President noted that the U.S. had been a Pacific power from its inception, is and would continue to be. In Manila discussions continued around the control of American military bases—some progress was made in separating out issues which could not be solved right away—and compensation.<sup>2</sup> The Filipinos desire jurisdiction for crimes committed by American military in line of duty—something which Congress would never countenance. Progress was made, and a new atmosphere created.

5. In Thailand the visit had been very successful.<sup>3</sup> There too our objective was to be seen, to demonstrate the permanency of our commitment. We reconfirmed to the Thais our commitment under the Manila Pact. We were told that it was not our words which were important, but the way we responded to tangible needs. We signed a major aid agreement concerning rural electrification. We discussed providing them a squadron of A-4's. We believe the Thais felt much better after our visit about U.S. interest in the region. They asked us curiously whether we were committed to ANZUS, we told them we were totally committed. One thing we might do, incidentally, would be to announce a joint naval exercise off the west Australian coast. This might make SEA nations aware of the tangible nature of our commitment. We would be seeking to reaffirm and in a tangible way to demonstrate clearly to all our firm interest. Secretary of Defense Brown, National Security Administrator Brzezinski had recently given speeches on the permanency of our interest in Asia. Brzezinski intended to go to China soon,<sup>4</sup> as the Prime Minister knew. The U.S. was trying by many ways to demonstrate this permanency.

6. The Prime Minister said he was encouraged by the Vice President's point of view that actions not merely statements were necessary. There could be a number of ways to follow up statements with action. It was the substance that the United States displayed that was important.

7. The Vice President said he anticipated that this fact would be misrepresented by the press. He had in Indonesia thanked the Australian Government for its help on refugees—this had been distorted by the press to a criticism of Australia for not doing enough.

8. The Prime Minister noted that since the Vice President was visiting Southeast Asia and the Western Pacific, it would be helpful if they discussed these countries for a while. Afterwards, they could take up bilateral issues and economic ones. He said that in their earlier

---

<sup>2</sup> See Documents 321 and 322.

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 167 and 168.

<sup>4</sup> May 20–23. For the memoranda of conversation, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XIII, China, Documents 108–111.

meeting the Vice President had mentioned energy research. His understanding, continued the Prime Minister, was that the Rand Corporation or one of its subsidiaries was trying to organize such research in Hawaii at the local or village level. At the Commonwealth Heads of Government Regional Meeting (CHOGRM) at Sydney a working group had been formed, at India's suggestion, on energy research specifically involving the local and village level. Ways should be found to coordinate such types of research; it would be to everyone's advantage.

9. The Vice President asked what the Prime Minister would recommend to that end; energy had been a component of the talks held with almost every country the Vice President had visited so far.

10. The Prime Minister said that what was needed was consultations between officials, to find out what was happening and see if the separate efforts could be brought together.

11. Deputy Prime Minister Anthony said that there were already some joint studies, particularly in coal research. If U.S. and Australian officials got together, probably a statement of joint goals could be evolved.

12. The Vice President said that applied both to coal conversion and to solar energy.

13. The Prime Minister said that although the boundaries were somewhat wider, coal conversion and solar energy were more related to Australian needs than village or local level energy studies.

14. The Vice President said he got the point. The two countries should share their research, and he would so recommend.

15. Deputy Prime Minister Anthony said that since the subject of energy had arisen, he noticed that the U.S. had imposed an embargo against the use of foreign uranium in the U.S. This he understood was a clearly political act to protect American suppliers.

16. The Vice President said that this was the first he had heard of an embargo on non-U.S. uranium. He found it hard to believe, but he would check and get back to the Australian side.

17. The Prime Minister noted that Iran-Australian talks on purchase by Iran of Australian uranium had just broken down. Iran was insisting on automatic approval for reprocessing. Some 15,000 tons of Australian uranium were involved, so it was not easy for Australia to forego the deal.

18. The Vice President said he had heard about this and very much appreciated Australia holding the line on reprocessing.

19. The Prime Minister said the Iranians were pushing Australia very hard.

20. The Vice President said the U.S. greatly appreciated this fact. He doubted that there was any issue the President felt more deeply

about than inadequate safeguards for uranium and the diversion of weapons grade material. The U.S. had encountered great domestic resentment already during the present administration by government shutting down the plants producing plutonium. He would, he said, check immediately on the matter of a uranium embargo.

21. Deputy Prime Minister Anthony urged strongly that the U.S. should either change its rules on reprocessing, or state categorically that it was not going to change. Talk that the U.S. was perhaps reconsidering made it very difficult for countries such as Australia.

22. The Vice President said that our position remained as stated on reprocessing, and now there was U.S. legislation as well which would render any change even more difficult.

23. The Prime Minister said that Iran was implying to Australia that the U.S. had now granted it prior consent on reprocessing. The Vice President noted that quite evidently Iran was trying to play one country off against the other. He said the U.S. would get an official document into the hands of the Prime Minister spelling out the U.S. position.

24. The Prime Minister called on Foreign Minister Peacock to begin discussion of political issues in the geographical areas just visited by the Vice President.

25. Peacock said that the Indian Ocean talks affected in Australia land based aircraft as well as the ANZUS effort.<sup>5</sup> The holding of exercises off Australia's west coast in spite of the June 1977 baseline date for "normal" strength comparisons had been Australia's strong desire. The territory of Australia delineated as "Indian Ocean" had also been a concern. While some concern remained, the recent Australian-American consultations in Washington on the Indian Ocean had been extraordinarily effective in reducing the level of that concern.<sup>6</sup> It was the very linchpin of U.S.-Australian cooperation that the two sides stay in touch. Peacock knew that Assistant Secretary Holbrooke would go to visit the PRC within 3 weeks. Was this a signal of forward movement on China, and what was congressional opinion?

26. The Vice President said that in his personal view there was a good deal of receptivity in Congress. They would say "normalize relations with the PRC, continue good relations with Taipei, and get on with it!" It was an interesting issue in American life, that uniquely,

---

<sup>5</sup> A fourth round of U.S.-Soviet talks was held in Bern February 7–17. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XVIII, Middle East Region; Arabian Peninsula, Document 120.

<sup>6</sup> A report on the discussions, held in Washington April 11–13, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XVIII, Middle East Region; Arabian Peninsula, Document 122.

in relation to a Communist country, both conservatives and liberals in large numbers espoused recognition.

27. Assistant Secretary Holbrooke noted it was most interesting to see that Congress was divided three ways on the issue. There were the Taiwan irreconcilables (Barry Goldwater, for example); there were those strongly for moving ahead right away with recognition, such as Ted Kennedy, Scoop Jackson and Allan Cranston. Then there were a large middle group who identified with what the Vice President had just said about Congress. These included Jacob Javits and Edward Brooke. The PRC still insisted on its three conditions. It would not be as difficult to get recognition of the PRC through Congress as were the Panama Canal Treaties, in that 67 votes were not needed in the Senate, but it would still be difficult. It was now recognized in Washington that apart from an executive branch decision, there would have to be a legislative branch component for normalizing relations with the PRC.

28. The Vice President said that Mr. Brzezinski would soon be visiting the PRC. Normalization of U.S. relations with the PRC was not the goal of the visit, but while there he would test the temperature, and get an indication of where things stood.

29. Assistant Secretary Holbrooke emphasized that every scenario the U.S. was considering for normalization of relations with the PRC called for continuance of all ties with Taiwan, save diplomatic, a U.S. military presence and a defense treaty. There was absolutely no intention of abandoning Taiwan.

30. The Vice President said that as a matter of policy the U.S. would not dump Taiwan.

31. The Prime Minister said he had become convinced that the U.S. ease in normalizing relations with the PRC on most favorable terms for the U.S. depended largely on the Chinese perception of U.S. military strength. The Chinese perception of U.S. strength in the Indian Ocean and elsewhere still was of critical importance in getting any satisfactory agreement with them.

32. Peacock noted the PRC was now quite stridently supporting ASEAN in the last few weeks. The Chinese would then welcome the Vice President's visit to SEA on those terms. It showed that the U.S. was stepping up its involvement with ASEAN in an ASEAN-U.S. format. The Philippines support this strongly.

33. The Vice President noted that the Thais were somewhat more reluctant, the Malaysians were more nuanced. The Thais claim to be worried about appearances; they would prefer that the proposed US-ASEAN Cabinet meeting be held in Asia, as it would be easier for the U.S. to come to the Five, they claim. We are, of course, talking about the whole U.S. Cabinet, which could not go to Asia.

34. Peacock said that closer ties with ASEAN are distinctly in the U.S. and Australian interest.

35. The Prime Minister said that while ASEAN generally wanted the U.S. security insurance to be available, at the same time they were very much interested in maintaining their own independence.

36. Assistant Secretary Holbrooke said there had been an ASEAN proposal that the Cabinet level meeting take place during, and under the cover of, the UN General Assembly meeting in New York. The U.S. would prefer an earlier date.

37. The Vice President said that the U.S. saw ASEAN as a very helpful institution.

38. Deputy Prime Minister Anthony said that the Vice President had mentioned his very satisfactory trip to Thailand. A lot of Communist SEA intrusions were being made in Thailand. Could the Vice President give his assessment of how the U.S. could help the Thais?

39. Insurgency was never raised during the Thai-U.S. talks, answered the Vice President. A lot of economic problems had been discussed, their huge gas reservoirs. Refugees had also been discussed, but not insurgency.

40. Assistant Secretary Holbrooke noted that their trip was the first time since about 1963 that any important American figure had visited Thailand without such a discussion. No real changes in the Thai internal security situation were evident.

41. The Prime Minister said the Thais always believed they could handle their own security—and they have always demonstrated their lack of ability to do so.

42. Turning to economic matters, the Prime Minister said there was no doubt that what was achieved in trade talks this year would set the pattern for a long period ahead.<sup>7</sup> There were signs of protectionism rising in Europe; the Japanese had expressed their concerns to him about it and the extent of Japanese penetration into European markets was not all that great. There were some protectionist signs in the U.S. Congress. He supposed, added the Prime Minister, that the MTN would achieve something if it stopped the U.S. and the EEC going further down the protectionist track. But Australia thought such negative achievements were insufficient. An expansion of the world market had to be sought, or increased tensions could be developed between developed countries, and between LDC's and DC's.

---

<sup>7</sup> Reference is to the ongoing Tokyo Round of multilateral trade negotiations under the GATT, which began in 1973.

43. During the Kennedy Round<sup>8</sup> we had all insisted that agriculture be part of the arrangements, but what had happened? "Europe" had successfully fought to keep agriculture out. So it had been a failure. Under MTN a 40 per cent lowering of industrial tariffs over 8 years starting in 1980 equates to  $\frac{1}{2}$  of 1 per cent per year—a lowering which can be more than wiped out by currency fluctuations. Industrial tariff reductions cover 40 per cent of American, European and Japanese exports—but only 5 per cent of Australian. Australia believes it should reevaluate its position on MTN, and Australia is prepared to do so, but only with reciprocity. There are non tariff barriers (NTB's) on over 25 per cent of total Australian exports; NTB's on 9 per cent of her imports. As in the Common Fund, Australia deliberately moved towards the B Group countries<sup>9</sup> recently. At the Sydney CHOGRM meeting, but more importantly at the London Commonwealth Economic Conference, several Commonwealth developed countries moved closer to the Australian position.

44. These two issues, continued the Prime Minister, namely the MTN and the future of UNCTAD, are interrelated. The expansion of markets seems to Australia to be vital. It seems to us time for a sharp major economic reassessment; we must come up with a major change between now and July,<sup>10</sup> or else we will go to the final negotiations in a pretty rigid situation. That is why we saw the Manley-Schmidt meeting,<sup>11</sup> which now appears to have disintegrated—as advantageous.

45. Another concern to Australia is the continuing decline in value of the U.S. dollar. Nothing is more central than that the U.S. dollar be strong, and be seen to be strong. Devaluation is seen by Australia as destabilizing. There are many things the U.S. could do, such as enact an energy policy, and make sure there is no further inflation. The next two or three months are a watershed. If the actions to stabilize the dollar are of the wrong dimensions, it could be a long time before we could recover. Australia had already set in motion a reexamination of her MTN policy; this has to be seen against a background of reciprocity, NTB's which are more balanced, and Australia's tariff reduction since 1973.

46. The Vice President noted that the condition of the U.S. currency compared favorably with about every currency of the world. The real

---

<sup>8</sup> The Kennedy Round of negotiations began in 1963 and ended in 1967.

<sup>9</sup> Group B was the developed country negotiating group in the Common Fund negotiations.

<sup>10</sup> Representatives of the countries participating in the multilateral trade negotiations met in Geneva before the July 15 deadline to complete the negotiations. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. III, Foreign Economic Policy, Document 144.

<sup>11</sup> See footnote 3, Document 259.

growth of 5 per cent appears to have been sustained. Unemployment dropped to 6 per cent, 5½ million jobs had been added to the labor market since the present administration had been in power, which was a record, and the tax and business incentive package under preparation would give added help. The U.S. was not suffering from inflation caused by excess demand, but rather by cost push. There had been an urgent, major program to ride down inflationary tendencies to a much more stable level; this had been directed by the President. For example, there was stepped up sale of timber off Federal lands to bring down lumber and thus housing costs. The U.S. has put into play a major effort that the U.S. dollar not be inflated beyond that level that every industrialized society seems to suffer.

47. Another key is a fundamental long range energy policy; we are stepping up conversion to coal of oil and gas fired plants. This we see as very important. The value of the dollar was challenged primarily because of the current balance deficit, which has been entirely energy related. Even absent a National Energy Act, during the past year industrial and private users' savings of energy has brought about a much better growth-to-energy use ratio. Now Alaska oil is on line, which is a tremendous help. We have started a policy of selling gold; the dollar is firm and has appreciated again versus the yen. While there are difficulties, the U.S. would not want to trade its economic problems for what other nations face.

48. The Vice President continued that he was not bragging, but major economies ought to bear part of the burden that increased oil debts have on undeveloped countries; America has. On trade, we've called our GATT offer "generous". The U.S. would effect a 40 per cent reduction on tariffs overall. We estimate that towards Australia that would be \$520 million in U.S. imports. We have long sought more liberal agricultural trade policies with the EEC but with only limited success. Your STR representative Garland and ours, Strauss, recently talked about cooperating more closely.<sup>12</sup> We think movement likely this year. We have tried to make our offers especially responsive to the LDC's. For instance, on mahogany plywood and coconut oil for Manila. All products have strong domestic competition, and we have fought off protectionist tendencies domestically. Industrial nations must take the lead in pushing the MTN forward. If they fail to do so, protectionism will quickly gain ground. The time to make progress is this year. If we do not, the U.S. is fairly pessimistic on what will follow.

---

<sup>12</sup> A report on the April 10 meeting is in telegram 5475 from the Mission in Geneva, April 12. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780157-0448) Documentation on Carter administration policies in the MTN is in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. III, Foreign Economic Policy.



49. The Prime Minister said that Australia agrees. A 40pc tariff cut sounds good. At an average of 8–10pc starting in 1980, this means  $\frac{1}{2}$ pc for 8 years. Monetary changes would probably wipe this out. This is really not much liberalization. This in addition applies over only 20pc of world trade. The only way we can get liberalized trade is by countries being prepared to make sure agriculture is included, as a condition of reducing industrial tariffs. The U.S. is very firm in its view that agriculture will be included. In the Kennedy Round, this attitude did not finally prevail. It is a very unequal equation. It is 40pc for the U.S., Europe and Japan, and only 5pc for Australia. Many LDC's would gain even less than 5pc, and there will be no way to cover up an MTN failure.

50. The Vice President said the U.S. was the most liberal of all nations in trade, and should not feel itself embarrassed.

51. The Prime Minister said it was not his intention to embarrass the U.S.; his intention was broader based. He wished to make sure that there was a greater discussion and understanding of the limitations of the MTN industrial proposals. It would not solve world trading problems.

52. The Vice President said that Strauss and Garland had agreed to crack that nut, that is, the agricultural nut. How they developed their strategy might make a difference. We agreed clearly that the EEC had to be as forthcoming on agricultural products as on industrial goods. How do we achieve this?

53. The Prime Minister answered that there was no chance if the EEC believed that if it remained firm, agricultural products would be pushed aside again. It all gets back to the fact that, if all that happens is that the MTN makes 40pc industrial tariff cuts, MTN's limitations will be pointed out as no one will see world expansion of trade markets much affected. The Japanese at our recent meeting understood this; they are reassessing their Common Fund attitude; they agreed to cooperate on an export code for agriculture. The (Japanese) machine works slowly, but it seems to understand. It shows that Japan is a responsible international citizen. If we let the MTN go on its present track, it will not be successful. We need to try to reassess, to get greater content. Our governments can make this effort successful. People tend to get stuck in positions. It will take hard bargaining, and it is moreover not an environment for big movement.

54. The Vice President said he would welcome any suggestions for the upcoming conference. Any suggestions, he repeated, would be gratefully received.

55. The Prime Minister said that one suggestion would be the complete determination on the U.S. part not to let "Europe" push



the agriculture question aside. The U.S. could make it all or nothing. Probably only the U.S. carried enough weight to make this stick.

56. Deputy Prime Minister Anthony said that Australia knew if the U.S. did not push, there would be no hope. Australia had told Strauss they would stick right beside him. Australia was waiting to see if the U.S. ratified the International Sugar Agreement (ISA). If America could finalize that, it would really be a weapon with which to wallop into the EEC. They were quite recalcitrant on joining. It was a critical time.

57. The Vice President said the U.S. agreed; it had every intention of signing the ISA, but there were temporary troubles which would take a little time to resolve.

58. Deputy Prime Minister Anthony said that Australia had submitted its offer. Since 1971 and Britain's joining the EEC Australian agricultural trade with the EEC had plummeted. In fact these products had been completely excluded in these markets. This was causing increasing resentment, both with LDC's and with Australia. He did not think that Australia would be successful in breaking through the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), but they might get a code established.

59. The Prime Minister confided that three or four weeks ago, he had said very critical things about the Common Market. That had been done on the basis of heretofore undisclosed information, namely that the French were pushing to foreclose negotiations with Australia over meat before the negotiations had even started.

60. The Vice President said he would review the MTN situation with Strauss, and impart to him the intensity of the Prime Minister's feeling on the matter. He thought there was no problem in principle, if we had been unsuccessful in breaking down the agricultural barriers, we had to keep at it. It had been the same with the Japanese—there had been a very successful test run in Osaka.

61. Deputy Assistant Secretary Heginbotham explained that as an experiment, in the face of Japanese claims that there would be no market, the U.S. sent 10 tons of high grade beef to Osaka by air. With all extra costs involved, the beef was sold for \$7/lb, local market beef was \$15/lb., such a rush developed that ration cards had to be issued to keep sales orderly.

62. The Prime Minister said Australia could airlift its meat to all countries and sell, at Australian domestic price plus extra costs, in all countries below local costs. He added he did not like the sound of some U.S. suggestions for cyclical meat programs. He noted that the Europeans could be very wearing, with 7–8 participants at a conference versus one foreigner. "When Strauss is there we'll be right beside him", added the Prime Minister.

63. The Vice President said he understood.

64. The Prime Minister said he feared that there would be no breakthrough at present—that MTN would not succeed. With the requisite will and resolution a clash between LDC's and DC's would be averted—else sour relations would taint the air for years to come. The only hope remaining is through firm U.S. efforts. No one else carries the weight.

65. The Vice President said the U.S. was willing to try to do its best. It has been very, very difficult. The EEC just does not want to talk about anything but more access to U.S. markets. He would report the intensity of the Prime Minister's views fully to Strauss. He added he would like to make two more points. First, it would be helpful that Australia's MTN reoffer be made as soon as possible. We have tabled the U.S. offer, and frankly since there have been few counter offers there was pressure in Congress to take back what the U.S. had already done. On plywood, for instance, a strong U.S. group was trying to counter the U.S. offer. The second matter was refugees, and the Vice President hoped to talk about refugees during the working lunch. Andrew Peacock had made useful suggestions which the Vice President had raised with the Indonesian Government.

66. The Prime Minister said his trade figures showed that Australia had made U.S. trade concessions of \$35 million to Australia's U.S. concessions of \$10 million.

67. The Vice President said his figures cited the U.S. offer as "generous", but agreed that this discrepancy was for the statisticians to resolve among themselves. On wool, the U.S. had proposed 40 per cent reduction in tariff which was about \$30–40 million/year on present trade.

68. Treasurer Howard said he would like to reinforce the Prime Minister's comments on how he welcomed the President's statement on inflation. He knew it was a domestic problem, but he agreed entirely with President Carter's renewed emphasis on containing inflationary pressure. He was very pleased to see the President's emphasis.

69. The Vice President concluded that the U.S. was dead serious. The Federal Reserve Board had increased interest rates, gold sales had been started and America was doing everything it could to dampen inflation.

**Alston**

## 255. Telegram From the Embassy in New Zealand to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Wellington, May 17, 1978, 0311Z

2606. Subject: Vice President's Visit to New Zealand: Substantive Wrap-up. Ref: A) Wellington 02433 (Notal), B) Wellington 02434 (Notal), C) Wellington 02487 (Notal), D) Wellington 02492 (Notal), E) Wellington 01503 (Notal), F) State 077179 (Notal), G) Wellington 01525.<sup>2</sup>

Summary: This telegram summarizes by topic the substantive aspects of the Vice President's very successful visit to New Zealand. Formal talks consisted of meetings by the Vice President with PriMin Muldoon, with the entire NZ Cabinet, and with Labour Party opposition leader, W.E. Rowling. Public statements embodying substantive comments were made on arrival, following the VP's meeting with Muldoon and the Cabinet, and at a State luncheon (texts in Refs A–D). Appropriate addressees please note various undertakings, declarations, and offers relating to trade and energy reported in paras 3B, 4A, 4B, and 8B. End Summary.

### 1. Regional Policy/ANZUS

A. Evincing the purpose of his trip, the Vice President took numerous opportunities to underline the importance President Carter attaches to the Asian Pacific region and to reaffirm the United States commitment to the ANZUS alliance.

B. PriMin Muldoon welcomed the VP's statements on regional policy and, on behalf of the GNZ, reciprocated with equally strong statements of adherence to the alliance. "I can assure you," he declared, "that New Zealand, under the present (National Party) administration, will continue to play its full part in the maintenance of the health and strength of that treaty." Labour opposition leader W.E. Rowling, despite reservations about visits of nuclear powered and armed warships, confirmed, though in somewhat more tepid term, his support for the alliance as well (see para 2 below).

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Foreign Trip Files, Box 131, [Vice President's Visit to Asia, 4/29–5/10/78]: New Zealand—[Diplomatic Trip Cables], [2/14–5/17/78]. Confidential. Sent for information to Canberra, Port Moresby, Suva, CINCPA also for POLAD and ICA adviser, NSC, and Auckland by pouch.

<sup>2</sup> Reference telegrams A–D have not been found. Telegram 1503 from Wellington, March 24, addressed U.S. tuna fishing vessels operating within the New Zealand exclusive economic zone. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780129–0703) Telegram 77179 to Wellington, March 24, and telegram 1525 from Wellington, March 28, also discussed U.S. tuna fishing vessels. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780133–1273 and D780131–0578)

C. Embassy Comment: We have now come full circle with the Muldoon government on the doubts raised earlier last year about the Carter Administration's Asian Pacific policy and the fear that New Zealand's interests would be overlooked in what Muldoon thought was going to be a solely tri-lateral world view from Washington.<sup>3</sup> In an ebullient mood following the visit, Muldoon pronounced that, "we have had more direct interest displayed in New Zealand and the South Pacific than we have had under any other (American) administration."

## 2. Naval Visits

A. On three occasions, the Vice President expressed our appreciation for New Zealand's hospitality to our Armed Services personnel and, in the Cabinet session, specifically thanked the NZ Government for permitting the visits of nuclear powered warships (NPW). In the Cabinet session, the Vice President also declared that such visits were essential to the defense of the whole area.

B. In a private session with the VP, opposition leader Rowling professed adherence to ANZUS, despite objections to NPW visits, and said that he wanted the VP to know that "when the new (Labour) administration comes in," we will continue to be close allies despite disagreement "on small points." Later, in his State luncheon speech, Rowling again mentioned the subject saying "some of us have doubts about such things as deployment and logistics, but there is no doubt about the friendship between our peoples . . ."

## 3. Multilateral Trade

A. With trade highest on the New Zealand agenda, PriMin Muldoon led off the Cabinet session with a description of New Zealand's world market access problems. He said NZ feared that in the North-South dialogue the developed nations appear to show little interest or understanding of the problems of the developed agricultural producers. The PriMin said NZ's terms of trade had declined 40 percent during the last five years and, despite appearances, there was no scope for growth of the NZ economy unless it had access to the markets of the developed countries. In an aside, Muldoon commented that NZ had developed an export trade with the Soviet Union and other centrally planned economies, but these markets were uncertain and, anyway, NZ did not wish to rely on the Soviet market in the long term.

B. The Vice President said he had great sympathy for the problems faced by New Zealand and agreed that multilateral trade negotiations had often failed to contain a satisfactory agricultural component. He then restated his awareness of NZ's concerns, said he had received similar representations from Australian PriMin Fraser, and undertook

---

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 233 and 236.

to convey these concerns to the President's Special Trade Representative, Robert Strauss. The Vice President also agreed that the fullest coordination was essential to obtain maximum leverage on the EEC to change its Common Agricultural Policy and said that Mr. Strauss would be asked to work with NZ to that end in the MTN. Later, in his press conference, the VP repeated his agreement on the importance of the MTN having a strong agricultural component and said that "we pledge to work closely with NZ in these talks."

#### 4. Bilateral Trade

A. The passage almost simultaneously with the VP's visit of the Bentsen Amendment to the Meat Import Act of 1964<sup>4</sup> heightened NZ's concerns about access to the U.S. beef market. Minister of Overseas Trade Talboys raised the subject in the Cabinet session with the VP. He said New Zealand had analyzed the legislation and had concluded that the bill would reduce very considerably NZ's opportunities to sell beef to the U.S. He then noted that NZ beef imports were only 1.2 percent of total U.S. beef consumption and said it was important for the Carter administration to appreciate the vital importance to NZ of this small percentage of the U.S. market. The VP replied that he understood the importance of the U.S. beef market to NZ, noting that 50 percent of NZ's beef exports were taken by the U.S. He, however, pointed out that the New Zealanders need to understand the strength of the domestic U.S. beef lobby and the period of acute depression which many ranchers have been experiencing. Mr. Mondale, nevertheless, recognized the crucial nature of the American market to the NZ livestock industry and undertook to discuss the situation with President Carter.

B. In his press conference, the VP was asked whether the Bentsen bill had been discussed with the GNZ. He confirmed that it had been discussed and then restated U.S. interest in continuing to be a substantial purchaser of NZ agricultural products. Despite insistence by the press, the VP did not take a position on the bill itself, saying only that administration policy was to continue to be a reliable market for NZ products.

C. In his State luncheon speech, PriMin Muldoon spoke out against what he called the "pernicious policy of agricultural protectionism which exists in most if not all of the great industrial nations." Muldoon added, however, that he was delighted, when in his talks last November with President Carter,<sup>5</sup> Mr. Strauss and others, he had received a "firm

---

<sup>4</sup> Reference is to S. 294 (95th Congress), which would restrict the importation of fresh, chilled, or frozen meat.

<sup>5</sup> See Document 249.

affirmation of the present administration's policy of opposing agricultural protectionism". The PriMin concluded his luncheon speech by declaring that if the VP took no other impression away from his visit to NZ, this is the one he wished Mr. Mondale to retain: "a solution to the problem of agricultural protectionism is vital for the future of NZ, and vital for the maintenance of its ability to play a significant role in the preservation of stability in the South Pacific."

#### 5. South Pacific Islands

A. Muldoon was quick to raise the subject of South Pacific island policy in his first meeting with the Vice President, pointing out that NZ had shifted most of its aid there and welcoming U.S. interest in the islands' economic development. He reiterated this position in his State luncheon speech, stating that New Zealand gladly accepts its obligation to the island states, is increasingly directing its external assistance to them, and seeks the assistance and support of the United States and other friendly countries in this endeavor.

B. Embassy Comment: Muldoon's tactic is to focus attention on New Zealand's undeniable value to the U.S. in promoting stability in the rapidly changing South Pacific. Through this specific means and by other more general linkages between security and the economic health of his country, Muldoon obviously hopes to engage U.S. interest in and sympathy for NZ's economic plight (cf. Muldoon quotation in para 4C).

#### 6. Fishing

A. PriMin Muldoon, during the Cabinet talks, raised the issue of the U.S. position on highly migratory species (HMS) of fish, resulting from the Fishing Conservation and Management Act of 1976, and its impact on the Pacific island states. He stressed that if the rights of these very small states to their fishing resources are not recognized by a country of the stature of the United States, then no other country would recognize their rights.

B. The Vice President invited Asst. Secretary Holbrooke to reply. Mr. Holbrooke said that the United States would very much like to join the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Agency (SPRFA), but not if joining contravened the 1976 Act. He, however, expressed the opinion that this matter could be settled in discussions with the South Pacific states.

C. With regard to American tuna fishing in the NZ 200-mile zone, Fisheries Minister Bolger warned that the HMS problem would come to a head for New Zealand in November 1978 when the tuna fishing season opens. The GNZ would then have to either license American vessels or exclude them entirely.

D. Embassy Comment: This problem may be obviated entirely if, in the meantime, an SPRFA agreement satisfactory to the U.S., is

concluded. If not, the Embassy will take steps to head off a last-minute problem such as occurred with the U.S.-owned “Voyager” in late March (see Refs. E–G). There are several alternative solutions possible including individual licensing of American vessels, joint ventures with NZ firms (the “Voyager” solution), or, less likely, a bilateral agreement.

#### 7. Refugees

The Vice President, in the Cabinet session, reviewed what the USG is doing to respond to the plight of Indochinese refugees, thanked the GNZ for its relatively sizeable contribution to the solution of the problem, and encouraged the GNZ to consider taking more refugees. PriMin Muldoon agreed to “keep the situation under review,” but noted that the GNZ had a problem obtaining sponsors to assist in the settlement of refugees. To this exchange, Minister of Immigration Gill added that he expected a report soon on the settlement and assimilation of the 420 refugees already in New Zealand, and that the GNZ “could not afford” to make any further commitment until that report had been assessed.

#### 8. Energy

A. During his discussion of this subject with the Cabinet, the VP said the U.S. would be pleased to engage with NZ in joint geothermal energy research studies. Minister of Energy George Gair responded that he would be pleased to look into the VP’s request for a joint program.

B. In his press conference, the VP stated that “we agree to review renewed cooperation in this field and intensified research and development in other energy fields as well.”

#### 9. Neutron Bomb

A. A sour note was struck by opposition leader Rowling at the State luncheon when he said that he welcomed the decision by President Carter “not to go ahead with the neutron bomb, which so rightly has been described in your country as the ultimate obscenity. Nothing good can be said about such a weapon. One that destroys life while leaving property undamaged is an abomination.”<sup>6</sup>

B. Despite a recent exchange on this subject by the Embassy and opposition foreign policy spokesman Freer, it appears that the Labour leadership has failed to (or chosen to) misunderstand U.S. policy regarding the weapon. We intend to follow up.

---

<sup>6</sup> In an April 7 statement, Carter indicated that the United States would defer production of enhanced radiation weapons. (*Public Papers: Carter, 1978*, Book I, p. 702)



#### 10. Presidential Visit Invitation

During his State luncheon speech, PriMin Muldoon renewed the invitation which he extended last November to President Carter to visit NZ at any time during Mr. Carter's presidency.

#### 11. Overall Evaluation

From the point of view of the U.S., we can confidently say that the Vice President's trip went off precisely according to scenario and completely achieved its goals. New Zealand official and public reaction to the visit have also been excellent. New Zealand officials believe they at least have won understanding of their economic problems and hope that the personal relationships which have been developed over the past nine months, starting with the Warren Christopher visit late last July,<sup>7</sup> Muldoon's Washington visits in September<sup>8</sup> and November, and now with the Vice President's visit, will assure them a hearing as vital bilateral and multilateral trade issues evolve.

**Healy**

---

<sup>7</sup> Christopher attended the ANZUS Council meeting July 27-28, 1977. See footnote 8, Document 106.

<sup>8</sup> Muldoon visited the United States in September-October 1977 to attend the UN General Assembly session. He did not visit Washington.

---

#### **256. Letter From Australian Prime Minister Fraser to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Canberra, May 24, 1978

My Dear Jimmy<sup>2</sup>

Thank you for your letter which Fritz Mondale handed to me during his recent visit to Canberra.<sup>3</sup>

My colleagues and I found our discussions with the Vice-President most useful and constructive. We attach genuine importance to consultations with you and senior members of your Administration, and in

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 4, Australia, 1978. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> Fraser handwritten the salutation.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 252.



particular we welcomed the opportunity for talks with the Vice-President.

Those talks represented a valuable continuation of the discussions I had with you in Washington last year.<sup>4</sup> On that occasion I believe we were able to gain a much clearer idea of each other's views and interests in a wide range of areas—bilateral, regional and global.

We were reassured by the Vice-President's clear statement of your Administration's total commitment to the ANZUS Treaty and his reaffirmation of close United States interest in and commitment to the Asia/Pacific region.

I attach particular importance to our discussions of international economic issues. Perhaps more than anyone you will be aware of the very difficult problems of the world economy of the 1970s. In the last few years there has been only moderate growth in the major economies and the momentum of the present recovery is quite fragile. Confidence is lacking and there are increasing pressures on governments from sectional interests. The dangers of protectionism are increasing as countries compete for greater national shares of existing markets.

I know you will agree with me that this sort of destructive competition must be avoided. The real hope lies, I believe, in expanding markets and increasing trade overall. That is why I attach such importance to the current round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations and to discussions within the UNCTAD. I believe that a broadly-based liberalisation of trade can be the only basis for sustained and stable global economic growth. It must cover not only the immediate interests of the advanced industrialised economies but also those of agricultural producing nations and the rest of the world.

I would be less than frank with you if I did not express my grave doubts about the current proposal for a 40 percent average weighted tariff cut as a major initiative in the MTN. As I see it, the formula cut, if achieved, would not have a major early impact on trade among the industrialised nations and would do little to expand markets worldwide in the short term. With average tariffs around 10 percent and with the cuts spread over eight years from 1980, this amounts to an average of only half a percent reduction in tariffs each year. While I appreciate that a successful conclusion to the negotiations on industrial tariffs could have an important symbolic and practical bearing on the international trade outlook, the benefits of such small tariff reductions could tend to be negated by relatively minor movements in currency values.

---

<sup>4</sup> See Documents 237 and 238.

Secondly, and of equal importance I feel, the proposed formula would be very unequal in its effect. While it covers about 40 percent of the exports of North America, Europe and Japan, it could cover as little as five percent of the exports of countries such as Australia and much of the developing world. In essence, if the MTN is to provide a significant early stimulus to world trade its final outcome must embrace a substantial liberalisation of trade in agriculture as well as manufactured products.

You will be aware I know of the importance Australia attaches to meaningful concessions on agriculture within the framework of the MTN, and I appreciate the efforts your government has made to have agriculture included in the MTN.

But Australia's concern goes beyond our own national interests. Agriculture is of critical importance to most of the developing world. If the developing countries are to realise their vast potential for development and contribute as they might to sustained global economic growth, then their trading interests cannot be set aside as has happened so many times in the past. Failure to help meet their needs will only breed resentment and bitterness and could do grave damage to the interests of the West.

In many cases the developing countries' interests will need special consideration. I believe we as developed nations should be prepared to make concessions to them in the MTN and the UNCTAD Negotiations on the Common Fund.

Merely holding the line against protectionism and preserving the status quo will not serve the purpose. I believe strongly that there must be positive and tangible advances to expand the trading opportunities of all nations if expectations of enhanced living standards are to be realised throughout the world.

I know that all Western leaders are very much concerned with the problems posed by the current international economic situation. Your own statements in South America and Africa and also those recently of Jim Callaghan hold out the hope that some real progress may be achieved. I was also encouraged by my discussions in Tokyo with Prime Minister Fukuda just before his departure for Washington last month. But while there appears to be some willingness to move ahead on the part of some individual European leaders, I am not confident that without some further outside pressure the European Communities as a whole will fulfil their obligation as a major and powerful world economic entity.

1978 is a year when important decisions will be taken whose effect could extend well beyond the present decade. I am sure that you and

other major leaders will be very much aware of this when you meet in Bonn in July.<sup>5</sup>

The United States has an admirable record as a liberal trading nation and has provided a lead to others in promoting international economic growth. I believe that your government can and will provide the sort of leadership required to encourage greater commitment and co-operation in the present international effort.

I believe these matters are of great importance to the economic health of the world. I also believe that you as President of the United States hold the key to the successful reconciliation of the differing national interests which is needed to produce an enduring and equitable resolution of current difficulties, and that you are probably the only person who can motivate and achieve a proper outcome to the difficulties that are of so much concern to all of us. It is because of this that I have been anxious to meet with you again before firm decisions are made.

Yours sincerely,

**Malcolm Fraser**

---

<sup>5</sup> The G-7 Economic Summit was held in Bonn July 16–17. For the minutes of the sessions, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. III, Foreign Economic Policy, Documents 145–148.

---

**257. Letter From President Carter to Australian Prime Minister Fraser<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 13, 1978

Dear Malcolm:

I was pleased to hear of the positive reaction to your discussions with Vice President Mondale. He has told me that he found his visit to Australia and his talks with you helpful and constructive.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 1, Australia, Prime Minister J. Malcolm Fraser, 1–12/78. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 254.

I share your concern about the dangers of protectionism and the need for a successful conclusion of the Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTN).<sup>3</sup> I will not consider these negotiations a success unless they lead us toward significant liberalization of world trade in agricultural products. We intend to continue to work with you and our other negotiating partners to achieve that goal. Clearly, no country will achieve all of its objectives in the negotiations, but I believe the will exists to solve the urgent problems fairly. Bob Strauss and I recognize that Australia shares these objectives and we hope you can improve Australia's offers to make success more likely.

You are right to attach special importance to improving trade relations with the developing countries. I expect these countries—especially the more advanced of them—to benefit from the Tokyo Round and to contribute to its success.

In UNCTAD discussions on individual commodities, we have supported international stabilization measures where conditions warranted, as they did with sugar. We want to reach agreement on a Common Fund. But we think the OECD proposals offer the most reasonable prospect for successful negotiations and should get more attention from the developing countries. We also think the developing countries' proposal that the Common Fund serve as a central source of financial support for international commodity agreements is unnecessary to promote our shared objective, commodity-market stabilization. We favor the financing of other measures to address the problems of specific commodities, but we do not see the need for a financial role for the Common Fund in this area.

I see a need to advance preparations for the UNCTAD V meeting<sup>4</sup> through consultations among developed and developing countries. I would also welcome regular exchanges of views and ideas between senior officials of our Governments.<sup>5</sup>

Best regards,  
Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>3</sup> See Document 256.

<sup>4</sup> UNCTAD V took place in Manila May 7–June 3, 1979.

<sup>5</sup> Underneath his signature, Carter wrote, "P.S. Chip & Caron really enjoyed their visit to Australia. J."

**258. Letter From Australian Prime Minister Fraser to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Canberra, undated

Dear Mr President,

I am writing to bring to your personal attention a matter of the utmost concern to the Australian Government. I refer to the meat import measures recently endorsed by the Congress.<sup>2</sup>

Your Administration has, of course, strongly resisted efforts to place further restrictions on meat imports. Moreover, you have yourself publicly declared your need to retain discretionary flexibility. The legislation would have the most damaging consequences for the Australian meat industry, affecting its future development, its stability and its shipping arrangements. These factors force me to ask that you exercise your Presidential right not to sign this Bill into law.

This legislation, if enacted, would clearly show that the United States wishes to retain quantitative restrictions on meat imports for at least a further decade. As a result the burden of adjustment would fall, most inequitably, upon Australia and other meat exporters. We would be no more than residual suppliers to your market and in addition, would be subject to the uncertainties of an untried theoretical formula.

We have already indicated our concern that this legislation could prejudice our shared objectives in the Multilateral Trade Negotiations. We both seek to expand trade access for meat and livestock products. This legislation, however, would completely contradict our common approach in international forums.

I firmly believe that this situation warrants your refusal to endorse this legislation, and I urge you to take this course.<sup>3</sup>

Yours sincerely,

**Malcolm Fraser**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 1, Australia, Prime Minister J. Malcolm Fraser, 1–12/78. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> The Meat Import Act (H.R. 11545, 95th Congress) was passed by the House on October 12 and the Senate on October 14.

<sup>3</sup> On November 11, Carter vetoed the bill. For his November 10 memorandum of disapproval, see *Public Papers: Carter, 1978*, Book II, pp. 2009–2010.

## 259. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, January 2, 1979, 11 a.m.–noon

### SUBJECT

The President's Meeting with Australian Prime Minister Fraser

### PARTICIPANTS

#### *U.S.*

President Carter

Secretary of State Cyrus Vance

Zbigniew Brzezinski, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Henry Owen, Special Representative of the President for Economic Summits

Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia

Evelyn Colbert, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia

Nicholas Platt, Staff Member, NSC

Guy Erb, Staff Member, NSC

#### *Australia*

Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser

Foreign Minister Andrew Peacock

Alan Renouf, Ambassador to the U.S.

Geoffrey Yeend, Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

David Barnett, Press

*President:* Mr. Prime Minister, I very much appreciate your statement on our normalization of relations with Peking and I thank you for it.

*Fraser:* The move was inevitable. It was just a matter of time and finding leaders willing to grasp the nettle.

*President:* The Chinese were ready. During the last few weeks of the negotiations they were accommodating. They accepted our draft communique without change.<sup>2</sup> We are proud of this development. We think it will be beneficial to peace and stability. I would like to assure you that we will be careful. We know how concerned the Soviets are.

Did you have a good meeting with Manley and Schmidt?

*Fraser:* Yes. The Manley Summit grew out of a conversation between Manley and Schmidt in Germany.<sup>3</sup> In fact, Schmidt had suggested the meeting and it had been rescheduled for him.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Subject File, Box 37, Memcons: President, 12/78–1/79. Confidential. The meeting took place in the Cabinet Room at the White House. Fraser was in the United States for a private visit January 1–3.

<sup>2</sup> For the text of the communiqué, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XIII, China, Document 171.

<sup>3</sup> Regarding the summit on North-South issues organized by Jamaican Prime Minister Manley, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. III, Foreign Economic Policy, Documents 319, 323, and 324.

The most interesting aspect of the meeting was that all participants recognized that inflation damages the prospects for the growth of trade and markets. It limits the capacity of the developed countries to provide aid and access to their markets. The participants recognized that if there is to be a North-South breakthrough it won't depend on taking something away from someone else but on enlarging the pie. I had not expected developing countries to agree on the importance of inflation and growth but they did.

*President:* You have had a remarkable success. This is a difficult point to make in the world community and even harder at home. Convincing the poor and the minorities that their interests are served by the fight against inflation is a tough task. I am impressed that the developing countries saw that point.

*Fraser:* The developing countries were vastly concerned with the Common Fund. They believe it will achieve more than it probably will. The Australian Government believes that it will be a useful adjunct to commodity stabilization policies. Even Schmidt recognized the importance of the Common Fund and indicated that he would agree with the majority view on this issue.

*President:* North-South issues are growing in importance. In Panama I had several North-South discussions with LDC leaders, including those of Costa Rica and Jamaica.<sup>4</sup> Manley, is a thoughtful, forceful, and moderate person. However, in the United Nations, demands by the developing countries are often excessive and abusive. A rational debate is hard to achieve. Your bridge role in the North-South dialogue has been useful.

*Fraser:* I tried to stress the need for compromise at the Jamaica Summit. With regard to the second window of the Common Fund, I informed the developing country participants that there is no hope of financing that window unless its purposes are clearly defined.<sup>5</sup> There is no pie in the sky.

*President:* There is a difference between the more advanced developing countries and those whose economies are very dependent on a single commodity.

*Fraser:* The particular situation of the oil producing countries puts them in a separate category.

*President:* There is a possibility of an expanded role for the IMF that might help address the problem of export instability. We have begun to distinguish between the political aspects of the North-South

---

<sup>4</sup> Carter traveled to Panama July 16–17, 1978. See *ibid.*, Document 306.

<sup>5</sup> Negotiations on the Common Fund took place in Geneva November 14–30, 1978.

dialogue that are useful to attract attention, and those which are purely economic.

*Fraser:* The Australian position and strong views on the Common Fund are due to our own experience as commodity exporters. Fluctuations can upset plans and make the development process very difficult.

*President:* (Laughing) Are we demanding too much Australian beef?

*Fraser:* (Laughing) Not yet, Mr. President. We still have not made arrangements for the stabilization of commodity prices.

*President:* We have made some progress on individual commodities like sugar and coffee. The prices of these commodities have gone wild, with devastating effects to the economies of the producing countries.

*Fraser:* Such instability fuels inflation.

*President:* As a major sugar producer, we have to face domestic political problems when we examine international sugar questions.

What is your experience with Japanese import restraints?

*Fraser:* We have considerable trading experience with Japan, though import restraints are not a major problem. Last year we had trouble with sugar shipments.

*Peacock:* The Japanese trade balance is quite different with us.

*Fraser:* In fact, we had a group of ships in the harbor loaded with sugar which the Japanese refused to unload until we had settled some differences on coal contracts. The Japanese believe that contracts should be changed when considerations of price and quantity change.

*President:* Do you know Prime Minister Ohira?

*Fraser:* Yes. He is somewhat more reserved than Fukuda.

*President:* I met him briefly before he became Prime Minister. We don't expect any major policy changes. We note that Foreign Minister Sonoda will be kept on.

*Fraser:* We are very happy that Sonoda will remain the Foreign Minister.

*President:* We are pleased with our new base agreement with the Philippines.<sup>6</sup> It is the end to a long and drawn-out discussion. We have been forced to operate under very serious constraints. If we conclude a liberal agreement with one country, we will be under pressure to renegotiate from all the others with whom we have base agreements.

*Fraser:* It is a very positive development, and like normalization, one which we regarded as predictable over the long run.

*President:* There was some doubt, however, that we would be able to agree, but we now hope to conclude the agreement shortly.

---

<sup>6</sup> See Document 326.



In South Korea we have a potential avenue to the PRC. We are concerned about North Korea. When Vice Premier Deng comes to Washington we will be talking about this.

*Fraser:* I was given a briefing this morning by the Director of your CIA on the increases in the North Korean order of battle, and I am concerned about the build-up.

*President:* The trend is ominous. However, the North Koreans have in recent months moved closer to the Chinese. Deng Xiaoping should realize that were he unable to restrain the North Koreans, he would be destroying everything that he had achieved.

*Fraser:* Could you not argue that your normalization of relations with Peking will move the North Koreans toward the Soviet Union?

*President:* It could. We don't know yet what the impact of the Soviet-Vietnamese Treaty<sup>7</sup> will be. For the time being, we plan to hold off normalization with Hanoi. What is your assessment of the situation in Indochina?

*Fraser:* It is disturbing. The Vietnamese have shown great capacity for persistence in the past.

*President:* What is your relationship with Hanoi?

*Peacock:* We have an Embassy in Hanoi, a modest aid program, and a good working relationship. We are concerned over the extent to which either the Soviet Union or the Chinese become embroiled in the Cambodian conflict.<sup>8</sup> We wonder whether China could accept Cambodia coming under Hanoi's control.

*Holbrooke:* If Vietnam had intended to be genuinely nonaligned, the treaty with the Soviet Union was a giant step in the wrong direction. The establishment of the Cambodian Front Organization and the attack on Kratie are further such steps.

*President:* Perhaps Secretary General Waldheim will have some success. When does he travel to the area?

*Vance:* At the end of the month.

*Fraser:* None of us believe we can deter Vietnam from causes they want to pursue.

*President:* We have learned that.

*Holbrooke:* China is very unlikely to take direct military action but can squeeze the Vietnamese in other ways.

---

<sup>7</sup> Reference is to the USSR-Vietnamese Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, November 3, 1978.

<sup>8</sup> Vietnam's invasion and occupation of Kampuchea began on December 25, 1978. See Documents 36–39.

*Fraser:* You cannot rule out the possibility of a Chinese military intervention.

*Vance:* No, you cannot rule that out. We have seen them do it before.

*Peacock:* Is it not possible that the tendency by the United States to drag out the normalization process with Vietnam might force Hanoi closer to the Soviet Union? Could you not delay too long?

*President:* The refugee problem is very unpopular in the United States. Our efforts to normalize relations with Hanoi have been complicated by the invasion of Cambodia, the signing of the treaty with the Soviet Union, and the outflow of refugees. Speaking of refugees, we appreciate the role that you are playing, and the numbers you are taking. Unfortunately, I think the problem is going to get worse.

*Fraser:* I agree. The matter of Soviet intentions in Indochina places a very serious question mark in our minds.

*President:* We hope to have a SALT Agreement soon and then sit down and talk with Brezhnev about this problem. The Soviets have been negotiating in good faith. At Cy's last meeting, the Soviets interjected some new elements, apparently wanting to delay conclusion of the agreement until after Deng Xiaoping's visit.<sup>9</sup> We had discussed all the other issues ad nauseam.

*President:* I would like to hear your thoughts about the Iranian situation and what we might do.

*Fraser:* Keep your naval vessels in the area. None of us saw the nature or the intensity of the problem. We are concerned that the balance of power will be altered if the Shah does not survive, and are very unhappy with a difficult situation.

*President:* We have maintained in private and public our loyalty to the Shah. To get ourselves further into the dispute would be counter-productive. We have been interested to see Khomeini make anti-Soviet as well as anti-government statements. If Bakhtiar can put together a government, there is a chance of maintaining equilibrium after a period of adjustment.

*Peacock:* It is really a question of adopting the policy best suited to limit damage to our interests.

*President:* The Shah has been indecisive and at times lost control of himself. We are as helpless as you or anyone else to intrude.

*Brzezinski:* You have, however, taken the lead in discouraging others from meddling in the situation. The best we can hope for is the

---

<sup>9</sup> Vance and Gromyko met in Geneva November 22–23, 1978; see *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. XXXIII, SALT II, 1972–1980, Documents 230 and 231. Deng visited Washington January 28–February 5. See *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vol. XIII, China, Documents 201–210.

emergence of a government like that of Soares in Portugal, but you could also envisage a less positive development, something more closely resembling the Allende government.

*President:* How would you describe your relationship with Pakistan?

*Fraser:* Friendly but not deep.

*President:* We are concerned about Pakistan. We have tried to prevent an infusion of advanced weapons into the area, which has hurt our relationship. We have a better relationship with India now. I find that I get along very well with Desai.

*Fraser:* He is a determined individual. We found it difficult to develop practical relationships with India. Our trade is very limited.

*President:* India has seemed averse to developing major business and economic relationships with other countries. This may be diminishing.

*Peacock:* The Prime Minister has used the Commonwealth, in which India participates, as a bridge between developed and developing countries. They see a bridging role within the Commonwealth for Australia. The Commonwealth, although it lacks the super powers, is a microcosm of world relationships. Sometimes, during informal discussions within the Commonwealth it was possible to cut through areas which meet obstacles in other organizations or discussions.

*Fraser:* The Commonwealth plays a role comparable to the Manley meeting. Whatever one thinks of that meeting and who attended, we do have a better understanding of each other as a result of it, which will help when we try to negotiate agreements.

*President:* What are your thoughts on the Middle East? We are so deeply involved that we sometimes lose perspective.

*Fraser:* We admire very much your efforts at Camp David and subsequently to further peace.<sup>10</sup>

*President:* It is a thankless task which we would be glad to turn over to you. (Laughter)

*Fraser:* You achieved a significant accord. Israeli transience has been the principal problem as we have seen it.

*President:* We will be persistent. Sadat has gone about as far as he can, given Arab pressures. Begin must operate in a democracy. His own party won't even support his actions at Camp David, presenting him with serious political problems. Cy's recent meetings with Dayan and Kahlil were constructive. Dayan took back to Israel a clear sense of the constraints on the Egyptians.

---

<sup>10</sup> The Camp David Accords were signed on September 17, 1978.

*Vance:* We have recently received word from Egypt that they are willing to resume negotiations. If so, we would recommend that they resume at the drafting level. Later we can move to a higher level if progress warrants.

*President:* We look at our relationship with you as being good and sound. Is there anything that we can help with at this point?

*Fraser:* I agree that our relationship is sound. We need some help, however, on one aspect. The Japanese have contacted us through a number of channels expressing the view that we should combine with them and you to develop a consultative mechanism on Pacific affairs. The idea of greater cooperation in the Pacific by the major powers involved is a good one.

*President:* We should explore this further. There was a revulsion in the United States regarding involvement in Southeast Asia following the fall of Saigon. We have worked hard to repair that wound. The Korean Peninsula is still a problem. PRC relations with both the United State and Japan have improved. As a matter of fact we encouraged both the Japanese and the Chinese to conclude the Peace and Friendship Treaty. ASEAN is greatly strengthened, thanks to your beneficial influence. We have encouraged Fukuda to play a bigger role in the region, and he has responded. Has Mike Mansfield been to Australia?

*Fraser:* No.

*President:* That might be a good next move. Mike is in many respects our senior man in Asia. Perhaps he might visit to discuss with you and Philip Alston our policies in the region.

*Fraser:* Japan is indeed reticent to play a role, and sensitive about its past. We should encourage them to be more active.

*President:* The same is true of Germany, which is similarly constrained by its World War II image.

*Peacock:* Fukuda and Sonoda have said that if we want them to play a larger role in the region this can only be done in conjunction with the United States.

*Vance:* That is good. We encouraged them to move on the Peace and Friendship Treaty when Fukuda was here. They still feel that people distrust them.

*Fraser:* They do.

*President:* Let's see when it's convenient for Mike to go to Australia. He is a fine gentleman.

What is the state of uranium production in Australia?

*Fraser:* All projects are completed. Bilateral safeguard treaties are now being negotiated with our trading partners. We have had problems as a result of differences in bilateral requirements and Euratom stand-

ards. We maintain our commitment to non-proliferation and share your views on the restraint of reprocessing.

*President:* We would like you to supply India with nuclear fuel and help us get out of that business. (Laughter) Your attitude on proliferation and reprocessing has been very helpful to us.

*Fraser:* The Europeans have been very unforthcoming in the MTN. The only result of the MTN will be perhaps to stop some protectionism, which would be some advantage. But the outcome of the MTN could also heighten North-South tensions. If there is no progress on commodity issues and no MTN benefits for developing countries the attitude of the developing countries will be critical of the developing countries.

*Owen:* The MTN does have something in it for the developing countries. The EC has been fairly forthcoming but France is holding out. Substantial results have been achieved in the industrial and agricultural areas. In addition, there are benefits for the developing countries in the MTN package. When negotiations resume we will make further efforts with the developing countries.

*Fraser:* We are skeptical of the benefits of the subsidies code.

*President:* We would have liked to have achieved more, but the language was the most that could be obtained from the European community. The MTN is on the “non-agenda” for Guadeloupe.<sup>11</sup> Schmidt agrees with the importance of the MTN for the world economy.

*Fraser:* The European Community is subsidizing exports even to the Australian market, a situation that we find unacceptable but difficult to remedy.

*President:* I’m delighted that you were able to visit. Please don’t hesitate to keep in touch on any problems you might have. I feel that way toward you.

*Fraser:* If there is any possibility of your coming to our part of the world you would receive a very warm welcome in Australia.

*President:* I would love to do this.

---

<sup>11</sup> Carter met with Giscard, Schmidt, and Callaghan at Guadeloupe January 4–9.

**260. Letter From the Australian Ambassador (Renouf) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, January 23, 1979

Dear Mr President,

Australia's Prime Minister, Mr Malcolm Fraser, has asked me to convey the following message to you:

"My dear Jimmy,

It was a pleasure to see you in Washington earlier this month<sup>2</sup> and I greatly valued the opportunity to have a good talk with you on a wide range of subjects. Your kind hospitality in making Blair House available was most appreciated; it is a most agreeable place to stay, and it enabled me to have a very full round of consultations during my short visit.

The United States and Australia have a long experience of very close cooperation in good times and bad, and I think that cooperation is going to be much needed in 1979 and the years ahead. Apart from global economic and other problems of mutual interest, the pressures and strains that are so evident now in the Asia-Pacific area will require careful and continuing attention.

I was particularly pleased to have the opportunity to brief you on the outcome of the Jamaica meeting and in turn to be briefed by you on recent United States policy initiatives in the international arena.

There is one matter of particular concern to me and my Government that I should like to raise with you. I refer to our mutual interest in a successful conclusion to the Multilateral Trade Negotiations. No doubt you have read the letter my colleague, the Deputy Prime Minister, sent to Ambassador Strauss outlining the Australian position,<sup>3</sup> but I felt I should take this opportunity to make you personally aware of our concerns.

As foreshadowed by my colleague in his letter to Ambassador Strauss, the Australian Government has now reviewed the latest developments in the MTN overall, and particularly in relation to the treatment of agricultural subsidies in the subsidies code and the outlook for negotiations to liberalise trade in beef.

I have reported to my colleagues in Cabinet on the relevant discussions which I held while I was in the United States. It is as disappointing

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Platt Chron File, Box 66, 2/1-13/79. Confidential.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 259.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

to my colleagues as it was to me that the United States has not been able to negotiate with the EEC more satisfactory provisions in relation to export subsidies on agricultural products.

Australia believes that a truly successful MTN must be balanced and equitable, and we do not consider this position has yet been reached, especially in respect of agriculture. It came as a disappointment to us that the United States concluded bilateral arrangements in circumstances which will so clearly influence the prospects of other agricultural exporters in the remaining negotiations. I refer particularly to the understandings you have reached with the EEC on the subsidies and countervailing code and on beef access.

No such access has yet been offered to Australia by the Community despite many months of negotiations. All the information and attitudes reported to us from Europe in recent weeks, and our own experiences of dealing with the EEC for over a decade, confirm that the EEC will not be moved by logic or justice alone. Support from the U.S. would be helpful, perhaps essential, if we are to achieve our modest objectives and therefore I would like to suggest that our senior officials meet promptly to work out the best means of cooperation to this end.

The position we now face is that the EEC apparently finds itself unable to offer Australia, a traditional and at one stage very significant supplier of beef to the EEC, any increased predictable access but is able to do so for the United States, which has not such a tradition of beef exports to Europe. This possibility is one which would bring forth a strong feeling of resentment from Australian producers. I want to work with you to ensure that this is avoided and that the post-MTN trading world is not marred by immediate bitterness.

I hope it will be possible for us to draw closer together in the remaining important stage of negotiations. We are still of the view that closer cooperation between the United States and Australia will lead to more positive and constructive negotiations resulting in a more balanced and equitable MTN. I know you share my view that this will be in the interests of both our countries and of the wider international community. An MTN outcome which produced some liberalisation of trade in industrial products but not in agricultural products such as beef would be totally inequitable.

As you will know the news of an exclusive arrangement negotiated between the United States and the EEC on beef—one of our major exports—was the cause of a considerable depth of concern here. I personally emphasise that concern to you and sincerely hope that all further misunderstandings can be avoided.

Our talk in Washington reinforced my conviction on the need to bring inflation under control. I was therefore not surprised, but very gratified to learn of the measures you have included in the budget

proposals you have just announced. These are the right steps; they are moreover courageous steps in present circumstances and I most warmly congratulate you on them. You have my warmest good wishes in the efforts you will now be making to have your policies accepted by Congress.

Yours sincerely,  
(Malcolm Fraser)."  
Yours sincerely,

**Alan Renouf**  
*Ambassador*

---

**261. Letter From the Australian Deputy Chief of Mission (Birch)  
to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, February 10, 1979

Dear Mr President,

I have been instructed to deliver to you as a matter of urgency the following text of a letter which my Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, has addressed to you on the Indo-China situation. The signed original is on its way.

"My dear Jimmy,

I know that you and your Government are deeply concerned about recent developments in Indo-China.<sup>2</sup> This is a concern which my Government shares. These events have implications not only for the region but also—because of the introduction into the region of Sino-Soviet rivalries—for world peace.

Despite the abhorrent nature of the former Kampuchean Government, Australia can under no circumstances condone Vietnam's violation of the independence and sovereignty of that country. I have made this clear in public statements in Australia, as has our Ambassador to the United Nations during the Security Council debate.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Platt Chron File, Box 66, 2/1–13/79. No classification marking. Carter wrote in the upper right-hand corner, "Zbig—Expedite reply. J."

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to Vietnam's occupation of Kampuchea and the subsequent build-up of Chinese forces on the Sino-Vietnamese border. See Documents 36–41.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 5, Document 171.



Nevertheless, up to this time it must be said that Vietnam has on balance clearly profited from its aggression. There is a continuing question, on which I would welcome your thoughts, of what further courses of action are possible to put pressure on Vietnam to give up the gains it has made through the use of force. It might also be desirable to look at ways of building up the confidence and strengthening the economies of the other countries of the region.

Moreover, I am sure you will agree that Vietnam's actions supported as they are by the Soviet Union, have important strategic implications extending well beyond the Asia/Pacific region. The Soviet Union has sought to extend its influence in the developing world—in Africa and Asia—by a carefully calculated series of steps, which taken in isolation have not been sufficient to evoke a Western response, but which, taken together, threaten to upset the global balance of power. It has made a significant incremental gain in South East Asia which it would hope to enlarge.

We share your concern that the present fighting in Indo-China might spill over into a wider conflict, involving China and even the Soviet Union, and pose a serious threat to world peace. At the very least, I believe that we face the prospect of a period of mounting tension between the chief protagonists. If, as now appears likely, Vietnamese forces become absorbed in a protracted struggle in Kampuchea, there must always be a danger of China, which has greatly built up its forces in the border area, being provoked into action against Vietnam. This could in turn draw a Soviet reaction which could escalate into hostilities between the two major powers.

My Government welcomes your Government's endeavours to impress on all concerned the dangers of precipitate action and to counsel moderation and restraint. I have no doubt that the highly successful visit to your country by Vice Premier Deng<sup>4</sup> was most timely in this regard, and I have today read—and warmly applaud—your public comments to Prime Minister Kriangsak during his present visit to the United States.<sup>5</sup>

I want you to know that my Government is doing what it can to encourage moderation. We have suspended our aid to Vietnam as an indication of our deep concern, and we are urging the Vietnamese to withdraw from Kampuchea and to devote their energies to peaceful purposes. We are also talking to the Chinese Government in the hope of dissuading them from taking action that might draw the Soviet

---

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 9, Document 259.

<sup>5</sup> Kriangsak was in Washington February 4–8 for an official visit. See Documents 171 and 172.

Union more directly into the conflict, and to other Governments—both within and outside the Asia/Pacific region—which possess some influence that might be brought to bear in this situation.

We are urging the Soviet Union to use its status as a world power responsibly and to do what it can to contribute to world peace and stability in the area.

You can be assured of my Government's full support for your efforts to prevent the present dangerous situation from worsening. I think it is important for like minded countries such as ours to work closely together in seeking to ease tensions such as those arising from the events in Indo-China, and I know that your Government will continue to take whatever action is open to it to influence Vietnam, the Soviet Union and China. You should know that my Government—like yours—will not be shirking its responsibilities in this regard.<sup>6</sup>

My warmest personal regards,

(Malcolm Fraser)"

Yours sincerely,

**R.N. Birch**

*Minister*

*Deputy Chief of Mission*

---

<sup>6</sup> In the margin of the first page, Carter wrote a note for his reply to Fraser, "Reply: Diplomatic isolation, Widespread condemnation, Stopping of economic aid by [illegible—all?] nations, Commitment to Thailand, etc., [illegible] acceptable, Republican leadership." For Carter's reply, see Document 263.

**262. Letter From President Carter to Australian Prime Minister Fraser<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, February 14, 1979

Dear Malcolm:

I was pleased to have the opportunity to discuss our mutual concerns and to get your views on international issues during your recent visit.

We have carefully considered your letter of January 23<sup>2</sup> and Phil Alston has informed me of your disappointment over the Multilateral Trade Negotiations.

We, too, regret that greater progress was not made in certain areas at Geneva. However, we feel that the results of the Tokyo Round have been worth the extraordinary effort that has been expended and will be a step forward. Failure to go ahead with completing the Round would be injurious to all trading countries.

We fully understand your particular disappointment over failure to gain concessions from the European Community on agricultural products. Many of the nations involved in the negotiations have had similar difficulties.

With regard to our own exchange of offers, I sincerely believe that our people and yours consulted closely with each other and that both sides have negotiated in good faith. In fact, I understand that the heads of our delegations are continuing to meet in Geneva. Cy Vance and Andrew Peacock have also spoken recently about the need to conclude an International Wheat Agreement and the good prospects for Australian meat exports to the United States this coming year. However, if you continue to believe that a meeting of senior officials would be helpful we would be pleased to participate in such a meeting.

Let me again emphasize that the United States values its relationship with Australia very highly. We are most appreciative of the support and advice you have given us. Australia and the United States

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 1, Australia, Prime Minister J. Malcolm Fraser, 1–12/78. No classification marking. In a February 12 covering memorandum to Carter, Brzezinski wrote, "Australian Foreign Minister Peacock followed up the Fraser letter by calling Dick Holbrooke and Cy Vance. In addition, Fraser called in Phil Alston to express his displeasure about the MTN. In response, Cy has informed Peacock of the additional meat imports we will take from Australia and Al McDonald, Bob Strauss' deputy, met with his Australian counterpart in Geneva. Many of Australia's problems are with the European Community. Our own negotiating flexibility is very limited with regard to Fraser's demands."

<sup>2</sup> See Document 260.

have an interest in a successful conclusion to the Tokyo Round, which I believe will provide significant long-run benefits to our countries.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter

---

**263. Letter From President Carter to Australian Prime Minister Fraser<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, February 14, 1979

Dear Malcolm:

Your letter of February 10<sup>2</sup> reflects our close identity of views on the need to avoid further escalation of conflict in Indochina and to support the cohesion and confidence of ASEAN. I assured Prime Minister Kriangsak last week of our deep interest in the integrity and freedom of Thailand and the security and independence of ASEAN. I will back my assurances with increased FMS credits, speeded weapons deliveries, and a move for Congressional approval to transfer to Thailand U.S. ammunition stored there. The talks Prime Minister Kriangsak had here with some of our major corporations and with President McNamara of the World Bank should help Thailand continue progress in strengthening its economy.

Since the Vietnamese attack on Cambodia, we have moved together with other governments, including your own, to isolate the Vietnamese diplomatically. The 13–2 U.N. vote was dramatic proof of the widespread condemnation felt by the world community toward Hanoi's aggressive actions.<sup>3</sup> Other governments, including yours, have agreed to suspend future bilateral and multilateral economic assistance so long as Vietnamese aggression continues.

We have also stressed the importance of withholding legitimacy from the Vietnamese-installed government in Phnom Penh. So far only 15 governments, all closely associated with the USSR, have recognized Heng Samrin. Since the attitude of the Non-Aligned Movement will be decisive on this point, I am especially pleased to hear of your

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Platt Chron Files, Box 66, 2/1–13/79. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 261.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 5, Document 171.

approaches to India and Sri Lanka. We share your long-term hope for a truly independent, neutral Cambodia with a government representative of its people.

We have taken these actions both to persuade Hanoi to revise its aggressive policies and to provide Peking with an alternative to military attack as a means of applying pressure on Vietnam. Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping left Washington with no doubt in his mind of our desire for restraint and our negative attitude toward Chinese military action against Vietnam. At the same time, the Soviet Union knows that we regard their support for Vietnamese action in Cambodia as a threat to detente. The knowledge that you are also counselling moderation is encouraging to me. We must continue to work together for peace and stability of the region.<sup>4</sup>

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>4</sup> Underneath his signature, Carter wrote, "Best wishes! J."

---

**264. Letter From Australian Prime Minister Fraser to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Canberra, March 5, 1979

My Dear Jimmy,<sup>2</sup>

I was very glad to have your letters on the situation in Indo-China,<sup>3</sup> confirming the strength of your commitment to secure an early end to the fighting in the region and to bring about a withdrawal of Vietnam-

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 1, Australia, Prime Minister J. Malcolm Fraser, 1–12/78. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> Fraser handwritten the salutation.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 262. Carter wrote again on February 18 to update Fraser on U.S. efforts to contain the widening conflict in Indochina. The text of the letter was transmitted in telegram 43142 to Canberra, February 19. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790078–0546) On February 18, Chinese forces crossed the Sino-Vietnamese border. See Documents 43–45.

ese and Chinese forces. I remain strongly of the view that we must continue our efforts to find an early solution to this dangerous situation.

Jim Callaghan has been in touch with me over the weekend about the suggestion he is canvassing with your Government and other permanent members of the Security Council to hold a conference with a membership based initially on that of the 1954 Geneva Conference.

I have told Jim that I welcome his initiative which seems to me to meet the need for swift action if the situation in Indo-China is to be prevented from getting out of hand.

In proposing a conference there is obviously a difficulty in determining membership, and this as I understand it is why Jim has gone to the membership of the 1954 Geneva Conference. I think this is useful as a starting point.

I do not underestimate, however, the obstacles which will need to be overcome if an attempt to convene a conference on the Indo-China situation is to succeed. I have offered Jim one or two preliminary thoughts which have occurred to us on smoothing the way for such a conference.

Much has changed since 1954. There has been a major shift in power groupings and it may be that these would not be fully reflected in the original membership of the Geneva Conference. I have suggested that it might help, in terms of better balance, if the original members of the International Control Commission were also included.

An obvious difficulty would be Kampuchean representation: which regime should be invited to participate? A possible solution could be to involve both, either officially or otherwise.

I think we must accept that the prospects for achieving a settlement through the Security Council, at least in the immediate future, now seem very slim. The British proposal offers an alternative which, I think, should have our full support.

The attitude of the other major powers is, of course, crucial. It is here, I am sure, that your support will be most valuable. While we may not be able to expect an enthusiastic response from them, initially at least, they will no doubt be considerably influenced by the degree of support that your Government gives.

With the continuing risk that the fighting in Indo-China may broaden into a wider conflict, it is most important that every effort continue to be made to bring about a settlement. Even if the fighting were to end now there would be a danger of continuing Russian involvement in Vietnam, of access to bases and of severe disturbance to the strategic balance. As we know, Russia has recently moved logistic elements into Vietnam. There can be no doubt that the longer the conflict goes on, the greater are the chances that the Soviet Union

will become increasingly committed and involved. For this reason in particular, whatever the difficulties encountered, I think the British Government should be encouraged.

I have told Jim that he has my strong personal support and that we stand ready to assist in any way we can. I hope that you too will feel able to support his proposal, which could ease tensions at this critical time.

My warmest personal regards,  
Yours Sincerely,<sup>4</sup>

**Malcolm Fraser**

---

<sup>4</sup> Fraser handwrote the last two paragraphs.

---

**265. Telegram From the Embassy in Australia to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Canberra, July 9, 1979, 0620Z

6091. For DAS Colbert from DCM Squire. Subject: Conversation Between Secretary Vance and Prime Minister Fraser, July 4, 1979. Ref: Canberra 06020.<sup>2</sup>

1. The following reports the remainder of the uncleared, rpt uncleared, memo of conversation from the Vance/Fraser talks of July 4. The Southern Africa portion was cabled reftel. S/S and Mr. Hormats each have a copy of the full uncleared memcon as reported here.

2. Memorandum of Conversation between Secretary Vance and Prime Minister Fraser.

Date: July 4, 1979 0900–1015

Place: Parliament House, Canberra

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Cables File, Box 13, Cables: Far East, 7–8/79. Secret; Sensitive; Immediate; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> Vance was in Canberra July 3–5 to attend the ANZUS Council meeting. Telegram 6020 from Canberra, July 6, transmitted excerpts of an uncleared memorandum of conversation between Vance and Fraser regarding Zimbabwe and Southern Africa. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840167–1830)

Participants: Australian Side: Prime Minister Fraser; Foreign Minister Peacock; N.F. Parkinson, Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs; Sir Geoffrey Yeend, Secretary Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet; Roger Holdich, Department of PM and Cabinet, Note-taker.

US Side: Secretary Vance; Ambassador Alston; Assistant Secretary Holbrooke; Deputy Assistant Secretary Hormats; Nicholas Platt, Staff Member, National Security Council; Michael G. Wygant, First Secretary, Embassy/Canberra Note-taker.

3. Secretary Vance opened by extending to Prime Minister Fraser greetings from President Carter. He said that the series of meetings which he had just attended had been good, that in particular the Bali session had been generally productive in the way it had dealt with refugees.<sup>3</sup>

4. Prime Minister Fraser said that he had just had useful discussions with Prime Minister Thatcher, adding (without elaboration) that she had been disappointed with her recent talks in Moscow with Premier Kosygin. Continuing with refugees, Mr. Fraser said the U.S. and Australia pay major attention to the problem while most of the rest of the world seems to think it is mainly an issue for SE Asia. The Secretary replied that the conscience of the World has been pricked by the refugee issue which will be reaffirmed again shortly in Geneva.<sup>4</sup> The summit meeting in Tokyo was a spur toward new activity on refugees.<sup>5</sup>

5. Prime Minister Fraser observed that with few exceptions most of the nations of the world are not doing enough and it is up to countries such as the U.S. and Australia to get them moving. He asked if at Bali there had been any effort to persuade Japan to switch its economic aid to Vietnam to direct relief of the Vietnamese refugees.

#### Vietnam Aid and Refugee Assistance

Secretary Vance countered that some movement had been made on the margins of this issue. The EEC has taken under advisement the idea of withholding economic aid from Vietnam during the refugee crisis. Specifically, the Irish Foreign Minister speaking at Bali had said that the EEC would undertake a new look at the matter, Mr. Vance added that Japan is not now prepared to withhold its aid from Vietnam. If Vietnam continues to refuse cooperation in alleviating the refugee problem, then Japan might change its attitude.

---

<sup>3</sup> Vance was in Bali July 1–3 to meet with the ASEAN Foreign Ministers after their Ministerial session. See footnote 6, Document 176.

<sup>4</sup> A UN-sponsored conference on refugees was held in Geneva July 20–21. See Document 138.

<sup>5</sup> Reference is to the Tokyo Economic Summit June 25–29. See footnote 7, Document 176.



The Prime Minister asked if perhaps Japan might be susceptible to greater world-wide pressure, to which the Secretary responded that it is indeed receiving pressure from others. The Secretary observed that if the EEC takes a more forthcoming position Japan would be significantly influenced in that direction.

Mr. Fraser said that the UK has agreed not to extend any new aid to Vietnam and would only be fulfilling its prior commitments.

Foreign Minister Peacock observed that while Japan had not agreed to take in any more refugees it was willing to substantially increase its financial contribution to the UNHCR. He noted that the UNHCR budget had been running at about forty million dollars, to which the Japanese had contributed 25 percent. Now, he said, Japan is willing to contribute fifty percent of a UNHCR budget that will probably exceed one hundred million dollars.

Prime Minister Fraser remarked that Japan's attitude toward aid to Vietnam probably reflects Japanese concern to protect its present and potential trade with that country.

Mr. Holbrooke intervened that Japan continues to pay out assistance under its pledge of 70 million dollars that was committed to Vietnam in 1975, however, Japan will not undertake new programs. Mr. Holbrooke also observed that the Chinese have influence with Japan on this issue, and that even Sweden is now talking of reviewing its aid policies vis-a-vis Vietnam.

Mr. Fraser interjected that it is the refugees who most need this economic assistance.

The Secretary reported that progress had been made in Bali with all delegations working together on the issue of first asylum. The Philippines and Indonesia are moving more toward our view about first asylum and Malaysia may be moving in the direction; certainly its Foreign Minister is.

Prime Minister Fraser observed that Malaysia was under special pressure because it is receiving more refugees than others. However, the Secretary asserted that in recent weeks Hong Kong was actually receiving more. He added that because of upcoming sea currents and weather conditions the flow should slow somewhat in coming months.

6. At this point, discussion shifted to the Lusaka Commonwealth Conference and the Zimbabwe problem, reported reftel.

#### 7. Energy: The Oil Crisis

Moving on to energy, Secretary Vance said that some progress had been made on this issue in Tokyo. Goals had been set for petroleum purchases in 1979 and 1980 with some progress towards commitments until 1985. There is now a willingness to control the spot market. There was a clear expression of need to move more toward coal and nuclear

power resources. More work needs to be done on renewable resources. The Secretary said that he felt the U.S. would make a major move in the next few days about developing shale and tar deposits.

Mr. Fraser asked how many billions this would cost, to which Mr. Hormats replied that although he had no figures, he felt we would move ahead on gasoline from shale, gas liquefaction and coal. Mr. Fraser asked how much gasoline from these sources might cost and Secretary Vance mentioned a figure in the \$25-30 per barrel range.

The Prime Minister noted that West Germany is working with Australia on a program for brown coal liquefaction. Mr. Vance said he foresaw a sharp U.S. move towards coal, combined with a continuing nuclear role and a major effort on synthetics.

Mr. Fraser wondered how the U.S. Government would move vis-a-vis subsidies. The Secretary said it would be largely by administrative action. The Prime Minister noted that Australian industry is based largely on gas and coal. Mr. Vance said the U.S. is beginning to see the need to relax its environmental controls. The heads of government in Tokyo all agreed that such relaxation was necessary.

Prime Minister Fraser noted that Australia could save ten percent of its oil consumption if it could relax environmental controls. All actions in that direction will relieve pressures but he noted that in some areas such as aviation gas Australia continued to have a problem of specific shortages.

Mr. Vance said he had recently seen some pessimistic figures on Iran showing that production has gone from 2.5 million down to 1.4 million barrels a day but that Saudi Arabia's commitment to raise production to 9.5 million barrels will be helpful. Mr. Fraser observed that there would not be enough oil to knock out the spot market, adding that this would increase inflation and the prospects for recession.

Mr. Vance agreed that this was an extremely serious problem, with Fraser adding that oil is only one aspect of the larger picture. Mr. Vance said that he had indications the U.S. GNP could go down one percent in real terms in 1979 with a loss of 800,000 jobs over the next two years and an inflation rate of 10-12 percent. Mr. Hormats noted that by the end of 1980, we anticipate two percent less growth based on international actions which have already taken place.

Mr. Fraser noted that one "fortunate" aspect of the problem was that Australia's tax revenues from oil have gone up as Australia moves to a world parity price on oil. Hormats interjected that this would be offset by a lower growth rate. The Prime Minister said that Australia's growth rate in 1979 would be about five percent but that this would be reduced next year because current record levels of rural growth

could not be sustained. He sees non-farm GDP at four percent for this year.

Mr. Vance warned of the danger of talking one's self into a recession. Mr. Fraser agreed, adding that the economy is what people expect it to be.

Mr. Hormats again spoke of the need to develop synthetic fuels. He remarked that several years ago we had said if oil reached \$7.00 a barrel, then various synthetic processes would be economically viable. Unfortunately, in subsequent years, inflation has wiped this figure out. The USG will have to moderate the risks involved in synthetic fuel investments, through guarantees, equity participation and other means.

Mr. Fraser observed that this would take 5–6 years.

Mr. Hormats added that the siting of generating plants and environmental protection concerns slow things down. Mr. Vance remarked that through congressional legislation we hope to develop a system whereby each new project would require only one court review of the environmental situation. Mr. Fraser said that environmental legislation in Australia was a state prerogative and this had a more inhibiting effect.

Mr. Vance said that adequate fuel will be a major problem for the future, noting that Australia's coal and uranium would be very important as the U.S. and other Western countries work on alternate fuels. He suggested more joint research and development cooperation. Readily assenting, Mr. Fraser said that our scientists and technicians must consult. He noted that Australia did not put any money into research and development but that it was doubling the allocation for this purpose, pointing again to liquefaction of brown coal. Mr. Fraser noted that Australia also has an interest in shale oil development, observing that Esso has made some suggestions for Australia in this sphere.

Mr. Fraser said that all of these alternatives would be 4–6 years down the line. However, Mr. Vance felt that coal development could come more quickly. Mr. Fraser pointed out that Australia has just announced developments in converting automobiles to liquid petroleum gas. He reported that all government cars and most taxis in Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra would shortly be converted to liquid petroleum gas at a tremendous price saving and cheaper operation. In a few years the Prime Minister felt 10–15 percent of Australia's automobiles could be LPG fired. It could go even further—it solves the emission problem and is available quickly. Mr. Vance noted that the US thrust is toward developing a new type of automobile engine but said he would ask his people to find out more about Australia's LPG automotive developments.

## 8. North-South Issues and Commodities

The Secretary reported that there had been some discussion of North/South issues at Tokyo. We are concentrating our efforts on the special areas of food, health care, and transfer of technology. He said he planned to allot more time to the considerations of achieving concrete results in these areas.

Turning to sugar the Secretary explained that our domestic enabling legislation will be vetoed or effectively shelved by the end of July. He feels that we have broken loose on sugar, and even in the absence of new legislation we will be able to act under existing law. The Secretary also saw progress on rubber.

Mr. Fraser announced that EC Commissioner, F.O. Gundelach, was in Australia recently. Gundelach had said that if the US implements the sugar agreement, then the EC will follow. However, he had stated his proposition in the context of a hope that the US would not join. Sugar is clearly an area for further effort.

The Prime Minister raised beef. Mr. Vance said the President plans to veto countercyclical legislation if it calls for a floor under 1.3 billion pounds. We will continue to press for 1.3 billion.

Turning to North-South issues to be discussed at Lusaka, the Prime Minister felt there would be debate on the Common Fund. Will there be movement on sugar in the US before Lusaka (early August)?<sup>6</sup> Mr. Vance said he thought yes, but would advise the status later.

Mr. Peacock referred to a recent report commissioned by his department on "Australia in the Third World", by Prof. Owen Harries. He recommended close study of the report, and said a copy would be made available to the US. The Secretary said he will make a major address focused on North/South issues to the National Urban League later in July.<sup>7</sup>

Mr. Fraser suggested that for those commodities on which no agreement is possible, or likely in the near term, funds from the Common Fund (presumably second window) should be used for sponsored research and product development. As under current wool agreement arrangements, such funds would be used to improve quality and broaden the market base. The Secretary said this sounded like a sensible idea, and we could support it. The Prime Minister viewed this as an action which could be taken without delay and as a show of good faith, by the Group B countries. Negotiating specific commodity agreements is a long process.

---

<sup>6</sup> The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting took place in Lusaka August 1-7.

<sup>7</sup> Vance spoke on July 23. See Department of State *Bulletin*, September 1979, pp. 6-8.

### 9. Indo-China

Mr. Peacock mentioned Cambodia, and the Japanese interest in doing something to alleviate that crisis. The Secretary noted Foreign Minister Sonoda's interest, but said we prefer that the ASEANs take the lead. Mr. Peacock said Australia would not oppose an international meeting on Cambodia if ASEAN agreed. However, he felt both China and Vietnam would be against such a conference.

Mr. Vance remarked that the Chinese side of the Cambodia puzzle was easier to fathom. But how does one design a settlement which could gain Soviet and Vietnamese approval?

The Prime Minister pointed to Vietnam's current isolation and dependence on Soviet support. However, we presume the Vietnamese continue to be wary of total dependence on the USSR. Would cutting off all Western assistance to Hanoi force a readjustment of policy?

Mr. Vance said we have pondered that issue. The Vietnamese are stubborn, and if driven may continue their present route. The ASEANs feel Vietnam must continue to bleed, and thus they support Pol Pot. This is dangerous and may not succeed. The Soviets might escalate and come on stronger. Thailand could be further sucked in. Thai-Vietnamese conflict would ensue, and then our commitments to Thailand would drag us in. China will continue to press Vietnam.

Mr. Holbrooke said the ASEANs are moving more toward China's argument. China's object, perhaps, is to fight to the last drop of Thai blood. Mr. Fraser remarked that the USSR is already heavily committed. But the Secretary asserted that Moscow's involvement could become even greater, and he mentioned the northern border.

Speaking of the refugee problem, Mr. Fraser said the ASEAN response will harden if no relief results from current attempts to cope with the flow. You have bought three months of breathing time, he declared. Mr. Peacock observed that the forthcoming Geneva Conference will be key.

Mr. Fraser said he would not advocate keeping up the war to bleed Vietnam just for fun, but how does one influence a Vietnam determined to go its own way? The Secretary responded that economic assistance is not an inconsequential carrot, and Vietnam's enormous development problems serve as some restraint.

The Prime Minister suggested that we should be much more active in using aid as a handle. Mr. Vance declared that Sweden could use its aid to bring beneficial change. Mr. Holbrooke said we are actively discouraging ADB loans to Vietnam. The greatest incentive we have is to keep Vietnam from total dependence on the USSR. While Vietnam has no natural affinity with the Russians, the country is now more dependent than ever. Mr. Vance suggested that the problem has not

been wholly thought through. The carrots and sticks must be weighed. China wants a new Cambodian Government, dumping Pol Pot and bringing Sihanouk as a transition force, and meanwhile keep bleeding Vietnam. How could one make this attractive to Hanoi?

The Prime Minister noted Vietnam's infinite patience, its endurance of 30 years at war, and its acceptance of huge popular sacrifice. The Vietnamese are not to be seduced into better behavior. He is not sure that the USSR is making a concerted policy to use Vietnam for its own ends, but that cannot be ruled out.

#### 10. The USSR

Mr. Vance declared his conviction that the Soviets are in much worse shape than many believe. They see China working with Japan, and Chinese/US rapprochement, the southern border with Iran looks bad, with spill-over possibilities in Soviet Central Asia. They are in a swamp in Afghanistan, with little prospect of a solution. NATO and Western Europe are doing well. The Europeans are beginning to sell arms to China. The Soviet economy is in bad shape and the wheat crop will be poor this year. Soviet leadership is in transition, with uncertain prospects. Finally, Vietnam is a heavy drain. Mr. Fraser wondered that if this were so, would the Soviets now be more inclined to destabilize Southeast Asia? Perhaps the cost now would not be too high. The Secretary said the Thais have figures developed by India which show that Moscow now pays \$2.5 million per day to Vietnam.

Mr. Holbrooke declared that at least two ASEANs (Singapore and Thailand), and perhaps Malaysia believe that the USSR is intent on destabilizing Southeast Asia. But, he added, the Vietnamese are capable of making their own decisions. The Soviets may pursue their objectives through Hanoi. Mr. Fraser observed that the refugee outflow serves to destabilize. Moscow sees the refugees as a ready instrument, and thus needs to keep them flowing.

Mr. Fraser concluded that on refugees we do not have many cards to play.

Mr. Vance closed with an expression of thanks for this opportunity to share views.

**Alston**

**266. Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>**

PA M 79–10426

Washington, September 14, 1979

*South Pacific: Nuclear Attitudes**Key Points*

Concern among the states of the South Pacific over nuclear contamination is widespread and of long standing, honed by years of apprehension over French nuclear testing in French Polynesia. The attitudes of these states toward nuclear matters have been demonstrated in:

—Efforts to create a nuclear free zone.

—Debates over port visits by nuclear powered vessels.

—Resistance to the storage of spent nuclear fuel in the area. [*portion marking not declassified*]

New Zealand's Labor government, in office from late 1972 until late 1975, first articulated these concerns as self-proclaimed spokesman for the more passive South Pacific island states. The current National Party government in New Zealand has soft-pedaled the nuclear issue, but another Labor government would be certain to renew agitation. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Australia, although heavily involved in aid programs and commercial activities in the South Pacific, has given only perfunctory support to New Zealand initiatives on nuclear issues. [*portion marking not declassified*]

*Nuclear Free Zone*

A nuclear-weapons-free zone—a central feature in South Pacific thinking on nuclear issues—was the inspiration of Norman Kirk, Labor Prime Minister of New Zealand from late 1972 until his death in office in September 1974. Kirk intended a nuclear free zone to force an end to French nuclear testing. His successor, Wallace Rowling, rekindled the idea in early 1975 in part to cash in on Kirk's popularity. Rowling

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 82T00267R: Production Case Files, Box 1, Folder 128: South Pacific: Nuclear Attitudes. Secret; [*handling restriction not declassified*]. A note on the first page reads, "This paper, based on information as of 10 September 1979, was prepared by [*name not declassified*], East Asia and Pacific Division, Office of Political Analysis. The paper was requested by Evelyn Colbert, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific. It was coordinated with Office of Scientific Intelligence and Office of Strategic Research and the National Intelligence Officers for East Asia Pacific and for Nuclear Proliferation. Comment and queries should be addressed to the author, [*less than 1 line not declassified*]."



apparently also envisioned regional restrictions on nuclear weapons and nuclear powered ships. In the spring of 1975, New Zealand officials presented the US Ambassador in Wellington with an outline of a proposal for such a zone. They emphasized that it would apply, at least initially, only to the territory, territorial waters, and air space of the South Pacific countries, not to the high seas. They insisted that advocacy of a zone did not imply any lessening of the importance New Zealand attaches to the ANZUS (Australia, New Zealand, United States) treaty relationship with the United States, a tie that has been the focus on New Zealand foreign policy since World War II. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The United States, while sympathetic to South Pacific concerns over earlier French atmospheric testing, had strong reservations about the nuclear-free zone proposal, in that it could presage restrictions on internationally recognized rights of free passage of ships and aircraft over the open seas. Prime Minister Rowling, contrary to his earlier assurances to the United States that "there would be no problem with respect to movement," stated in August 1975 that he sought to bar nuclear-armed vessels from the zone. Rowling's position called into question New Zealand's earlier assertions that a zone would not disturb existing security arrangements. Most of the consequences of the implementation of such a proposed zone would fall on the United States because other possessors of nuclear weapons do not have the traditional presence, strategic interests, alliance commitments and territory in the Pacific area. The tendency of the New Zealand Labor government to blur the distinction between nuclear weapons and nuclear propulsion was an additional source of concern for US interests. Any restrictions on the mobility of US forces, particularly with the increased use of nuclear powered ships, would detract from the ability of the US to carry out its obligations under the ANZUS treaty. *[portion marking not declassified]*

The Rowling government nevertheless persisted in efforts to get UN endorsement of the concept of a South Pacific nuclear-weapons-free zone. Fiji cosponsored such a resolution at the UN and other South Pacific island nations supported it, although all but New Zealand felt that a nuclear ban should apply only to testing and not to nuclear powered ships or those carrying nuclear weapons. The UN General Assembly voted for the principle of a South Pacific nuclear-free zone in December 1975,<sup>2</sup> after the New Zealand Labor government had been voted out of office but just before the new National Party government had been sworn in. Australia voted for the zone out of a sense of

---

<sup>2</sup> UN General Assembly Resolution 3477 (XXX) was adopted on December 11, 1975.



Commonwealth solidarity but was not enthusiastic. The US abstained. [*portion marking not declassified*]

The National Party government under Robert Muldoon that came into office in late 1975 quickly scuttled the nuclear-free zone as “woolly-headed.” New Zealand has continued to support the creation of nuclear-free zones in principle, both in the UN and in the South Pacific Forum (the 12-member regional organization of island nations and dependencies plus Australia and New Zealand), but with the reservation that they not jeopardize traditional freedom of navigation of the high seas or existing security arrangements. Foreign Minister Talboys restated this position most recently at the UN special session on disarmament in June 1978. The South Pacific Forum has not focused on the issue since its March 1976 session, when the thrust of discussion, as guided by Fijian Prime Minister Mara, was to register continued opposition to French nuclear testing rather than to promote a scheme that would prohibit nuclear-powered ships or those carrying nuclear weapons. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Although a South Pacific nuclear-weapons-free zone is dead so far as the National Party government in New Zealand is concerned, opposition Labor leader Rowling continues to espouse the concept, and any future Labor government would renew agitation on the issue. Typical of the lingering sentiment in the South Pacific that Labor could play upon was the recent incident in Fiji in connection with the visit of a US naval vessel. Although the ship was not nuclear-powered, the Fijian press speculated over whether it had nuclear weapons on board. The ship’s captain, in accordance with standard instructions, would neither confirm nor deny the reports. This prompted a Fijian cabinet minister, although a friend of the United States, to cancel a scheduled luncheon aboard the ship.<sup>3</sup> [*portion marking not declassified*]

### *Nuclear Powered Ships*

New Zealand’s resistance to port calls by nuclear-powered ships had worrisome implications as the US Navy became increasingly dependent on nuclear propulsion. Again the New Zealand Labor Government, because of its tendency to lump nuclear weapons with nuclear propulsion, led the opposition. It refused—during its term in office from late 1972 to late 1975—to budge from its prohibition on port visits. In this stand, it had the support of a strong body of New Zealand public opinion that feared nuclear radiation. National Party Prime Minister Muldoon, who assumed office in late 1975, asserted, however, that New Zealand could not expect a dependable security relationship

---

<sup>3</sup> Telegram 2601 from Suva, August 9, reported on the incident. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790360–1124)

with the United States if it continued to bar the most modern US naval vessels from its ports. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Nevertheless, public opinion on the subject was such that Muldoon found it wise to wait until mid-1976 before lifting the ban on port visits. Since then, there have been four port calls by US nuclear-powered naval vessels, the last in January 1979. Each has provoked hostile demonstrations, and popular feelings over the issue remained sufficiently strong that in 1978 the US Embassy recommended that no visits be requested during that year because of national elections in November. Rowling, as head of the Labor opposition, continues to inveigh against visits by nuclear-powered warships. A Labor government would be certain to reimpose the ban, knowing it would have the support of a highly vocal minority of the New Zealand population. [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *Nuclear Storage*

A new and current worry among the South Pacific states is the possibility of a nuclear storage site in the Pacific. Island nations voice this concern without any prodding by New Zealand. A major topic at the annual meeting in July of the South Pacific Forum was US consideration of a storage facility in the Pacific for spent nuclear fuel. Forum members, expressing apprehension over leaching of nuclear waste into fishing waters, voted unanimously to urge the United States to abandon study of a storage site on one of three US-owned islands—Palmyra, Midway, or Wake.<sup>4</sup> [*portion marking not declassified*]

#### *Australia's Attitude*

Attitudes in Australia toward both a South Pacific nuclear-weapons-free zone and port calls by nuclear-powered vessels have been more relaxed than those in New Zealand. The Australian Labor Party, in particular, has taken a markedly different stance from that of its New Zealand counterpart. Although the Australian Labor government under Gough Whitlam took France to the International Court of Justice in 1973 over French nuclear testing in the Pacific (France refused to accept the court's jurisdiction), Whitlam did not actively support the campaign in the UN to have the South Pacific designated a nuclear-weapons-free zone. Indeed, he tried to dissuade Rowling from pursuing the idea, arguing that it was impractical because it could not be policed and would cause unwanted strains with the United States. Australia finally voted in favor of the UN resolution supporting the concept, but

---

<sup>4</sup> The resolution passed by the South Pacific Forum at its meeting in Honiara July 11–13 was sent to Ambassador Olmsted on July 16. (Telegram 1024 from Port Moresby, July 23; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790335–0801)

did not lobby for it. Australia's position on the issue reflected—in addition to its desire not to create problems with the United States—its greater distance from [*less than 1 line not declassified*] the South Pacific [*1½ lines not declassified*]. [*portion marking not declassified*]

Concern over nuclear contamination and proliferation, although common in Australia, is not as deepseated as in New Zealand. Australia refused for some years to export uranium, fearing a contribution to nuclear proliferation. Canberra now permits uranium exports but imposes stringent end use controls to prevent the use of uranium in weapons. Similarly, fears of nuclear contamination delayed permission for port calls by US nuclear-powered warships. The Australian ban was imposed in July 1971 by the Liberal-Country government out of concern over safety and US liability in case of an accident. The succeeding Labor government, realizing that the US Navy's increasing reliance on nuclear-powered ships could not be ignored, was moving toward permission for port visits by US nuclear-powered naval vessels when it was voted out of office in December 1975. The new Liberal-Country government permitted the resumption of port calls in August 1976. The size of protest demonstrations during US port calls has gradually diminished, and public opinion polls show that the majority of Australians now favor such calls. Still, feeling remains sufficiently intense in two states—New South Wales and South Australia—to discourage any early plans for visits there. [*portion marking not declassified*]

With the Australian Labor Party's record of greater reasonableness on both the nuclear free zone issue and port calls, the prospects of difficulties on these two points are less with a future Australian Labor government than they would be with a Labor administration in New Zealand. Under Whitlam's successor—Bill Hayden—Australian Labor has become more moderate. The firebrands of the early 1970s who railed against US policy in Vietnam are now retired or voted out of office. In contrast, Rowling remains in control of New Zealand's Labor Party, and his hardline attitudes would prevail if he again became prime minister. [*portion marking not declassified*]

267. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

New York, September 25, 1979

## SUBJECT

ANZUS Breakfast

## PARTICIPANTS

<i>US</i>	<i>New Zealand</i>	<i>Australia</i>
The Secretary	Secretary of MFA	Foreign Minister
Ambassador	Frank Corner	Andrew Peacock
McHenry	Ambassador to the	Ambassador to the UN
Mr. Holbrooke	UN H.H.	H.D. Anderson
Ambassador Alston	Francis	Private Secretary
Mrs. Colbert		Robert Gordon

The Secretary suggested that the group take up Indochina as its first order of business. There was general agreement that Kampuchean relief was the most urgent immediate problem and that it was necessary to put heavy and concerted pressure on the Vietnamese to break the deadlock in Phnom Penh and to accept arrangements that would make it possible for the relief effort to go forward. Mr. Corner reported that he had raised this issue with Phan Hien the previous day. Phan Hien, while dismissing accounts of famine as exaggerated had, nevertheless said that UNICEF could come. Mr. Holbrooke suggested that when Mr. Peacock saw Phan Hien later in the day he should stress the urgency of the problem and make it clear to him that the ANZUS countries, ASEAN, the Japanese and others all feel very strongly about it.

Turning to the military situation, Holbrooke noted that the dry season offensive was already under way. The military outcome is unpredictable but there can be no doubt of certain consequences: the Vietnamese will advance; there will be a vast increase in Kampuchean refugees and in starvation; pressures on the Thai border will increase; and, in the end, Kampuchea will be destroyed. Political tensions in Thailand could also increase. [2½ lines not declassified] Corner remarked that Phan Hien in talking of Thai cooperation with Pol Pot and the Chinese, had urged that if Heng Samrin forces tangled with the Thai it would be important to keep cool. Vietnam does not intend to molest Thailand. Nevertheless, Ambassador Francis observed, it was obvious

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Records of Cyrus Vance, 1977–1980, Lot 84D241, Vance Exdis Memcons, 1979. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Evelyn Colbert (EA) on October 1; distribution approved in S/S on October 9. The meeting took place in the Secretary's suite at the UN Plaza.

that Vietnam intended to cross the border. All agreed with the Secretary's comment that the situation was ominous.

Meanwhile, Holbrooke continued, no one can predict what the Chinese will do. They have said they are not planning another massive offensive. But it was clear from the difference between their comments to him in July and those to the Vice President six weeks later that their position has hardened considerably.<sup>2</sup> They are backing Pol Pot all out. They charge that the Vietnamese are now wholly Soviet puppets and will take years to learn that they must change their policies. Pol Pot must be supported as the only effective resistance to the Vietnamese. The United States and Japan are naive in talking about a political solution.

Peacock observed that this same line had been reflected in the Chinese demarches in Canberra and Wellington where, as we all knew, they had completely misrepresented the U.S. position.

Corner, observing that Phan Hien had also stressed to him the total Vietnamese subservience to the Russians, wondered about the extent to which this was really true. Past experience had suggested that the Vietnamese were fiercely independent. The Secretary agreed that this was the case; despite their present heavy dependence on the Russians, which they will find increasingly galling, the Vietnamese retain their independence. Even so, however, the Soviets have strengthened their position in the region, gradually building up installations which they can deny are bases. As the struggle goes on they will be able to strengthen their position; accordingly the longer it continues the happier they will be.

Corner observed that their unwillingness to subordinate themselves to any other country and their economic problems offered the main hope of detaching the Vietnamese from the Russians. Lee Kuan Yew at Lusaka, he observed, had pointed out, with some effect on the Africans, that while the Russians were effective in supplying military equipment to countries that want to go to war, countries that want to promote economic development must turn to the west. The same point applies to Vietnam.

The Secretary agreed that this is our principal lever; the real question is how to use it. The Vietnamese continue to press us on normalization and we continue to tell them that they must first clear away the obstacles. Meanwhile, Holbrooke observed, nothing can be done about a political settlement until the dry season fighting is over; the Vietnamese and the Chinese both want another test on the Khmer battlefield. Agreeing with this analysis, Peacock observed that over the next four

---

<sup>2</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vol. XIII, China, Documents 252 and 265.

months nothing more could be done beyond keeping up the pressure on troop withdrawal, refugees and famine. He asked whether the Secretary would be raising the Vietnam issue with the Russians. Responding affirmatively, the Secretary observed that it would probably be only for the record.

The Secretary then raised the problem of orchestrating tactics in the UN; what would be the best way to proceed. Holbrooke responded that the Thai would take the lead and would play the PRC game—perhaps too much so. Ambassador McHenry noted that while the ASEAN-sponsored item is on the agenda, the ASEANs don't seem to know as yet exactly what they have in mind. Clearly, however, they would like a GA resolution that would do what the Security Council failed to do and they are concerned lest the humanitarian issues overshadow the political one. They seem to have a withdrawal resolution in mind, but they have not yet decided on what the best procedures would be.

Winding up the discussion of Indochina, Holbrooke observed that the Japanese had also seen Phan Hien on Monday<sup>3</sup> and took the same line with him that the ANZUS countries were taking. We were asking the Japanese to link their actual aid deliveries to progress on refugees. Peacock speculated that pressure to resume aid will rise in Australia but that the cabinet would stand firm on this. Corner reported that the only remaining New Zealand aid program—training for Vietnamese students in New Zealand—had now been suspended by Hanoi, reflecting the much harder line the Vietnamese were now taking toward his country.

The Secretary then provided an account of developments in the Middle East. The West Bank-Gaza talks, he said, were going forward slowly and he expects that by the end of 1979 agreement will have been reached on modalities and major issues. With respect to powers and responsibilities, there is already 60–70% agreement. The key issues on which agreement has not yet been reached are essentially political: how to deal with common lands and how to deal with water. Sadat is satisfied with the progress that has been made to date. He will continue carefully building up his personal relations with Begin. The situation in Lebanon, however, is extremely worrisome. Without a real truce, we can have a catastrophe; the Syrians keep challenging the Israelis and getting clobbered. We will all have to work together to put the pieces together. Stabilization in Lebanon is particularly important since it also buys time for the West Bank/Gaza settlement.

---

<sup>3</sup> September 24.

The Secretary continued by describing the arrangements under which US monitoring will proceed in the Sinai until the end of the three year withdrawal period in 1982. We hope that one year before—in April 1981,—it will be possible to put in UNEF or some sort of multilateral force. We have insisted very strongly to both parties that in addition to the US there should also be some form of UN presence in the interests of all concerned. Egypt is strongly positive; Israel is strongly negative.

Peacock then raised the issue of the helicopter unit Australia had contributed to UNEF. The Defense Department he said was very anxious to get the unit back and these pressures were intensified in Canberra by uncertainty over whether the UN would provide the necessary logistic support if the helicopters remained and over financial support. However he is prepared to have them remain if this would be helpful and Prime Minister Fraser also takes this position. The Secretary responded that it would be extremely helpful if the Australians could delay their decision for a couple of weeks. Peacock said that this could be done and that he would cable Canberra to this effect immediately.

Peacock, referring to the Secretary's reference in his GA speech to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, observed that it would be very important to have it in place before the NPT conference. The key problem the Secretary said was the difference between Britain and the USSR on the permissible number of acoustic stations. Peacock agreed to join the US in urging the British to be more flexible. New Zealand, Corner said, will once again be a sponsor of the GA resolution on nuclear testing. It has usually been able to exert a moderating influence. This year, however, because so little progress has been made on the CTB, the pressure for demanding a moratorium will probably be much stronger and, if this is the consensus, New Zealand will have to go along. Australia, however, is less convinced that the consensus will develop along these lines.

In anticipation of the Secretary's meeting later in the day with Papua New Guinea's Foreign Minister Olewale,<sup>4</sup> Peacock suggested that the Secretary bear in mind that Olewale is paranoid about decolonization in the Pacific. The Australians, who had succeeded in redrafting the Forum decolonization resolution, had told Olewale that the more you go after the French publicly, the nastier they get. The French don't mind references to self-determination, but they don't want to be held to a set schedule. If there is a call for independence by the people of the territory they will respond, but this is unlikely in the case of New

---

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 3, Document 143.

Caledonia. Corner, agreeing with Peacock's analysis, said that Olewale seems to be becoming more aware of French sensitivities. He had reminded Olewale, citing New Zealand's experience, that the French, much more than other Western countries, are likely to retaliate in the trade and aid fields.

The discussion closed with a brief mention of Indian Ocean affairs. Peacock expressed his gratification with the Secretary's statement that negotiations with the Russians on this subject were unlikely to resume any time soon and reiterated Australian interest in being kept informed.

---

## 268. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, January 31, 1980, 10:15 a.m.

### SUBJECT

Your Meeting with Malcolm Fraser, Prime Minister of Australia

### PARTICIPANTS

#### *US*

Mr. Claytor  
VAdm Hanson, Dir, Joint Staff  
DASD/ISA Mr. Murray  
Ambassador Philip Alston  
Deputy Asst Secretary State,  
Evelyn Colbert  
DASD/ISA Mr. Platt  
LTC Eirich, Assistant for  
Australia/ISA (note taker)

#### *Australian*

Malcolm Fraser  
Michael McKellar, Minister  
attending the Prime Minister  
Sir Geoffrey Yeend, Head, Prime  
Minister's Department  
Sir Nicholas Parkinson, Australian  
Amb.  
Adm Sir Anthony Synnot, Chief  
Defense Forces Staff  
William Pritchett, Secretary of  
Defense  
Peter Henderson, Secretary,  
Department of Foreign Affairs  
Mr. R.W. Furlonger, Director  
General, Office of National  
Assessments

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330-83-0218, 1, Fraser Visit, 1980. Secret. The meeting took place at Blair House.



*Mr. Claytor:* We appreciate the strong support you've given us in Iran<sup>2</sup> and Afghanistan.<sup>3</sup> And the decisive measures you've taken. We need that kind of worldwide support.

*Mr. Fraser:* We believe the U.S. is right in these situations and that it's not just the task of the U.S. We think the current situation is a long term problem, one that might last for the decade.

*Mr. Claytor:* We agree, but it's not easy to convince everyone of the Soviets' intentions.

*Mr. Fraser:* We would be interested to hear your plans. For our part we are willing to do more in our part of the world. We could make facilities available in Australia.

*Mr. Claytor:* They would be appreciated; it would be great to have an increased presence in your area. We are, of course, taking our own measures to strengthen our position.

We have new programs across the board, a 5½% increase in the FY 81 defense budget—the biggest increase in 15 years. It's needed. Our five year defense program will increase 4½% each year so that at the end of the 5th year we will be spending 25% more than we are now.

Our immediate concentration will be on the MX missile to maintain equivalence with the Soviets.

We will also increase the Navy, 17 new ships, and an additional nuclear carrier. We need them because of the Indian Ocean deployment.

We will arm an additional division in Europe.

We will establish a Rapid deployment force. We are doing this on two fronts. We have been doing it in Europe to backup two divisions on the central front. We preposition heavy equipment there and then fly in the troops. It's easy to fly in the troops.

For the Indian Ocean we'll contract for some RO-RO ships that will carry enough supplies and equipment for a half a division. We plan to send the ships to Diego Garcia. This means we will be able to deploy this force into the area within 5 to 7 days instead of 30 days with enough equipment or supplies for 10–15 days. We will have this capability by the spring.

In the longer term we will have a new special class of support ships by budget year 83.

*Mr. Fraser:* Will you be needing facilities in Australia?

*Mr. Claytor:* Yes, we plan to look at the problem.

---

<sup>2</sup> Iranian students took 52 Americans hostage on November 4, 1979. See *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vols. X and XI.

<sup>3</sup> The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan began on December 24, 1979. Documentation on the invasion and the U.S. response is in *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vol. VI, Soviet Union.

*Mr. Fraser:* What kind of operations would you conduct?

*Mr. Claytor:* We will look for a homeport for carriers. Our problem is the six month turn around period. Longer periods with men away from their families cause personnel problems. Homeports near the operating areas are a great advantage. A homeport on the Indian Ocean would be attractive, if feasible.

*Adm Synnot:* Maintenance requirements would pose a problem at Perth.

*Mr. Claytor:* We would use dry dock facilities at Singapore or Subic Bay when required but could return to Perth between deployments.

Homeporting in Japan has worked well. In addition to the ship, there is also the problem of maintenance for the Air Wing.

*ADM Synnot:* You would almost need an air station to maintain the aircraft.

*Mr. Claytor:* That's right and then there is the problem of family housing. There would be about 6000 men on the carrier; 4000 of these would have families. We are looking into the requirements for dependent housing.

*Mr. Fraser:* Well I certainly think we should explore it. I know there are practical problems to overcome, but I don't see why we couldn't support a homeport in Australia. Let our people look at it. What are the other options?

*Mr. Claytor:* Combined operations.

*ADM Synnot:* Including Marines?

*Mr. Claytor:* That's right, we'll have Marine amphibious groups deployed to the Indian Ocean, and Marine exercises in Australia would be very good.

In addition to the Indian Ocean, I'm also concerned about the South Pacific. That's an important area.

*Mr. Fraser:* We're particularly aware of the importance of the area. We have allocated greater aid. The sums are small, but large relative to their small economies.

I urged Ohira to consider greater civilian aid to the islands. He said he would take a look at it. Our objective should be to keep the Soviets from playing around in the area. Later today I'll tell the President we are prepared to increase aid to the Southeast Asian nations, and that Australia is willing to do more.<sup>4</sup> The sooner we examine the establishment of joint bases, the better.

---

<sup>4</sup> See Document 269.

*Mr. Claytor:* We have been doing some internal studies—it involves a great deal of study. The Navy has to get its requirements together and then talk to you.

*Mr. Fraser:* I remember we talked about this ten years ago. We said then that they would be available.

*Mr. Claytor:* Ten years is about what it seems to take to get things like this done.

—We are also looking at other bases in Oman—Bob would you like to say something on that?

*Mr. Murray:* They received us well in the countries we toured in December, Oman, Kenya, and Somalia. All of them said we were welcome to use the available facilities but that we should keep our presence low key, integrate into the area, and use local workers. They are worried about the Soviets. They understand America's responsibility and want to help.

We think we'll soon be able to use Mombasa for carriers. With the triangle of Mombasa, Oman and Diego, we'll have a reasonably good support arrangement for our operations in that area. We would like to use air facilities in Somalia and Oman for air search operations and we've been talking to Egypt about its air fields. We need as many airfields as we can get.

This would allow us greater flexibility if some become unavailable.

*Mr. Fraser:* Are you doing more in Diego? Are the facilities there being expanded?

*Mr. Claytor:* Yes, our five year plan show improvements in runways and P.O.L. facilities.

*Adm Synnot:* Will it be able to handle B-52s.

*Mr. Claytor:* Yes, when we've extended the runways and expanded the aprons.

I spent a day out there when I was Secretary of the Navy. I was very impressed. We could put the whole Seventh Fleet in the lagoon if we dredged it. Best of all there are no people there. Only the environmentalists complain about our presence. There are some wild donkeys there that they are worried about.

*Adm Hanson:* The liberty is not good.

*Adm Synnot:* Morale won't be very high on those depot ships.

*Mr. Claytor:* Those will be civilian crews, highly paid and rotated periodically. I'd be worried if Marines were on those ships.

*Mr. Fraser:* Would the Marine groups be located at Diego.

*Mr. Claytor:* The Marines would rotate in and out of the area and would use the materiel on the depot ships during unopposed landings. In the new budget we do have money for a new class of amphibious

ships, the LSD-41, which we would use for opposed landings. We believe the most likely case will be an unopposed landing where we'll be able to move our heavy equipment in with administrative landings. These prepositioned ships will give us that capability.

*Mr. Fraser:* What about Australian airfields as transit facilities?

*Mr. Murray:* We might need them, but plan is now to move our flights through Europe and the Mid East.

*Mr. Fraser:* What are some of the things we could do?

*Adm Synnot:* We have limited capabilities compared to the U.S. We have one P-3c squadron with an ASW capability, and we would not be able to accelerate our current operations very much.

—We could make port calls in areas that are inaccessible to the U.S. Navy—in India for instance.

—We would take over some of the patrolling of the Malacca straits and parts of the Southern Indian Ocean. We have access to the air facilities at Tengah and Butterworth.

*Mr. Claytor:* Great Idea.

*Mr. Fraser:* We had been thinking of removing our presence at Butterworth, but that would have to be reassessed.

I'm thinking of exploring a revival of the Five Power Agreement<sup>5</sup> in London. That arrangement is in being, but has been rather dead from the start.

*Mr. Claytor:* We'd like to see more of the Royal Navy with the French in the Indian Ocean.

*Adm Synnot:* They make about one deployment a year.

*Mr. Claytor:* The French have a very big presence in Djibouti. We are seeking to encourage the UK to establish a permanent token force in the Indian Ocean.

*Adm. Synnot:* I recall that the UK sent a task force to the Med that released U.S. ships. They've also sent an Army unit to Oman.

*Mr. Claytor:* We appreciate the opportunity to exercise with the Melbourne in the RIMPAC exercise.

Would the Melbourne be able to participate in an Indian Ocean exercise?

*Adm. Synnot:* It couldn't go for a while. I doubt if it could have anything there until after the middle of the year.

---

<sup>5</sup> Reference is to the 1971 Five Power Defense Arrangement among the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, and Singapore, in which member countries would consult if there were an armed attack on Malaysia or Singapore.

*Mr. Claytor:* We could coordinate the carrier deployments. We have 26 ships in the Indian Ocean now with carrier groups scheduled to be rotated.

*Mr. Fraser:* Our actions are important to the perception of the South-east Asian nations. A number of factors have caused doubts within these countries. I believe the Soviet challenge will be outside Europe in the Third World.

*Mr. Claytor:* I agree, it will not be in Europe provided our presence there is not an easy mark.

*Mr. Fraser:* I believe the Soviets will conclude a war in Europe would be too costly—what kind of Europe would they have left after a big war?

—Because the threat will be in the Third World I never believed in the idea of an Indian Ocean balance. Suharto and I both supported increased forces in the Indian Ocean.

—I think the President's speech<sup>6</sup> gives us a good base to build on, at least it exhibited a change of course.

*Mr. Claytor:* Our course is now set and we intend to increase speed.

*Mr. Fraser:* ASEAN will have greater self confidence if it sees a renewed interest on the part of the U.S. There has been some doubt about U.S. interest in this part of the world. The Nixon doctrine<sup>7</sup> said you're on your own. ASEAN felt lonely. You don't need to be the world's policeman or offer blank checks, but it's important to show interest in the independence and sovereignty of these countries.

*Mr. Claytor:* I agree, but we really couldn't do that because of internal factors. Now the Vietnam syndrome is just about over. People in the U.S. were anti-military. They didn't like people in uniform. Now we've had requests for our reservists to wear their uniforms. The President's speech couldn't have been made when he took office. They would have hounded him out of Washington.

*Mr. Fraser:* In my view our efforts must be for the long haul; we must pay attention to the Third World, particularly ASEAN. We must give them the confidence to say in public what they say in private.

*Mr. Claytor:* The Soviets have helped us in this. They scared the Third World. These countries can see that a treaty of friendship with the Russians is an invitation to an invasion and the killing of their presidents.

---

<sup>6</sup> Reference is to Carter's January 23 State of the Union speech. For the text of the speech, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. I, Foundations of Foreign Policy, Document 138.

<sup>7</sup> See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. I, Foundations of Foreign Policy, Document 29.

*Mr. Fraser:* Yes it has certainly strengthened the conviction of some of the leaders like Moi in Kenya.

What are we doing to implement these ideas.

*Adm Synnot:* We will work out the details—most likely with CINCPAC.

*Mr. Claytor:* Our study on the homeport requirement is not really finished. It's probably a month away.

*Mr. Fraser:* I think we could sort out the homeporting problems, but it's an issue we will have to think about some more.

*Adm Synnot:* A large aircraft carrier would create some big problems.

*Mr. Fraser:* Perth is a good city.

*Amb Alston:* Would they welcome the idea of a homeport?

*Mr. Fraser:* The Premier of Western Australia guarantees it. They're more reactionary out there than in the East.

*Mr. Pritchett:* What about Pakistan?

*Mr. Claytor:* Brzezinski and McGiffert are going there today to look at the problems from a military and economic perspective. The problem is to persuade the Indians that Pakistan is not a threat. Almost all of Pakistan's Army is on the eastern border. They wouldn't move it to the west unless political conditions change. Is there anything that can be done to improve relations with India?

*Mr. Fraser:* Peacock's recent discussions with Indira<sup>8</sup> indicate she is still sympathetic to the Russians.

*Mr. Murray:* The Carrington mission was helpful.

*Mr. Fraser:* She insists on bringing up unhelpful things like why we didn't condemn China as strongly when it invaded Vietnam.

*Mr. Murray:* We intend to send Clark Clifford to see her in the near future.

*Mr. Claytor:* What about Japan? Harold Brown had some discussions with Ohira on increasing their defense forces and taking some of the pressure off us. What do you see for the Japanese role?

*Mr. Fraser:* There's a great deal of political sensitivity in ASEAN. They fear China, also the Russians. Japanese ships would not be acceptable yet within ASEAN. We are close to the Japanese, but we might feel uncomfortable about a Japanese fleet in Sydney harbor. Perhaps they could do more work in the north Pacific.

---

<sup>8</sup> Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

*Mr. Claytor:* They could do more around their home islands—ASW work—they would not be a threat to anyone else there. We'd like to see them do more, but it's a sensitive issue.

*Mr. Platt:* The climate has changed in Japan. When Harold Brown asked Ohira for increased defense expenditures the request was publicized and the reaction was not negative. This would have been unthinkable two or three years ago.

*Mr. Pritchett:* Will Clifford mention the plans for Kenya to Indira?

*Mr. Murray:* It's not a part of the formal briefing, but it could come up. Part of his objective is to explain our actions in the Indian Ocean. We plan to indicate that our interest in Pakistan is not a threat to India.

*Mr. Fraser:* One person who could approach Indira might be Harry Lee. He respects Indira, he liked her strong government and had little use for Desai. Do we have an assessment of the relationship? Lee is on our side on most of these issues.

*Synnott:* How do we publicize our discussions? No specifics, additional discussions are required, common and independent actions for regional security.

*Mr. Fraser:* We've said we would be willing to increase patrols in the Indian Ocean. We could say we discussed that without being specific. We could say we were laying the ground work for staging facilities. We wouldn't be specific on homeporting. Greater numbers of exercises, land, air, and sea.

*Adm Synnott:* Contributions to air patrols.

*Mr. Fraser:* We'll note our offer for greater assistance to ASEAN. On the question of increased Australian defense forces, we'll say more than what we've been doing.

*Mr. Pritchett:* Cultivate defense contacts in the region. We will have on-going discussions, I suppose mainly with CINCPAC, but you will probably want to have a policy input from back here.

*Mr. Claytor:* That's right, we'll look at that. We appreciate all of your proposals.

*Mr. Murray:* Australia has gone to war with us the last four times. I hope we don't have to do it again.

## 269. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, January 31, 1980, 1:30–2:30 p.m.

### SUBJECT

Summary of the President's Meeting with Prime Minister Fraser of Australia

### PARTICIPANTS

President Jimmy Carter  
Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance  
Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, David Aaron  
Deputy Secretary of Defense, W. Graham Claytor  
Assistant Secretary of State, Richard Holbrooke  
U.S. Ambassador to Australia, Philip Alston  
Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Evelyn Colbert  
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Nicholas Platt  
National Security Council Staff Member for East Asia, Donald Gregg, Notetaker  
  
Prime Minister Fraser of Australia  
Minister of Health & Minister Assisting the Prime Minister, Michael McKellar  
Ambassador to the United States, Sir Nicholas Parkinson  
Secretary, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Sir Geoffrey Yeend  
Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Peter Henderson  
Chief of the Defense Force Staff, Admiral Sir Anthony Synnot  
Secretary of Foreign Affairs, William Pritchett  
Director, Office of National Assessment, Robert Furlonger  
Deputy Secretary (Trade and Resources), Lindsay Duthie  
Executive Officer to the Prime Minister, Michael Cook  
Notetaker for the Australians, Roger Holditch

*The President* opened the meeting by welcoming Prime Minister Fraser and his party. He said that their support was reassuring. He thanked them specifically for the leadership Australia has shown on Afghanistan and Iran.

*Prime Minister Fraser* replied that he knew how difficult the last three months had been in terms of the hostage situation. He added that the President's response to the Afghan situation was seen in Australia as fully correct. He referred to the State of the Union speech<sup>2</sup> as "something to build on." *Fraser* said that he knows that the United States cannot do all things by itself, and that close cooperation between allies is necessary. (C)

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Subject File, Box 38, Memcons: President, 1/1980. Secret. The meeting took place in the Cabinet Room at the White House. Fraser was on a private visit to the United States en route to Europe.

<sup>2</sup> For the text of the State of the Union speech, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. I, Foundations of Foreign Policy, Document 138.



*The President* spoke of the United States and Australia as “partners” committed to the same cause. He said he felt that the Soviets had been surprised by the strength of the reaction to their attack. *The President* said he was pleased with the results of the Islamic Conference. He said he did not expect the Soviets to pull back from Afghanistan, but that they must be sent “a continuing message” that aggression carries with it a heavy price. *The President* said that the United Nations vote had also sent the Soviets an important message of condemnation.<sup>3</sup> *The President* listed the various actions the United States has taken against the Soviets, and said that we must work in close cooperation with the Australians and other close allies to see that our efforts are complementary. *The President* cautioned that we do not want to alienate the Soviets completely. This would be dangerous. We should “leave the door open for them.” (S)

*The President* said that he was gratified by the growing response to the United States stand on the Olympics. He said that the nations of Africa will have an important influence on how that issue is resolved. He said that Muhammed Ali and Andrew Young are both going to travel to Africa to urge those nations not to take part in the Olympics.<sup>4</sup> (C)

*The President* said that he hoped at a later time to move toward ratification of the SALT II treaty. He said he knew that it was hard for our allies to stand firm with the United States, and cited the European nations as having done a minimal amount. (C)

Turning to the Indian Ocean *the President* said that Australian support in that area is most welcome. He said that we plan to keep two carrier battle groups in the Indian Ocean, and that we are offering to help other nations in the area, such as the Yemens. He noted that some countries cannot accept US aid publicly. *The President* then asked Fraser what he had heard from Foreign Minister Peacock’s trip to India and Pakistan. (C)

*Fraser* said that Mrs. Gandhi had been difficult, and was not holding to the anti-Soviet stance she had manifested a few weeks ago. Mrs. Gandhi tends to try to equate the Chinese invasion of Vietnam with the Soviet attack on Afghanistan. *Fraser* said that we need to try to influence her as Carrington of the United Kingdom had done. *Fraser* said that Lee Kwan Yew may be able to help in that area. (S)

---

<sup>3</sup> The UN General Assembly met in Emergency Special Session January 10–14 to address the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Resolution ES–6/2 was adopted on January 14. See *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1980, pp. 299–302 and 307.

<sup>4</sup> Documentation on Ali’s trip to Africa February 3–10 is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vol. XXV, Global Issues; United Nations Issues.

Regarding Pakistan, *Fraser* said that Peacock had not found things much better. The Pakistanis appear to be saying that US aid is not adequate, and that unless the US does better, they may strike a bargain with the Soviets. *Fraser* said he recognized that the Pakistani are in a very difficult position, that we should do all we can to help them, but that even this will not be easy to accomplish. (S)

*The President* said that the US hoped to come up with a significant aid package to Pakistan extending over several years. He said that the US was also trying to reassure the Indians that our aid to the Paks was in no way a threat to them. *The President* said that the American people are aroused and unified by what has happened in Afghanistan. The President commented that even Congress, however, which usually cuts aid packages, seems supportive of our efforts toward Pakistan. (C)

*The President* said that our deployment of theater nuclear weapons in Europe is an indication of our resolve. He added that the US plans to increase defense spending by 25% over the next five years. (S)

*The President* noted that the overall NATO response to American moves has been good, and that even some "pacifist nations" have been helpful. *The President* said that the Soviet move to exile Andrei Sakharov has had a strong impact in Europe. *The President* said that he hoped that Prime Minister Fraser's visits to London, Bonn and Paris would help convince those nations to "stick with us." *The President* said that we fully expect a Soviet peace offensive before too long, but that we do not intend to be deceived by it. *Prime Minister Fraser* replied that it was his experience that European nations often stand aside when non-European problems present themselves. *Fraser* said that the Soviets have demonstrated blatant hypocrisy in Afghanistan, and that we must show determination in responding to their aggression. *The President* said that he fully agreed with that analysis. (C)

*The President* then commented on the recent visit of Prime Minister Ohira to Australia. He noted that Japan-Australian relations have grown and become stronger over the past several years. (U)

*Fraser* agreed that the Ohira visit had been a success. He said he felt that Japan is doing better in responding to problems outside its immediate area. He noted that the energy problem will tend to draw Japan and Australia closer together, due to the Australian ability to supply Japan with much of its needed coal. (U)

*Fraser* turned to the Indian Ocean area, and noted that he has offered to increase Australia patrolling and reconnaissance in that area. He said that Australia is also willing to give "defense aid and defense training" to the ASEAN nations. *Fraser* added that Australia will also give "civil aid" to the new small nations in the Pacific, so as to keep them from offering tempting targets for Soviet subversion. (C)

*The President* said that he was pleased with all of these moves by the Australians. (U)

Turning to the recent visit to the PRC of Defense Secretary Brown,<sup>5</sup> the *President* said that the US has made good progress in its relationship with Beijing. He said that they appear cautious in some areas, and that the US does not intend to sell weapons to them. We may sell such things as radar to them, *the President* said. He added that we will also be willing to sell some technology to the PRC that we will not sell to the Soviets. *The President* noted that the PRC's relationship to Pakistan is a very important one. (C)

*Fraser* replied that the ASEAN nations, some of which are still strongly anti-communist, are still somewhat suspicious of the PRC. He said that these perceptions need to be changed, as do the views which India and Pakistan hold toward each other. *Fraser* also noted that there are still some sensitivities in South East Asia toward the rearming of Japan. (C)

*Secretary Vance* noted that at his meeting with Prime Minister *Fraser* it had been thought to be a good idea to move up the ANZUS meeting, and to hold it in the US. (U)

*The President* said he approved of that idea. (U)

*Fraser* said that the President's State of the Union speech was a starting point, and something to build on. He said that the question "What next for the Soviets?" worries him deeply. *Fraser* said he believes that the attack on Afghanistan has brought about "a long-term change in the environment." (C)

*The President* said that in dealing with the Soviets he had hoped for cooperation and mutual restraint, but that Afghanistan had changed US views. The President noted that he had had excellent intelligence on the developing situation in Afghanistan, and that the US had expressed its concerns to the Soviets directly several times. The Soviets ignored our warnings and went ahead with their attack. *The President* said he believed that the Soviets had underestimated the strength of world reaction which has arisen in response to their attack. (C)

*Fraser* again thanked the President for his State of the Union speech, which he said had "brought others along." (U)

Turning to Iran, *the President* said that the US was committed to Iranian unity, and was not opposed to their revolution. He noted that by today's standards, Bani-Sadr looks pretty good, having condemned the kidnapping of the Americans. *The President* said that under no circumstances would the US be a party to the return of the Shah to

---

<sup>5</sup> Brown visited Beijing January 6–10. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XIII, China, Documents 290–295.

Iran. He also said that the US would not let a "trial of the US" take place. He said he was not opposed to the establishment of a tribunal, through which the Iranians can seek redress. *The President* noted that he was not opposed to Iranian efforts to gain access to some of the Shah's wealth, and that he was not inclined, at the present time, to punish Iran for what it has done. *The President* noted that the Australians have been most helpful in dealing with the situation in Iran, and expressed his thanks for what they had done. *The President* then asked if the Australians are satisfied with the intelligence they exchange with the United States. (S)

*Prime Minister Fraser* replied that they were satisfied. *Fraser* added that they might like to exchange "technical analysis" from time to time. *Fraser* noted in this connection that Australia is trying to update its capabilities in the technical intelligence field. (S)

*The President* asked if Australia was able to assimilate the refugees it has accepted from Southeast Asia. (U)

*Prime Minister Fraser* replied that all appeared to be going well. He said that the refugees work hard and quickly adapt themselves to Australian society. He said that it would be hard for Australia to deal with a direct influx of boat people, but that they planned to take a total of 38,000 out of refugee centers by June. (C)

*The President* was surprised by this large number, and was told that in terms of its population, Australia was accepting a higher ratio of refugees than any other country in the world. (C)

Returning to the Indian Ocean area, *Fraser* again referred to his offer of increased patrolling and surveillance. He said he also plans to have Australian vessels make port calls in India. He noted that Australian air units can operate out of bases in Singapore and Malaysia and that in case of an emergency, Australia could take some air-defense burdens off of the US. *Fraser* noted that home porting of US Navy ships in Australia was under study, as was the question of having US ships use Australian ports in transit. *Fraser* noted that West Australia would particularly welcome a U.S. presence. He said that he hoped to have specific agreements ready in a few weeks. (S)

*Prime Minister Fraser* noted that in South East Asia, since the end of the Vietnam war, there had been real concern about American interest in that part of the world. *Fraser* said that the ASEAN nations had wanted the U.S. and South Vietnam to win. When they did not, their worries grew stronger. The Nixon Doctrine had deepened their concerns *Fraser* said. *Fraser* added that the President's speech had helped a great deal to show that the U.S. maintains a strong interest in Asia. He said that the allied nations need to do all they can to demonstrate that they have an interest in the life and independence of the nations

in Asia. *Fraser* noted that if these nations had more confidence in the allies, they would speak out more clearly. (C)

*The President* said that he agreed with *Prime Minister Fraser's* analysis and that he saw this as a long-term problem. (U)

*Fraser* said that the Soviet attack on Afghanistan may open up a chance for the allies to improve their relations with Third World Nations that may now be suspicious of Soviet motives. (C)

*The President* replied that we have not shared responsibilities adequately in dealing with the Third World. More countries need to know what they should do. *The President* said that he hoped that Congress, which was often reluctant to pass aid programs for the Third World, may well be swayed by what has happened in Afghanistan. (C)

*Prime Minister Fraser* asked if there was a message *the President* would like to have him carry to the French and the Germans.<sup>6</sup> (C)

*The President* replied that he had been generally disappointed by the European response to Afghanistan. He said that he had been particularly struck by how little the French have done. He noted that even if the French are not willing to join in direct anti-Soviet actions, he had hoped that they would have been more helpful on more symbolic issues such as the Olympic boycott. *The President* noted that Canada has been most supportive, and that the Italians have also done well. *The President* noted that Mrs. Thatcher had made good speeches, "but not much else." (S)

*The President* noted that his planned increases in US defense spending have an unfortunate impact on inflation, which *the President* referred to as his biggest problem. He said that he hoped that Congress would support his defense expenditures. He noted that the current budget deficit amounted to ½ of 1% of the US GNP. *The President* spoke of the fact that the US still is importing too much foreign oil. He said that he would soon announce gasoline consumption quotas for all 50 states. He said that he hoped, as the US cuts the importation of foreign oil that Europe will do likewise. (C)

*The President* said that in dealing with the energy problem, the allies will have to work closely together, to share technical expertise. He spoke of coal liquefaction and shale reduction as problems to which several approaches must be taken. (C)

---

<sup>6</sup> Fraser returned to the United States on February 7 and again met with Carter, Vance, Brzezinski, and others to report on his meetings in Europe. The memorandum of conversation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XXVII, Western Europe.

*Prime Minister Fraser* spoke of the growing complexity of military weapons production. He said that he hoped that the US could help Australia in matters of spare parts and resupply. (C)

*The President* gave his full support to this idea. (U)

*The President* asked if Australia could help Pakistan in any way, particularly military training. *Prime Minister Fraser* replied that Australia would give aid to Afghan refugees in Pakistan, and that Australia would be willing to consider giving military training if the Paks asked for it. (C)

*The President* said that Pakistan wants to diversify its military relationship as much as possible, and that even symbolic Australian aid would be helpful. (C)

*Prime Minister Fraser* said that he would be forward looking on this problem, but that they have to consider their relations with India. (U)

As the meeting drew to its conclusion, *the President* said that he did not think that Australia and the US had any problems between them. (U)

*Prime Minister Fraser* agreed. (U)

*The President* said that unless the free world nations are forceful and united, they might miss a crucial opportunity to keep the peace. He urged *Prime Minister Fraser* to ask the Europeans to do more. (C)

*Prime Minister Fraser* said that he agreed fully with what *the President* had said. *Fraser* said that he feels that Europe is the most secure area of the world, as any Soviet threat reunited the traditional alliance. *Prime Minister Fraser* referred to the 1930's and the rise of Hitler, and said that the Soviets must not be allowed to move into Iran or the other Middle East oil-producing areas. (C)

*The President* said that timidity and reticence only encourage the Soviets to try to split the allies. He noted that some nations in the Persian Gulf area have not taken any measures to keep the Soviets from moving further into the area. (C)

*The President* said that the Palestinian problem has an impact on all nations of the Middle East, and their attitudes toward the US and the USSR. He said that after Egypt and Israel exchange ambassadors, they will then take a hard look at the tough remaining issues. At that time, *the President* said, the US will play a more forceful diplomatic role. (C)

After mutual thanks were exchanged the meeting ended. (U)

## 270. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, February 25, 1980, 9–9:25 a.m.

### SUBJECT

Summary of Dr. Brzezinski's Meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister of New Zealand

### PARTICIPANTS

Zbigniew Brzezinski, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs  
Brian Talboys, Deputy Prime Minister of New Zealand  
Merwyn Norrish, New Zealand Ambassador  
Frank Corner, New Zealand Secretary of Foreign Affairs  
Bryce Harland, New Zealand Assistant Foreign Secretary for Asia  
Hugo Judd, New Zealand Deputy Chief of Mission  
Donald Gregg, NSC Staff Member

After an exchange of greetings, *Minister Talboys* stated that New Zealand's primary interests lie in the South Pacific area. He noted that New Zealand has to keep on fighting agricultural protectionism, which limits New Zealand's economic strength. *Talboys* noted that New Zealand shares with Australia an interest in developments in Southeast Asia and China. He said that New Zealand will do all it can to reduce chances for the Soviets to move into the area, either seeking bases, or via political infiltration. *Talboys* said that New Zealand shares the US concern for developments in Indochina, particularly with regard to the development of Soviet bases. *Talboys* noted that although Afghanistan is far away from New Zealand, developments there are a potential threat to New Zealand's oil sources. *Talboys* said that New Zealand is full of admiration for what the US does, and that they hope to play a part. *Talboys* said that New Zealand is particularly grateful that the US is trying to establish a balance of forces in the Indian Ocean area. (C)

*Talboys* said that New Zealand is interested in political relations with the Moslem world, and that they hope to be able to exploit anti-Soviet feelings which have developed out of the Afghanistan affair. *Talboys* noted, however, that the Moslem world does not seem to want to be too close to the west. (C)

*Dr. Brzezinski* replied by noting the value which the US places on its ties with New Zealand. He said that there is an "automatic" feeling for the closeness between the US and New Zealand, and Australia as well. He said that these feelings have roots in our shared World War

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Subject File, Box 34, Memcons: Brzezinski, 1–6/80. Confidential. The meeting took place in Brzezinski's office.



II experience where we fought side by side. *Dr. Brzezinski* said "We expect you to be with us, and we expect to be with you." (C)

Turning to US relations with the Soviets, *Dr. Brzezinski* said that we are trying to show to the Soviets that their move into Afghanistan is costly for them. We do not want the impact of these costs to be diluted or weakened by actions which our allies may take. *Dr. Brzezinski* predicted that the Soviets will approach New Zealand with requests designed to weaken what the US has done. *Dr. Brzezinski* asked that such overtures be turned away. (C)

*Dr. Brzezinski* stated that the US has two major objectives in mind as it responds to the Soviet move into Afghanistan. First is to provide a chance for the development of an increased sense of identity in the Moslem world. *Dr. Brzezinski* said that this growing sense of identity must not be interfered with or exploited too openly by the West. We need, for example, to move carefully as we seek to establish bases or facilities in the area. *Dr. Brzezinski* noted that during his visit to Algeria, a nominally pro-Soviet regime, many anti-Soviet sentiments had been voiced to him by individual Algerian officials. *Dr. Brzezinski* reiterated that the West needs to be subtle in exploiting these anti-Soviet feelings. (C)

The second major US objective is to shore up the region near Afghanistan, which is subject to political intimidation. *Dr. Brzezinski* said that he did not anticipate a direct Soviet thrust to the Straits of Hormuz. He did believe that the Soviets may try to dominate the region, and that the Soviets may try to turn Pakistan and Iran into "Middle Eastern Finlands." These two countries, in particular, need shoring up, both militarily and politically. In Pakistan, the first aid will come from the Islamic world, and then from a Western aid consortium. For the US to aid Iran will be more difficult, particularly as it comes out how our hostages have been treated. This objective will be pursued, *Dr. Brzezinski* said. (C)

*Dr. Brzezinski* added that the US is also building up its military presence in the area, in a low-key way. *Dr. Brzezinski* believes that we could match anything the Soviets could put into Iran for up to thirty days. After that, the balance would become unfavorable, due to the closer proximity of the USSR. *Dr. Brzezinski* indicated that the US could respond to a Soviet thrust into Iran in other parts of the world, in ways designed to show the Soviets the costs of their actions. *Dr. Brzezinski* quickly added that he does not expect such a showdown to develop, particularly if we are steadfast, and if our allies support us. (C)

*Talboys* responded first by going back to *Dr. Brzezinski's* first point on the closeness of our two countries. *Talboys* said he believed it to be "inconceivable" that the US and New Zealand would not stand together on major issues. *Talboys* then said that New Zealand's ability to help



the US is limited by its access to markets for its exports, mainly beef and butter. *Talboys* said that New Zealand encounters protectionism both here and in Europe. *Talboys* said that New Zealand had been forced to develop a market in the USSR, due to limitations elsewhere. *Dr. Brzezinski* quickly responded by saying that New Zealand would not be asked by the US to give up its Soviet market, but that we would ask that New Zealand not expand sales to the Soviets in such a way as to undercut US actions. (C)

*Talboys* asked if we saw future “mobilization” of the Moslem world to take place along Western or nonaligned lines. *Dr. Brzezinski* replied that a genuinely nonaligned Moslem world is fully satisfactory to the US. He added that a truly peaceful world must be pluralistic, and that such a world would be an extension of our own pluralistic value system. *Dr. Brzezinski* said that we saw Yugoslavia as a genuinely nonaligned country, while Cuba is not. He said that our objective in Afghanistan is to have a nonaligned country emerge, not anti-Soviet, but at least neutral. (C)

*Talboys* asked if Brezhnev’s speech had contained any hopeful signs.<sup>2</sup> *Dr. Brzezinski* replied that there was not much in it, except for one sentence which talked about “guarantees”. *Dr. Brzezinski* said that Soviet accusations of US support to internal opposition is a canard. He said that he does not feel that the Soviets are now considering a withdrawal from Afghanistan, but that they may be driven to do so if world opinion stays firmly opposed to what they have done. (C)

*Talboys* asked about the effects of recent events upon Pakistan. *Dr. Brzezinski* replied that what the Pakistanis want is the restoration of the buffer which a neutral Afghanistan used to represent. *Dr. Brzezinski* said that the long Western border of Pakistan is thinly defended and very vulnerable. *Dr. Brzezinski* said that a neutral Afghanistan might have its security guaranteed by 40,000 troops from such Moslem states as Algeria, Syria, or Jordan. He said that such a development is not likely, but worth a try. *Dr. Brzezinski* stressed that the US must be steadfast and reliable, and that we must not overreact to ambiguous signals such as the recent Brezhnev speech. *Talboys* said that the Soviets must be “baffled” by what they are encountering in Afghanistan. He asked if they might consider withdrawing. *Dr. Brzezinski* said that they would not withdraw as a defeat. He said that once summer comes, the Soviets’ weaponry and troop strength will make it very hard for

---

<sup>2</sup> In his February 22 speech in the Kremlin, Brezhnev said that the need for Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan would cease if the United States and Afghanistan’s neighbors would guarantee that outside support of the rebels would end. (Craig R. Whitney, “Brezhnev Links Afghan Pullout to U.S. ‘Guarantee,’” *New York Times*, February 23, 1980, p. 4)

the opposition to continue in any large force. The mountains have little or no cover, and units of over 20 men will not be able to operate effectively against Soviet helicopters. *Dr. Brzezinski* said that the only thing that might cause the Soviets to consider a withdrawal from Afghanistan would be a recognition that the political effects of their move have been totally negative. (C)

*Talboys* asked about Mrs. Gandhi. *Dr. Brzezinski* replied that she is a realist, and that he expects her to see that the restoration of an Afghan buffer state, leaving Pakistan as it is, is vastly preferable to a disintegrating Pakistan. (C)

*Dr. Brzezinski* reiterated that three factors are key to getting the Soviets out of Afghanistan:

- US consistency and the support of its allies
- An aroused and united Islamic world
- Continued resistance inside Afghanistan

Both *Talboys* and *Dr. Brzezinski* agreed that the second point will be the key factor. (C)

*Talboys* asked about Israeli policy, with particular regard to the rights of the Palestinians.

*Dr. Brzezinski* replied that the current policy is a “contradiction,” which works against a unified Moslem response to the Soviet aggression. *Dr. Brzezinski* said that the US will place major emphasis on the continuation of the Camp David process, to gain for the Palestinians what they are entitled to. (C)

The meeting ended at 9:25, with an exchange of pleasantries.

**271. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, February 27, 1980, 12:15–12:30 p.m.

SUBJECT

Summary of the President's Meeting with The ANZUS Ministers

PARTICIPANTS

President Jimmy Carter  
Cyrus Vance, Secretary of State  
Zbigniew Brzezinski, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs  
Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs  
Donald Gregg, NSC Staff Member  
Andrew Peacock, Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs  
Denis James Killen, Australian Minister for Defense  
Brian E. Talboys, New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs

As the President walked into the Cabinet room, *Secretary Vance* said that a “marvelous” ANZUS meeting had just been completed.<sup>2</sup> *Vance* added that it had been a great accommodation to have had the meeting held here in Washington, instead of in New Zealand at a later date. (U)

*The President* agreed, and said that it was very important to have held the meeting now. He thanked the ANZUS ministers for their cooperation. *The President* added that he viewed US relations with Australia and New Zealand as highly valuable. He added that it was reassuring, at a time of challenge, to have close friends with whom such close consultations could be held. *The President* said that the ANZUS partnership could not be stronger, and that he is personally grateful for what ANZUS has been in the past and for what it will be in the future. Both *Minister Peacock* and *Secretary Vance* noted that the ANZUS forum was completely open and candid. *Minister Talboys* commented that the meetings were like an extension of departmental talks. *Talboys* said he greatly appreciated the feeling of being consulted. (C)

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Subject File, Box 38, Memcons: President, 2/1980. Confidential. The meeting took place in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

<sup>2</sup> The memorandum of conversation of the first session of the ANZUS Council meeting, February 26, is in the Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330–86–0054, 1, ANZUS Council Meeting: 1980—Washington. For the joint press conference held on February 27 and the joint communiqué issued that day, see Department of State *Bulletin*, April 1980, pp. 53–58.

*The President* noted that he wished that the US had this same sort of easy relationship with its European allies. He noted that the Europeans were constantly complaining that they had not been told enough, or consulted fully. (C)

*Talboys* commented that there is a very strong connection between international events and domestic affairs that limits the freedom of action internationally. *The President* agreed with this, and said that the US must try to have a clearer understanding of our allies' domestic problems. (C)

*Minister Peacock* then turned to the issue of the Olympics, saying that we "must go to the limit" in making the boycott stand up. (C)

*The President* agreed.

*Secretary Vance* said that recent intelligence indicated that the Olympics were of even greater concern to the Soviets than the grain embargo. (C)

*The President* said that the Olympics are a key issue. He said that the US would not go to Moscow, and that it would plan to have alternative games held. He added that if the US holds firm, other countries will join in the boycott. *The President* then said that it was important to let the rest of the world know as soon as possible that there would be alternative games. All were in agreement that the sooner this is done, the better. *Minister Peacock* was particularly strong on this point. (C)

*Dr. Brzezinski* said that current thinking favored dates in late August, and four or five separate sites for the alternative games. (C)

*Secretary Vance* said that Canada was a natural place, having recently held the Olympics in Montreal and the Commonwealth Games in Edmonton. (C)

*The President* said that he would personally attend the alternative games, particularly if part of them were to be held at a site like Canada. He said that the importance of the Olympics to the Soviets is very high, and that we must announce the alternative games soon, so that support for them, which is now high in this country, will not dissipate. (C)

The meeting ended at this point, with the *President* thanking all concerned for having held the ANZUS meeting at this time. (C)

**272. Letter From Australian Prime Minister Fraser to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Canberra, March 5, 1980

My Dear Jimmy,<sup>2</sup>

I am writing about the Moscow Olympic Games and the efforts that are under way by like-minded countries to achieve an effective boycott of those Games.

I am sure you would share my view that it is now crucial that the move towards a boycott be given added momentum. Over the last three to four weeks not a great deal has happened and I believe the issue needs to be addressed at the highest political level.

We need firm decisions about alternative Games for our athletes. We need decisions that demonstrate the determination and strength of the United States and Europe supported by as many others as possible.

Against this background, I am asking my Minister for Home Affairs, the Honourable R.J. Ellicott, who is responsible for sport, to have discussions urgently with other like-minded Governments, including your own.

I believe that the next Steering Committee meeting, scheduled for mid-March, would be much more effective if it were to be at Ministerial level.

Certainly Mr Ellicott will be available to participate should that eventuate.

I mentioned this matter to Lloyd Cutler last night who told me that he supports and will press for Ministerial representation. I have put the same view to the Heads of Government of Germany, the United Kingdom and Canada.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

**Malcolm Fraser**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 4, Australia, 1980. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> Fraser handwrote the salutation.

**273. Letter From the Australian Ambassador (Parkinson) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, March 14, 1980

Dear Mr. President,<sup>2</sup>

I have been asked by the Prime Minister of Australia, the Right Honourable Malcolm Fraser, C.H., M.P., to pass to you the following message, dated 14 March 1980:

BEGINS—

“Dear Jimmy,

I have had a message from Toronto from Mr Ellicott, my Minister for Home Affairs, who is handling the Olympic issue for me. He reports that he had very useful discussions with Lloyd Cutler about the Olympics and alternative sites.

But from his discussions in Canada, he believes there is a tendency there for the Canadian Government to put off making a decision and to leave it all as late as possible. I have myself written to Pierre Trudeau and in his reply he certainly kept the door open, but made no commitment.

Mr Ellicott felt that a message or call from yourself would be very important for the Canadians in coming to a decision to support a boycott of the Moscow Olympics.<sup>3</sup> The addition of Canada to the group of countries supporting this line would be invaluable in helping to make a boycott effective. I agree with him and thought I should pass on the suggestion for your consideration.

Warmest personal regards,

Yours sincerely,

Malcolm Fraser”

ENDS

**Nick Parkinson**

*Ambassador*

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 4, Australia, 1980. Confidential.

<sup>2</sup> Parkinson handwrote the salutation.

<sup>3</sup> No record of a telephone conversation has been found.

**274. Letter From the Australian Ambassador (Parkinson) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 30, 1980

Dear Mr. President,<sup>2</sup>

I have been asked by the Prime Minister of Australia, the Right Honourable Malcolm Fraser, C.H., M.P., to pass to you the following message dated 29 April 1980:

BEGINS:

“My Dear Jimmy,

I would like to say how much we have all been thinking of you in recent days. Your decision to attempt the rescue of the American hostages in Iran<sup>3</sup> was a courageous and bold one, and it is a tragedy for all of us that it was not successful. You know how much and how strongly we have supported your various actions in respect both of the situation in Iran and of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, but I want you to know now that you have the sympathy and support of the Australian Government and people in your attempts to secure the release of the hostages and to contain the Soviet Union.

Australia has warmly supported your efforts in recent times to provide the leadership that our world so sorely needs. We are thankful that in the midst of the most extraordinarily difficult circumstances, the United States is providing leadership in meeting the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. We recognise your deep concern and your grief, and that of your fellow Americans, about your own people held hostage in Iran. We continue to support your efforts on both fronts, which we regard as essential to the survival of the world we know.

There are, however, some matters that cause me very real concern and I wanted therefore to put one or two suggestions to you. I hope you may find them constructive.

I well understand the problems that you have had in achieving an adequate, appropriate and continuous process of consultations with your major European partners: [2 lines not declassified].

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron, Box 4, Australia, 1980. Secret. Carter initialed the top of the page.

<sup>2</sup> Parkinson handwrote the salutation.

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to the April 24 failed attempt to rescue the American hostages in Iran. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XI, Iran: Hostage Crisis, November 1979–January 1981.

Because of the way in which events are unfolding, my Government believes that it is an over-riding imperative for the prevention of what could develop into a third world war to establish now a totally unified approach, a common strategy in seeking the achievement of shared goals and objectives. I know this has been your objective in the past and I know you have tried many times to consult with our European friends, but with varying results.

However, especially at times of crisis like the present, any perceptions of divisions among the Atlantic Alliance members are critically dangerous. Now, especially, there need to be both the private reality and the public perception of a common approach and a common strategy.

I believe that a more visibly united alliance would enormously strengthen the United States in the containment of the Soviet Union, and would substantially contribute to the ultimate resolution of the difficult problems in Iran. Otherwise, there is a very real risk that misconceived or divided approaches to the Iran issue could result not only in the continued captivity of the hostages, but in moving Iran closer to the Soviet Union and thus helping to achieve what many of us feared from the outset: that the Soviet Union's move into Afghanistan could become just a first step in a wider approach to gain control over Middle East oil supplies.

There can be no uncertainty about the results of divisions between Europe and the United States; there can only be the cold certainty of a disaster that could lead to a third world war.

I am sure we are at one in our assessment of the problem and in the need for unity in meeting it. How then to overcome the dilemma, which I know has concerned you very much? How to establish a common position, a common shared strategy, and how to share burdens in pursuit of common objectives? It will be difficult to achieve these results, but I believe they must be achieved. I see them as an overriding imperative affecting the credibility of the Western world, the containment of the Soviet Union and your own valiant efforts to secure the ultimate release of the hostages.

I wonder, therefore, whether you would consider seeking a meeting with Margaret Thatcher, Giscard d'Estaing, and Helmut Schmidt to discuss these issues with the objective of achieving and demonstrating the common purpose that I have referred to? What I have in mind is not necessarily just one meeting, but a framework and process of consultations which might be begun by an early first meeting in the United States, and which should be carried on at all levels of ministerial and official contact. Such a process would so establish the strength of the Western alliance, led by the United States, that the Soviet Union would know with total certainty that when policies were announced,



they were shared policies, that the Iranians would know also that Europe stood absolutely with the United States in securing the release of the hostages.

I fully recognise that what I suggest is not a strategy in itself for dealing with the Soviet Union or for achieving the release of the hostages, but I do believe that it will provide a framework within which that strategy can be established and within which policies for the containment of the Soviet Union and for securing the release of the hostages can be achieved. I certainly believe that the kind of unity of which I am speaking is an absolute prerequisite to the survival of your world and mine.

So I urge you once again to try to establish that kind of unity which I know you have wanted between Europe and the United States. Matters are more urgent now, and more serious, and your approaches might be better received than they were in the past. It is a time for the major free world nations to act as one in the policies and approaches that they adopt for the prevention of a third world war—just as Britain and the United States acted as one in securing victory in the second.

While I urge the need for common strategies and the sharing of burdens in achieving objectives about which there is no possibility of dispute, I know quite well that the United States could not ever, in an emergency, forgo the right to use its strength or give to another the power to veto its use. Ultimately, that responsibility rests with you and your country. But the likelihood of having to use that power will, in our view, be so much less if America, Britain, France and Germany can achieve the kind of unity, both at the private level and in public perception, which I urge.

You should know that I am writing also to Margaret Thatcher, Helmut Schmidt and Giscard d'Estaing, emphasising the need for unity and suggesting that they participate in a fuller process of consultations with you.

With my warmest personal regards and good wishes.

(Malcolm Fraser)

ENDS

Yours sincerely<sup>4</sup>

**Nick Parkinson**

---

<sup>4</sup> Parkinson handwrote "Yours sincerely."

**275. Letter From President Carter to Australian Prime Minister Fraser<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, undated

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

I greatly appreciate your sympathetic and supportive letter of April 29, 1980,<sup>2</sup> and I am grateful also for your strong and consistent public backing in the very difficult matter of Iran.

You are right about the need to reinforce both the reality and the public perception that the US and the European allies are united behind a common strategy. The decision of the European Community (as well as that of your own government) to proceed with the imposition of economic sanctions if the hostages are not released by May 17 is a heartening example of such unity.

That unity is being reinforced on our part by a series of meetings with our allies, leading up to the Venice meeting in late June.<sup>3</sup> This week, for example, both Lord Carrington and NATO Secretary General Luns have had consultations here in Washington. I have met with both of them. Ed Muskie in his new role as Secretary of State will join Harold Brown at the reinforced Defense Planning Committee meeting of NATO in Brussels, May 13–14, which will also be attended by the other NATO Foreign Ministers. Immediately thereafter, the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Austrian State Treaty in Vienna will provide another opportunity for major consultations. In late June, I will be making a state visit to Italy, in addition to attending the Venice Economic Summit. Given these contacts and the Venice meeting I do not feel, as I said in my press conference of April 29,<sup>4</sup> that a four-power summit is required at this time.

We continue to be convinced that economic sanctions, supported broadly by Iran's major trading partners, will have a constructive impact on the present situation. The decision to impose sanctions on May 17, in accord with the January 13 draft United Nations Security

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 4, Australia, 1980. No classification marking. Brzezinski transmitted the letter to Carter under a May 8 covering memorandum, requesting Carter's authorization to transmit the letter telegraphically. (Ibid.)

<sup>2</sup> See Document 274.

<sup>3</sup> Carter traveled to Italy June 19–24 for a State visit and to attend the Economic Summit June 21–24.

<sup>4</sup> See *Public Papers: Carter, 1980–81*, Book I, pp. 792–808.

Council Resolution<sup>5</sup> (in which other countries such as Portugal, Norway, Canada, Greece, and Switzerland have joined Australia and the EC Nine), will emphasize to Iran the growing cost its action will exact on its hopes of becoming a strong, stable, and independent nation, and will underscore its increasing isolation from the non-communist world. At the same time, we are actively pursuing opportunities for discussion that could lead to a peaceful solution of the crisis. Following the imposition of sanctions, we will simply have to wait for them to take effect, while we carry on parallel efforts to reopen our dialogue with the Iranians through selected intermediaries.

I can assure you that we are as conscious as our allies of the potential dangers of the Iran crisis in terms of the security of the area, that we have implemented a series of high level exchanges and meetings that will, I believe, enable us to harmonize our policies, and that we will continue to press for a peaceful solution to this problem.

I value your views on this matter as on others, and look forward to hearing from you.

Warmest personal regards.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>5</sup> The resolution failed to pass because of the Soviet Union's negative vote. See *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1980, pp. 309–311.

**276. Letter From the Australian Ambassador (Parkinson) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, May 28, 1980

Dear Mr. President,<sup>2</sup>

I have been asked by the Prime Minister of Australia, the Right Honourable Malcolm Fraser C.H., M.P., to pass to you the following message dated 28 May 1980:

*BEGINS—*

"My dear Jimmy,

Since our conversation earlier this year and our recent correspondence on the Olympic Games,<sup>3</sup> most countries have declared their position on participation in the Moscow Games and it now appears that an effective boycott is in place.

It is, however, a matter of very great regret to myself and my Government that the Executive of the Australian Olympic Federation decided last Friday<sup>4</sup> by a very narrow six to five majority that an Australian team should participate in the Moscow Olympic Games.

As you know, I and my Ministers have consistently urged the Australian Olympic Federation that, in the national interest, an Australian team should not participate in the Moscow Olympic Games.

A number of significant community interests in Australia have deplored the decision and this reaction is likely to become more widespread as the implications of the Executive decision become widely known in the community.

We remain firmly of the view that an Australian team should not participate in the Moscow Games and I and my Ministers shall do all that we can to persuade the Executive to reconsider its decision. We shall also call upon individual sporting bodies and sportsmen and women to make their own decisions not to participate in the Moscow Games.

It is my sincere hope that we can succeed in bringing home to our sports leaders and sportsmen and women that they should put their responsibilities to the national interest ahead of their responsibilities to sport and thereby lend their support to the stand taken by the United

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 4, Australia, 1980. Confidential.

<sup>2</sup> Parkinson handwrote the salutation.

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 269, 272, and 273.

<sup>4</sup> May 23.

States National Olympic Committee and those of many other like-minded countries.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely  
(Malcolm Fraser)''

ENDS

Yours sincerely,<sup>5</sup>

Nick Parkinson

---

<sup>5</sup> Parkinson handwrote "Yours sincerely."

---

## 277. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, June 6, 1980

### SUBJECT

Olympics, Iran, Indochina

### PARTICIPANTS

#### *AUSTRALIA*

Foreign Minister Andrew Peacock  
Ambassador Sir Nicholas Parkinson  
Minister Robert Birch, Australian DCM  
John McCarthy, Private Secretary to Minister Peacock

#### *US*

Secretary Muskie  
Assistant Secretary Richard Holbrooke  
Deputy Assistant Secretary Evelyn Colbert  
Frank C. Bennett, Director, EA/ANZ

The Secretary opened the conversation by welcoming Foreign Minister Peacock. Peacock thanked Mr. Muskie for his invitation to come to Washington and noted the fruitfulness of the close working relationship that exists between the Department of State and the Department of

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Records of Edmund Muskie, 1980–1981, Box 2, Memoranda 1980–1981. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Frank C. Bennett (EA/ANZ) on June 16 and concurred in by Holbrooke.

Foreign Affairs. Peacock then went on to say that he and Prime Minister Fraser were very disappointed in the Australian Olympic Federation's (AOF) Executive Committee decision to go ahead to the Moscow Olympics. He emphasized that the vote had been very close, 6–5, and that the government would continue its pressure on the AOF and on federations and individual athletes not to go to Moscow. In discussion, it was noted that the fact that the New Zealand Olympic delegation had dwindled to 4 sportsmen is helpful to the GOA position, but the decision of the British and French Olympic teams to go to Moscow is a disadvantage. Peacock explained that the issue was a matter of individual conscience and, while continuing to speak out forcefully in favor of a boycott, the GOA would not deny passports to those who wanted to participate and is allowing an Australian FSO on the fencing team to take regular annual leave to attend the games.

Peacock went on to say that Australia has sought to back USG efforts on Iran and, in so doing, has implemented the UN Security Council sanctions resolution vetoed by the USSR.<sup>2</sup> He said that despite some adverse economic impact on Australia, only one member of the Cabinet had advocated following the British decision to limit the retroactivity of the embargo. Secretary Muskie said that he was aware of this decision and that the US was very grateful for the consistent support it had received from Australia.

Foreign Minister Peacock next raised the question of Kampuchea, particularly the impending credentials fight in the UN General Assembly over whether Pol Pot's Democratic Kampuchea (DK) or the Heng Samrin's Peoples Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) should be seated. The rest of the conversation dealt with this subject.

The issue of continued support in the United Nations for the Pol Pot regime is a very difficult one in Australian domestic politics, the Foreign Minister said. It has been hard for the GOA to resist arguments that it should switch recognition to the Heng Samrin regime. Nevertheless, after careful consideration, the Cabinet has agreed to continue to support the position of the ASEAN countries that the DK is the legitimate government of Kampuchea. However, the GOA is thinking of seeking a dialogue with the Vietnamese through the SRV Embassy in Canberra. The main topic would be the possibility of a SRV withdrawal from Kampuchea. The way the SRV responded would have a bearing on the way the GOA votes on UN seating. Also, Peacock continued, a joint ANZUS policy on this issue and close coordination with the five ASEAN countries will be necessary to ensure adequate consideration of the credentials question.

---

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 5, Document 275.

He, Peacock, was very impressed when SRV Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach indicated that he was going to discuss the possibility of a withdrawal from Kampuchea with the Thais. However, within minutes of the announcement of this by Malaysian Premier Hussein Onn, the possibility was withdrawn by the SRV. It seemed to him, Peacock said, that the Vietnamese were contemplating a long drawn out process of negotiation over the withdrawal as a tactical move to lower resistance to their presence in Kampuchea, but, when this was prematurely made public, they were forced to withdraw their proposal.

To be able to speak with one voice, the Foreign Minister said, would be a great advantage to all three members of ANZUS. The GOA will be sending a senior officer, Dr. Robert Merrill, to Washington the week of June 16, Peacock noted, to meet with State Department officers and New Zealand Deputy Secretary of Foreign Affairs Malcolm Templeton to work out a common policy on Kampuchea.

Secretary Muskie asked what we could do politically if the SRV agreed to withdraw. Peacock replied that he didn't believe it would do so. If the SRV does change, however, we could move relatively quickly, Peacock commented, but he felt that we would have to vote to seat the DK in the UNGA at least one more time. Assistant Secretary Holbrooke said that he felt we would have to go to the SRV first, to urge it to be more conciliatory toward the Chinese. If we did so, could we expect a clear-cut answer, the Secretary asked. The answer might be fuzzy, Holbrooke replied.

With regard to seating, Holbrooke continued, the *sine qua non* is that we must let the ASEAN governments and the PRC know in advance what our position is. He thought, however, that we should not tell the ASEAN countries until the last minute, say the second or third week in July, and we should do this through Ambassadors since these attract less attention. Foreign Minister Peacock agreed that letting the ASEAN governments know our position on seating at their Kuala Lumpur meeting would be too early.

Secretary Muskie raised the possibility of abstaining on the UN vote. Peacock said that it is theoretically possible but not for Australia. We will, he thought, have to stick with the ASEANs and back DK presence in the UN for six to twelve more months. How would the ASEANs react to abstention, the Secretary asked. Abstention would be tantamount to a vote "for" the Heng Samrin Government, Peacock answered; it would probably precipitate an erosion among the 91 countries who voted against seating Heng Samrin last fall and would lead to an empty seat for Kampuchea. Holbrooke said that for the US, Australia and New Zealand to abstain would be tantamount to a break in our policy of support for ASEAN leadership on this question, but we also cannot give China and the ASEAN governments a blank check.

The Secretary remarked that if we want ambiguity in our position, we must lay the groundwork by abstaining. If we move from a pro-DK vote to abstention, Holbrooke contended, we will be giving up our one bargaining chip for withdrawal. Abstention would also upset the ASEANs and the PRC, he said.

At this point, a short private meeting took place, before the Secretary and Foreign Minister Peacock went to the 8th Floor for the luncheon in Peacock's honor, reported in a separate memcon.<sup>3</sup> The subject of Kampuchea did not come up at the luncheon.

---

<sup>3</sup> No memorandum of conversation of the private meeting has been found.

---

**278. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassies in New Zealand, Australia, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, Japan, and Malaysia<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, July 1, 1980, 2038Z

174008. Subject: Secretary's Meeting With New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Talboys.

1. (C-Entire text).

2. Secretary Muskie met with New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Talboys in Minister Talboy's suite on June 28. The discussion focused entirely on recent developments in Southeast Asia, particularly the implications of the June 23 Vietnamese attack inside Thailand.<sup>2</sup>

3. Foreign Minister Talboys opened the conversation by noting that UNHCR had stopped the voluntary repatriation of Khmer refugees and, according to Thai Foreign Minister Sitthi, the FAO had stopped distributing food in Phnom Penh. Secretary Muskie added that food shipments across the border were also halted because two civilian

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Records of Edmund Muskie, 1980-1981, Box 2, Memoranda 1980-1981. Confidential; Immediate. Drafted by Earl Wayne (S/S); cleared by Holbrooke and Leon Billings (S); and approved by Seitz (S/S).

<sup>2</sup> See Documents 90 and 91. Muskie and Talboy, along with the Australian, Canadian, and Japanese Foreign Ministers, were in Kuala Lumpur to meet with the ASEAN Foreign Ministers after their June 25-26 Ministerial session.



workers had been captured. More disturbingly, he said, there were indications that the Vietnamese are moving barbed wire to the border and may try to seal it. Minister Talboys said that Thai Foreign Minister Sitthi yesterday told him that the Vietnamese probably did not intend to stop the refugee flow. Secretary Muskie reiterated that several signs point to the conclusion that the Vietnamese were in fact positioning themselves to seal the border and recounted how quickly the Berlin Wall was constructed.

4. Talboys said that Thai Foreign Minister Sitthi had also spoken of the possibility of Sihanouk joining the DK coalition. Assistant Secretary Holbrooke noted that indirect reports from Korea suggest that Sihanouk is confused and in despair. The significant point, Holbrooke added, is that the Thais recently agreed to receive Sihanouk in Thailand. Neither Minister Talboys, Secretary Muskie nor Assistant Secretary Holbrooke believed Chinese efforts to push Sihanouk into an alliance with the DK would have much success.

5. Discussion then turned to the Vietnamese-Soviet relationship. Secretary Muskie noted that the Soviets were getting military access very cheaply in Vietnam and that the Vietnamese currently appeared to have little choice but to accept. Minister Talboys asked if there was a limit to Vietnamese willingness to accommodate the Soviets. Mr. Holbrooke said that in the long run he believed the Vietnamese want the Soviets out, but were willing to put up with a Soviet presence until Vietnam's flanks were secure. This was several years away, he added, and until that time we would be faced with serious problems in the region. Secretary Muskie noted that in this situation there was very little hope for a political settlement to the Kampuchea problem—it would be getting Vietnam to turn on a dime.

6. Secretary Muskie said that the U.S. was accelerating FMS deliveries to Thailand in response to the Vietnamese attack, but he also expressed worry about creeping into a dangerous situation. He asked Talboys what the U.S. and other allies should do if Vietnam invaded Thailand. Talboys did not venture an answer. Mr. Holbrooke then noted that it was unlikely that Vietnam would now invade Thailand. It was overextended in Kampuchea and on the Chinese border. In addition, such an invasion would require explicit Soviet support, which Holbrooke believed unlikely because the invasion would bring the U.S., China and the USSR into a very explosive confrontation.

7. Minister Talboys asked the Secretary's opinion about timing of the Vietnamese attack. Secretary Muskie said he was not certain. Indonesian Foreign Minister Mochtar had said it was timed to keep the Indians away, while others linked the attack to the start of the voluntary repatriation program. Yet, he added, he was unsure why the Vietnamese had not waited until the ASEAN meeting had passed.

Mr. Holbrooke said that one needed to consider the possibility that the Vietnamese Government had been split on the question, noting that Vietnamese Foreign Minister Thach appeared ignorant of the attack when Ambassador Abramowitz talked with him on June 26.<sup>3</sup> Minister Talboys agreed that there was great strain on the Vietnamese.

8. Secretary Muskie said that with 600,000 troops on the PRC border and 200,000 in Kampuchea, the pressures were great but wondered about pressures on Vietnam's neighbors. Minister Talboys said that his discussions with the ASEANs suggested that they were relaxed about Vietnam's intentions and that Vietnam itself was feeling most of the pressure. Agreeing, Secretary Muskie said that that could be Vietnam's reason for sealing the Kampuchean border. Minister Talboys suggested that sealing the border could hurt Vietnam by cutting off needed relief supplies. Secretary Muskie added that it would also cut off supplies to Pol Pot's forces. Secretary Holbrooke explained that Vietnam had lost a great deal of international support over Kampuchea, in part because of the endless flow of refugee population across the border. Sealing it would allow them to attempt to create a new political reality to present to the world.

9. Minister Talboys asked if the U.S. had heard of a Chinese offer to guarantee Kampuchean independence on the condition of a Vietnamese pullout. Assistant Secretary Holbrooke said that the U.S. had heard a similar story from *[less than 1 line not declassified]* Peking, but he speculated that it was only a trial balloon as neither the Chinese nor Thai Foreign Minister Sithi has mentioned the idea to the U.S.

10. Secretary Muskie explained to Minister Talboys the idea of the five visiting Foreign Ministers joining the ASEANs in an appeal to UN Secretary General Waldheim on the exacerbation of refugee relief problems created by the Vietnamese attack on Thailand. Minister Talboys noted that the Secretary General was very reluctant to involve himself in the refugee problem and wondered if the statement would have an effect. Assistant Secretary Holbrooke agreed that there were drawbacks but said that the only way Waldheim would act is under pressure, and the statement would create pressure. Mr. Holbrooke added that if the border is sealed in combination with a renewed flow of refugees in search of food, everyone would be faced with an extremely serious problem.

11. Secretary Muskie then explained that once agreed to the joint communique would be presented by the Permanent UN Representatives of the ASEAN Five and of the five non-member signatories (United

---

<sup>3</sup> See Document 92.

States, New Zealand, Canada, Australia and Japan) directly to Secretary General Waldheim in New York.<sup>4</sup>

12. Mr. Billings suggested that the ASEANs wanted publication of the five plus five joint communique delayed so that it would not drown out coverage of the ASEAN's own conference communique.<sup>5</sup> Mr. Holbrooke added that there may have been a disagreement within ASEAN on the issue, with some wanting the five non-member Foreign Ministers to endorse ASEAN's communique too, in order to avoid the impression that the non-member countries disagreed with the ASEAN paper. Secretary Muskie said that the U.S. could not endorse the ASEAN communique because it had not participated in the drafting.

13. After reading the draft five plus five appeal to Waldheim, Minister Talboys said that New Zealand would participate fully in the effort.

14. Accompanying Secretary Muskie were Assistant Secretary for East Asian Affairs Richard Holbrooke, Executive Assistant Leon Billings, and S/S-S Officer Earl Wayne (note taker). Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Talboys was accompanied by MFA Deputy Secretary Templeton, New Zealand High Commissioner Mansfield, and MFA Asia Division Director Brady (note taker).

**Muskie**

---

<sup>4</sup> This joint communiqué has not been found.

<sup>5</sup> Reference is to the communiqué of the 13th ASEAN Ministerial meeting. Excerpts of the communiqué are in telegram 4198 from Kuala Lumpur, June 26. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800308-0286)

279. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Washington, October 4, 1980

## SUBJECT

Secretary's Working Breakfast with Prime Minister Muldoon

## PARTICIPANTS

## US

Secretary Edmund S. Muskie  
 David Newsom, Under Secretary  
 for Political Affairs  
 Richard Holbrooke, Assistant  
 Secretary for East Asian and  
 Pacific Affairs  
 Richard McCall, Assistant  
 Secretary for International  
 Organization Affairs  
 Reginald Bartholomew, Director  
 for Politico-Military Affairs  
 Anne C. Martindell, American  
 Ambassador to New Zealand  
 Leon Billings, Executive Assistant  
 to the Secretary  
 Frank C. Bennett, Jr., Country  
 Director for Australia and  
 New Zealand Affairs  
 (Notetaker)

## NEW ZEALAND

Prime Minister Robert Muldoon  
 Frank Gill, New Zealand  
 Ambassador  
 Bernard Galvin, Permanent Head,  
 the Prime Minister's  
 Department  
 Bryce Harland, Assistant Secretary  
 Minister of Foreign Affairs  
 Hugo Judd, Minister of the  
 Embassy of New Zealand  
 Simpson Murdoch, Foreign Affairs  
 Representative in the Prime  
 Minister's Department

Secretary Muskie welcomed Prime Minister Muldoon, expressing appreciation for the support the US has received from New Zealand. The Prime Minister replied by thanking the Secretary for his kind invitation and noted that New Zealand's alliance with the US was the cornerstone of its foreign policy.

The Secretary inquired about the Prime Minister's impressions of India as a result of his attendance at the Regional Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in New Delhi. The PM said that India and Prime Minister Gandhi [*less than 1 line not declassified*]. He didn't know her well, but it seemed Mrs. Gandhi might still be suffering from the shock of the death of her son [*less than 1 line not declassified*]. In private she was apologetic about the current state of internal disturbances, [*less than 1 line not declassified*]. When questioned on the Kampuchea

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Records of Edmund Muskie, 1980-1981, Lot 83D66, Box 3, Memcons: October-December 1980. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Bennett (EA/ANZ) on October 8; concurred in by Holbrooke, Newsom, McCall, and Bartholomew. The meeting took place in the Thomas Jefferson Room at the Department of State.

issue and on India's close relationship with the USSR, Mrs. Gandhi simply repeated the standard Indian rationale without emphasis or conviction.

China, which Muldoon had visited in the first half of September, was very different. Zhao Ziyang was very active and single-mindedly devoted to development of the domestic economy. He is not very good on foreign affairs, hence the slip on conditions for a Kampuchean settlement subsequently corrected by Huang Hua. But Zhao is very clear on what he wants to do internally. His experience as a provincial governor obviously provides him with considerable expertise in this area. Zhao is very impressive and it is clear that he plans to give provincial chiefs a greater say in the development of policy. In many cases, Fujian and Guilin for example, areas will be permitted to produce what they can do most efficiently rather than have levels and types of production set by a central authority. This change is welcomed by most provincial authorities, Muldoon concluded. Muldoon found former Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping very relaxed. Party Co-chairman Hua Guofeng was also relaxed, but during the conversation Hua in effect pronounced his own obituary with some sadness.

Secretary Muskie inquired further about Zhao's slip on Kampuchea. Muldoon said Zhao was speaking from a handwritten brief and clearly said that SRV withdrawal would not be a precondition of any settlement. Huang Hua was not present and early the following day the Chinese were careful to correct Zhao's statement by insisting that withdrawal must begin before a settlement could be reached. However, Muldoon noted this is at least a change in the earlier Chinese position that it must be completed before a settlement could occur.

The Secretary expressed appreciation for the PM's decision to authorize contingency talks by our respective navies with regard to an international patrol in the Gulf.<sup>2</sup> He also remarked that French Foreign Affairs Minister Francois-Poncet was quoted in the morning's press as throwing cold water on the idea of an international patrol. The Secretary said that he didn't know how the French expected to protect lives in the event of heightened hostilities, although we know they have ships there. It is unfortunate, Mr. Muskie said, that Francois-Poncet said what he did because it reduces the deterrent effect of our consultations and discourages us from moving ahead. The patrol could work, however, if the French ships are positioned with our own.

---

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to the proposal, first made public in New York during the UN General Assembly session, to form an allied naval force in the event of an imminent blockade of the Persian Gulf. (Bernard D. Nossiter, "U.S. and Allies Discuss Joint Fleet To Protect Vital Strait of Hormuz," *New York Times*, September 25, 1980, p. A18) The Iran-Iraq war had begun on September 22.

Assistant Secretary Holbrooke commented that the French position on an international patrol was similar to that of the Australians. Muldoon replied that Prime Minister Fraser had a serious problem with his elections (scheduled for October 18).<sup>3</sup> He must question any US proposal closely and cannot be seen to be acting under US direction. The Secretary explained that our proposal for navy-to-navy talks was exploratory. We felt that some sort of naval peace patrol to inhibit attacks on shipping might be necessary if combat spread.

Prime Minister Muldoon asked whether we had yet had a reaction from either the Saudis or the Omanis. The Secretary replied that we have talked to them, but they don't really have much (to patrol with). At the moment we are cooling it, but planning must go ahead. This is fine as far as New Zealand is concerned, the Prime Minister commented, as long as our navies are talking about contingencies.

A discussion of the tactical situation then took place during which the Prime Minister said that it appeared the Iran-Iraq conflict would be long and drawn out. He asked Mr. Muskie for his views on its ultimate outcome. The Secretary said that the initiative to bring fighting to an end could come from both sides, but thought it unlikely that Iraq could overwhelm Iran. Even if oil supplies are cut to Tehran and spare parts are short the Iranians are capable of protracted guerrilla warfare. New Zealand Ambassador Gill remarked that it seemed unlikely that the other Arab states will come in behind Iraq. The Secretary noted that the Arabs have mixed feelings. They are worried that Iraq could become the dominant force in the Gulf. On the other hand, they hate Khomeni who, in turn, seems to have been strengthened by the war. Under Secretary Newsom commented that there is some enthusiasm in the Gulf states for the war, but Syria opposes it. The Syrians have proposed Algeria and Libya as mediators. This won't get far, Mr. Newsom said, therefore it is important that Pakistan President Zia and the Islamic Conference effort not be seen to have failed. The Conference should be preserved as a possible means for a settlement. Pakistan Foreign Minister Agha Shahi believes that the 1975 Agreement between Iran and Iraq offers possibilities for a settlement.

The Iraqis claim, Secretary Muskie said, that they don't want to take territory. Both sides have been inhibited by the outside view that the war could spread to the entire Gulf. Sending US Air Force AWAC's aircraft to Saudi Arabia has shocked the Iranians.

Prime Minister Muldoon said he wished to turn the conversation to the Kampuchean situation. The issue of Kampuchea is important to New Zealand because of its close relationship with the ASEAN coun-

---

<sup>3</sup> Fraser was reelected as Australian Prime Minister on October 18.

tries. It is now developing in different directions he said. Australia may de-recognize the DK (in an earlier conversation with Department representatives Muldoon had said that, in view of Australian Foreign Minister Peacock's announcement that he will probably announce de-recognition October 11 or 13, New Zealand might be forced to de-recognize before then). The Secretary noted that the DK seat in the UN is a risky business for the Administration. Fortunately, our announcement that we would support DK seating has not drawn much (domestic) political fire.<sup>4</sup> The ASEAN countries told him in Kuala Lumpur, Mr. Muskie said, that the ASEAN countries want to retain the DK seat for only one more year.<sup>5</sup> It is clear the war along the Thai border will not have ended by then. A settlement along the Thai border will not solve anything. The Vietnamese may be willing to negotiate a cease fire but they will not withdraw. The SRV wants to stop Chinese supplies getting to Pol Pot across the Thai border. We have spoken to the SRV which has simply not responded to suggestions for withdrawal. Repatriation of Kampuchians is another source of concern to the SRV since it is Pol Pot's only recruitment base. This was the reason for their incursion last June. It is a very unstable situation. The ASEAN countries want a conference. The US will push for a follow-on resolution at UNGA (which New Zealand is co-sponsoring). One wonders whether the SRV doesn't have reservations about the close ties they have with the USSR. [less than 1 line not declassified] say that we are not giving the SRV any incentives to quit. The Secretary concluded by saying he suspected that use of Cam Ranh Bay and access to the Malacca Strait are of great strategic advantage to the USSR.

Muldoon commented that Vietnam at present is strategically more important to the Russians than Cuba and is only costing them \$1 billion a year instead of the \$3 billion they are sinking in Cuba. He said that the impression he had gotten from talking to leaders in the area is that the Soviets are happy with their bargain. However, President Suharto spoke to him at length on the idea that Vietnam could become the Yugoslavia of the East.

Assistant Secretary Holbrooke pointed out that in the last month the Vietnamese have mounted a very clever campaign to recoup their international position, and he anticipates further moves in that direction. They will withdraw troops when the PRK no longer requests them to remain in Kampuchea and they will create a "non-aligned" Kampuchea. The SRV has announced elections in Kampuchea will

---

<sup>4</sup> Muskie announced on September 15 at his news conference that the United States would support the ASEAN position on the seating of Democratic Kampuchea in the UN General Assembly. See Department of State *Bulletin*, October 1980, p. G.

<sup>5</sup> See Document 146.



be held in 1981, although they have not said whether there will be outside observers.

Turning to another issue, the Secretary expressed appreciation for New Zealand support on the PLO observer issue in the IMF/IBRD, but regretted that resolution of the problem meant excluding all observers. Mr. Muskie noted that PM Muldoon would be chairman of a committee to look into the problem. Fortunately, Muldoon said, the issues before the committee would be legal and procedural and would not involve political issues. There will be four developed and four Group of 77 members with New Zealand chairing and casting a deciding vote. He, Muldoon continued, had looked at the questions prepared by the secretariat and believed they were workable. In his view, the matter has been de-escalated. The developing countries don't really want to see anything stop the work of the Fund and the Bank, therefore, they want to see this issue cooled down. The committee will have its first meeting in the first week of December. The Secretary commented that he was afraid that even the past effort to include the PLO as an observer will affect Congressional attitudes toward the two institutions. Africans and others, Assistant Secretary McCall pointed out, are aware that the issue of Israeli membership in the UNGA could be harmful to additional contributions from the US to UN development funds. With the price of oil up, Muldoon said, the developing countries are seeking additional assistance and know they mustn't anger the US Congress.

The Secretary introduced the subject of possible enlargement of the UN Security Council. Assistant Secretary McCall commented that to attempt to do so was not likely to bring about a resolution of the issue in ways that would not weaken the Western position in that body. Muldoon commented that New Zealand is not going to push for enlargement. If others do and it comes up it will make a decision then. The Prime Minister said that he would talk to Foreign Minister Talboys about it despite the line of (some) in MFA favoring enlargement. He didn't believe, Muldoon continued, that New Zealand should take a strong stand on this issue. [*3½ lines not declassified*]

The meeting ended without further substantive conversation.



**280. Telegram From the Embassy in Australia to the Department of State and the White House<sup>1</sup>**

Canberra, December 5, 1980, 0231Z

12114. White House for the President. Subject: A Report on My Tour in Australia.

(Confidential–Entire text)

1. This message, barring some circumstance unforeseen as of now, contains “a final comment” after my nearly four years as Ambassador to Australia. Herein are also two recommendations—restated from earlier communications.

2. I’ve urged that careful consideration be given to naming a career diplomat to succeed me. More than ever I am persuaded that advice is sound. See Canberra 11325.<sup>2</sup>

3. I am without doubt that it is in the interest of improved Australian-American relations that a third political officer be named for this post. The opportunity, both for valuable service to DOS and the learning process for the officer chosen, would be a significant one. The principal contribution to be made by an additional officer would be to enhance the Embassy’s ability for in-depth reporting and analysis not now possible because of the volume of work and the demands made on the two officers covering a part of the world which is busy and of increasing importance to the United States. See Canberra 08987,<sup>3</sup> para 22.

4. On a variety of occasions—both orally and in writing—I’ve been critical of a process of communication which often bypasses the Embassy. I will admit that the Embassy ultimately is made privy to the substance of communiques between GOA and USGov. But the point of the criticism is to note the damage to morale amongst the Embassy staff and a lessening of respect by the Australians for the role of the U.S. Embassy. And, of course, it does appear wasteful, to say the least, to have in place an expensive apparatus which is not fully used.

5. I expect it might be considered normal for an Ambassador, on completion of his tour, to leave a record of his personal impressions of his host government and its people. In lieu however of an analysis of Australia and Australians, let me call attention to a volume enti-

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800582–1037. Confidential; Exdis.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 11325 from Canberra, November 10, called for a career Ambassador for Australia. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800537–0925)

<sup>3</sup> Telegram 8987 from Canberra, September 5, reported on an inspection of the Embassy. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800425–0821)

tled "Australia Through American Eyes 1935-1945" (University of Queensland Press 1979). This little book contains observations by two American diplomats, J. Pierrepont Moffat and Nelson T. Johnson.<sup>4</sup> Both were perceptive. There is, of course, a risk in generalizing when describing a country and its people. I recognize also that there have been changes in the intervening 45 years and that there are many Australians today who do not fit the Moffat-Johnson descriptions. Nevertheless, to assist me in recording my impressions, reached after nearly four years in Australia, I am supplying a few passages which, subject to those two caveats, remain relevant today:

—"It was perhaps inevitable that there would be conflict between Australia and the United States over international trade, given, on the one hand, Secretary of State Cordell Hull's almost religious faith in the benefits of free trade and, on the other, Australian devotion to protectionism and the principle of imperial preference . . ."

—"What, then did these men say about Australia in their official and private letters to Washington?

—Irrespective of what party was in Government or the state of industrial relations at the time, the diplomats almost invariably began by referring to the emphasis placed in the Australian ethos on not working too hard, on not striving for excellence by happily accepting mediocrity with the cheerful cry of 'she'll be right', and on class conflict rather than collaboration. The fact that Australian coalminers and waterside workers could insist on their full quota of holidays, and even go on strike, when the very survival of the country was in jeopardy evoked as much bewilderment as scorn; but these extreme cases, which were seen not as Moscow-inspired but as authentically Australian, did not concern them so much as the general lack of enterprise and incentive, the universal desire to get the maximum reward for the minimum effort, and the social and economic legislation which protected and promoted these attitudes. According to Johnson, 'the average Australian desires a high standard of living but he expects the state to give it to him, while by contrast the American desires a high standard of living but expects to work for it'."

—" (Mr. Moffat's) harshest strictures were directed at businessmen who, he said, lacked initiative and enterprise and relied too heavily on the government. Indeed the real complaint not only of Moffat but of most North American diplomats in Australia, was that the whole society had too readily accepted working-class values and mores. It was one thing for trade unions to seek shorter hours, more holidays

---

<sup>4</sup> Moffat was the Consul General in Sydney during the late 1930s and Ambassador to Canada from 1940 and 1943. Johnson was Ambassador to Australia from 1941 to 1945.

and higher pay for less work: but it was much more reprehensible for the rest of the community quietly to acquiesce in, and indeed echo, these demands."

—"Johnson was no less concerned with Australia's apparent lack of a work ethic. In his despatch to Roosevelt, he portrayed the Australian desire to live in a 'legislatively planned social paradise', with an ever-improving standard of living and without fear of external threat, and the 'implacable hostility between labor and employer'."

—"... in the mid-1940's, as in the mid-1930's, the senior American diplomatic representative in Australia was lamenting that, for all her potential for independent nationhood, Australia was still far too closely tied to the mother country from who the United States had broken in 1776."

—"... What Australians regarded as worthy achievements towards the goals of social security and an egalitarian society seemed to many Americans indications of idleness and shiftlessness."

—"I do not know whether I have been more struck by the similarities between the American and the Australian or the differences. I incline to believe that the similarities are more superficial and the differences more fundamental. You find here the same zest, the same enthusiasms as with us. There is not however the same insistence on first rate work. The philosophy of 'good enough' is too prevalent in this country, and its ramifications extend far beyond mere workmanship. It is responsible for the five-day week in the government service and in many businesses; for the multitudinous holidays; for the virtual shutting-off of all business between Christmas and New Year; for the sacredness of the vacation . . ."

—"Beauty means little in their life and luxury less. The furnishing you see in almost every house is incredible. Electric lighting, for instance, is particularly bad, with blazing bulbs projecting out of the ceiling, instead of shaded lights and lamps. The shops are well stocked with good stuff but it is hard to find the best. There are no exhibitions of luxury articles exposed in the windows, as there is no demand. The average Australian probably does not go so far as to despise art and luxury, but 'it is all right for others' properly summarizes his views.

"Without the graces of life, the Australian has many very real compensating virtues. He is frank to a degree and does not resent frankness in others."

—"First and foremost let me say that it is proving most interesting, and we are very happy in the outdoor existence, the free and easy hospitality, and the chance to take some interesting trips to the interior. It is an experience I would not have missed for anything, for Australia is building up a new type of civilization, which I suspect to be the

civilization of the future—an equalitarian one, towards which we are slowly and relentlessly being driven in America and even Europe, and which our children, or at any rate their children, will regard as normal. It is a civilization built up on the theory that work is only an accessory to the main purpose of life—which is a wholesome use of leisure; that the accumulation of wealth is agreeable, but not worth too great a struggle, and is apt at best to be transitory, with the government taking the greater share; that ‘good enough’ should be one’s dominant philosophy and not an insistence for ‘the best’; that what we would call “the art of graceful living” is effete and outmoded, and that formality is incompatible with sincerity, and finally that artistic pre-eminence and scholarship are pleasant accomplishments, but should not be considered as an end in themselves, but merely as an accompaniment to the more important attributes of pre-eminence in games, sport and good fellowship.”

—“Unquestionably the most serious defect in the Australian character—one that if not corrected will, I fear, prevent her ever achieving first rank is the prevalent philosophy of ‘good enough’.

—“Even in the shops it is very rare to be able to buy the best quality of anything; good enough, serviceable products are all that the public understands or requires.”

—“In the course of decades, the Australian has thus become markedly dependent on the government for aid and assistance. Apart from the normal instances of government help he expects—and receives—grants, bounties and subsidies to help him export most of his primary products (again excepting wool). But in return he submits to governmental interference in a way no other Anglo-Saxon would stand.”

—“On the whole the brainiest type of Australian does not go into politics. In this respect the parallel with the United States during most of the nineteenth century is an apt one. The rough and tumble of political life does not appeal to the successful citizen, nor are the younger men of means as yet imbued with the ideal of public service.”

—“Any discussion, however brief, of Australia’s defense policies brings us right into the realm of external relations. Admittedly Australia cannot defend herself, although she is awakening to the pressing need of improving her situation in this respect.”

I would add that the present day Australian, while perhaps a bit more sophisticated than was the case in the Moffat and Johnson times, continues to search for his place and remains torn between “the Queen” and “the realities”. “The Queen” will win, “for a while longer”, is my prediction.

6. I have now reviewed Secret Canberra 10061 (US goals FY ’81 and Secret Canberra 03581 FY ’82 goals).<sup>5</sup> What I had to say in those

---

<sup>5</sup> Neither found.

two messages was relevant at the time and this is true as to Secret Canberra 11492<sup>6</sup> and 11792.<sup>7</sup> Reference to these telegrams is for the purpose of incorporating them in this “final comment”.

7. I have been guided during my tenure of office by President Carter’s mandate to me as contained in his letter of October 25, 1977<sup>8</sup> which said in part:

“Cutting the cost of government is of particular concern to me. The size of our representation abroad must be related to a stringent appraisal of policy and program requirements, and the number of personnel of all agencies must be kept at the minimum necessary to achieve our objectives. I consider this to be one of your most important goals. You should inform the Secretary of State when you believe that the staff of any agency or program is in excess of our needs. Routine implementing personnel actions remain the responsibility of the parent departments and agencies.”

I have now concluded it is not a simple task to reduce the “cost of government”. It is a disappointment that my efforts have not been more productive. But I must confess that [if] some of the suggestions and ideas, submitted by me from time to time in response to the President’s mandate, been implemented it would not necessarily have been in the best interest of U.S.-Australian relations. If for no other reason this is so because some of my proposals failed to take fully into account the resulting impact on Australia. Australia is hypersensitive about any American move, especially ones related to Australia and there would not have been a full appreciation that the effort was to reduce the cost of government. Witness the reaction to closing the Consulate in Brisbane.

7. I would be very remiss if in “my final comment” I failed to note that during my time as a United States Ambassador I have been deeply and favorably impressed with the quality and depth of support given me by members of the Foreign Service, other members of my staff and those in the Australia-New Zealand Desk in DOS. All have been diligent, and all have demonstrated a high degree of loyalty to our government. Their support for me has been generous and total and not free of constructive criticism when such was due. I have been

---

<sup>6</sup> Telegram 11492 from Canberra, November 14, projected policy and issues over the next 2 months. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800545–0531)

<sup>7</sup> Telegram 11792 from Canberra, November 25, outlined Alston’s views on U.S.-Australian issues to be discussed with the transition team. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800564–0186)

<sup>8</sup> The letter is in Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Agency File, Box 19, State: Authority and Responsibility of Ambassadors, Letters A–E, 10–11/77.

witness to a sense of professionalism which I believe characterizes the Foreign Service and as I return to private life I will take much pleasure in saying just that whenever the occasion permits.

8. It is my hope that the Department will continue to attract those for whom excellence is the only standard for it is upon the strength and vitality and commitment of State Department personnel that our nation depends in large part as it goes about the business of leading the Free World.

**Alston**

# Pacific Islands

## 281. Memorandum From Michael Armacost of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>

Washington, January 31, 1978

### SUBJECT

Disputed Claims to South Pacific Islands

Last fall we notified the UK of our willingness to renounce U.S. territorial claims to 15 small islands in the Pacific—in the Phoenix (Gilberts), Line, and Tuvalu groups—in exchange for the UK's recognition of exclusive U.S. sovereignty over Canton, Enderbury, and Hull—islands in the Phoenix Group in which we have missile tracking facilities.<sup>2</sup> (C)

The UK rejected this proposal, and in follow-up discussions made it clear that its rejection was definitive and categorical. They also urged us to come to some early understanding with respect to our claims to the Gilbert Islands since they are slated to obtain independence from the UK later this year. If rival territorial claims remain unresolved when the Gilberts achieve their independence, we may well find ourselves denounced as encroaching on a new nation's territory and sovereignties. (C)

The Inter-agency Group believes the time has come, therefore, to consider alternative approaches. Specifically, it wishes authority to discuss with the British and with representatives of the Gilbert Islands:

—A joint US-Gilbert administration of Canton, Enderbury, and Hull without prejudice to our territorial claims to those islands; (C)

—An exclusive use agreement to cover these three islands to replace our current ten-year exclusive use agreement with the UK (for which we pay \$240,000 and which will expire on September 20, 1978). We should expect some increase in the rental fee in a new agreement. (C)

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Official Correspondence of the Under Secretary for Political Affairs, 1969–1988, Lot 89D265, [unfolded material]. Confidential. Sent for action. Concurred in by Robert Hunter.

<sup>2</sup> Holbrooke, while in London October 26–27, 1977, met with Foreign Office Deputy Under Secretary Hugh Cortazzi and discussed U.S. territorial claims to the Pacific Islands. (Telegram 17853 from London, October 28, 1977; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770398–0012)

State and Defense both have indicated their desire to pursue this approach. (C)

*RECOMMENDATION:*

That you authorize me to convey to the Inter-agency Group NSC approval to discuss such an arrangement with the UK and Gilbertese representatives, provided soundings on the Hill indicate the approach would be acceptable to Congress.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Brzezinski checked the approve option.

---

**282. Letter From President Carter to Governor General of the Solomon Islands Devesi<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 27, 1978

Dear Governor General:

The American people join me in sending best wishes to you and the people of the Solomon Islands. I am pleased to inform you that, as the Solomon Islands attains independence, the United States Government extends its recognition. It is our hope that, with your agreement, diplomatic relations can be established quickly between our two countries.

We believe that friendly and productive relations will develop between the United States and the independent Solomon Islands. Significant ties between our two countries began during World War II when many Americans served in the Pacific area and cooperated closely with Solomon Islanders. These ties have continued, nurtured by our mutual concern for economic progress, human rights, and democratic government.

We are confident that the friendship between our two countries will grow even closer in the years to come. The Government and people of the United States share your aspirations for the progress and welfare of the people of the Solomon Islands, and we look forward to working

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Plains File, President's Personal Foreign Affairs File, Box 3, Solomon Islands, 6-10/78. No classification marking. The Solomon Islands gained independence on July 7.



together with you in your efforts to realize those goals and to contribute to peace and prosperity for all mankind.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter

---

**283. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to Secretary of State Vance<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 12, 1978

SUBJECT

Disputed Islands Negotiations—Tuvalu

The Department of State is authorized to proceed with negotiations for a treaty with Tuvalu which renounces all United States claims to four islands in the Tuvalu chain. In return for ceding our claims, the negotiators should seek:

—assurances of nondiscriminatory treatment by the Tuvalu Government toward U.S. vessels fishing in their waters.

—access to Tuvaluan waters for non-U.S. fishing vessels which supply the U.S.-owned tuna canneries on American Samoa.

—general assurances that Tuvalu will not make its territory available, for military purposes, to powers unfriendly to the United States.

—sympathetic consideration by the Government of Tuvalu to such requests as the U.S. might make for use of or access to the islands for military purposes, during time of emergency or international crisis.<sup>2</sup>

**Zbigniew Brzezinski**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Agency File, Box 18, State, 4–6/78. Confidential.

<sup>2</sup> The U.S.-Tuvalu Treaty of Friendship, after undergoing multiple text revisions, was eventually signed on February 7, 1979, after taking into account the reservations of the New Zealand Government. (35 UST 2087; TIAS 10776) The negotiations were reported in telegram 266859 to Canberra, October 21; telegram 6152 from Wellington, November 9; telegram 8038 to Suva, January 11, 1979; telegram 8171 to Wellington, January 11, 1979; and telegram 447 from Suva, February 8, 1979. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780432–0448, D780465–1075, D790014–1041, D790062–1091, and D790063–0671)

---

**284. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 22, 1978, 2:55–3 p.m.

**PARTICIPANTS**

President Carter  
Senator John Glenn  
Roger Sullivan, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs  
Nicholas Platt, NSC Staff Member  
Peter Kenilorea, Prime Minister, Solomon Islands  
Francis Bugotu, Ambassador-designate

The President greeted Prime Minister Kenilorea warmly, and congratulated him on both the independence of the Solomon Islands and their acceptance as the 150th member of the United Nations.<sup>2</sup>

Prime Minister Kenilorea thanked the President, noted what an honor it was for him and his new nation to be received in the Oval Office, and introduced his Ambassador-designate to the United States, Francis Bugotu.

The President welcomed Ambassador-designate Bugotu and said that he had heard that Ambassador Bugotu had the highest qualifications for his job.

Senator Glenn described the warm welcome he had received as head of the United States delegation at the independence ceremonies in the Solomons. He commented humorously that his space experience had led some inhabitants of the Solomons to believe that he was a god, which had added immeasurably to the warmth of his welcome.

Prime Minister Kenilorea then presented to the President a carved “nuza-nuza” figurine designed to be placed on the prow of a canoe. The President thanked the Prime Minister.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Subject File, Box 36, Memcons: President, 8–9/78. Confidential. The meeting took place in the Oval Office at the White House. Kenilorea made a private visit to Washington on September 22.

<sup>2</sup> See *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1978, p. 397.

**285. Letter from President Carter to Governor General of Tuvalu Teo<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 1, 1978

Dear Governor General:

The American people join me in sending best wishes to you and the people of Tuvalu. I am pleased to inform you that, as Tuvalu attains independence, the United States Government extends its recognition. It is our hope that, with your agreement, diplomatic relations can be established between our two countries.

We believe that friendly and productive relations will develop between the United States and Tuvalu. The economic ties between our two countries that began over one hundred years ago, and the American presence on Funafuti during World War II, form a rich part of American history in the Pacific. We intend to continue these ties, and to demonstrate our mutual concern for economic progress, human rights and democratic government.

We are confident that the friendship between our two countries will grow even closer in the years to come. The Government and the people of the United States share your aspirations for the progress and welfare of the people of Tuvalu, and we look forward to working together with you in your efforts to realize those goals.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Platt Chron File, Box 65, 9/1–22/78. No classification marking. Tuvalu became independent on October 1.

**286. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the Department of State (Tarnoff) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, December 18, 1978

SUBJECT

Disputed Islands Negotiations—Gilbert Islands

*I. Introduction*

The Gilbert Islands are expected to become independent in the spring of 1979. Gilberts leaders and the U.K. have been pressing us to resolve the problem of U.S. claims to 14 islands in the Gilberts chain. Resolution of the claims issue would enable us to avoid appearing to be engaged in a confrontation with a small third-world country over territory to which our claims are, for the most part, relatively weak. Such a confrontation would be detrimental to our broader foreign policy, security, and economic interests in the South Pacific.

There is general agreement among concerned U.S. government agencies that we should relinquish our claims. Relinquishment will improve the climate for achievement of U.S. objectives with respect to access to territory in the Gilberts for security related purposes and access to fisheries.

Although it is unlikely that we will be able to conclude negotiations before the Gilbert Islands become independent, beginning negotiations as soon as practical and seeking a timely resolution to the issue would be an indication of our good faith and have a positive impact on our relations with the Gilberts and other South Pacific countries. We have suggested that the first round of negotiations take place in Hawaii January 25–26.<sup>2</sup>

*II. The US Presence in the Gilberts (Canton and Enderbury)*

Since the late 1930's, and particularly during World War II, the US has made extensive use for civil aviation and military purposes of Canton and other islands in the Phoenix Group, which will come under Gilbertese administration after Independence. However, all these activities have been without prejudice to US or UK claims; the United

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Platt Chron File, Box 66, 1/1–22/79. Confidential.

<sup>2</sup> A report on the Honolulu negotiations is in telegram 85342 to London, April 6. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790157–0563)

States and UK agreed in 1939 to joint administration of Canton and Enderbury for 50 years.

On November 14, 1970, the United States paid the UK \$240,000 for the exclusive use and occupancy of Canton, Enderbury, Birnie and Hull Islands, together with similar use rights for Sydney and Gardner Islands as well, for a period of ten years. The agreement authorized the United States to construct, operate and maintain an electronic research and test facility at the Canton Island complex. This facility was very actively employed for MIRV testing in the early 1970's, but since 1975 the entire complex has been in caretaker status, with 35 US contractor personnel maintaining the facility.

DOD is committed to keeping a presence on Canton until September 30, 1979, but will begin withdrawing its equipment after January 1, 1979. For the period from independence to 1980, DOD wishes to maintain the rights and privileges concerning Canton, Enderbury and Hull that the USG has under the 1970 US-UK agreement.

### III. *U.S. Goals and Objectives in the Negotiations*

#### A. *Security*

##### 1. *Immediate*

a) acceptance by the Government of the Gilberts of the substance of the 1970 US-UK agreement.

b) a commitment by the Gilbert Islands that they will consult with us should any third party wish to use Gilberts' territory for military purposes.

##### 2. *Contingent Objectives*

DOD has not made up its mind as to the future need for Canton, Enderbury and Hull. Because of political problems with some of the landowners in the Marshall Islands, Defense is studying possible alternative sites in place of the Kwajalein Missile Range.

The results of the study will determine what terms DOS wishes to negotiate with the Gilbert Islands for use or access to the Canton complex after 1980.

a) Option to lease Canton, Enderbury and Hull.

b) Lease to continue U.S. presence in Canton beyond 1980.

#### B. *Marine Resources*

1. A commitment to give non-discriminatory treatment to U.S. fishing vessels and to the non-U.S. fishing vessels that supply American canneries in Pago Pago.

2. An expression of intent to cooperate in conservation, management, utilization and exploitation of fisheries resources.

3. Willingness to consider arrangements that would permit access by non-U.S. owned fishing vessels that supply the American canneries in Pago Pago.

*C. Other*

Agreement to cooperate in scientific research, especially marine research on Christmas and Canton Islands. We are consulting with interests in the State of Hawaii to clearly define these positions.

*V. Action Requested*

We now require the approval of the President to go ahead with these negotiations. Since we intend to conclude the agreement as a treaty, we will consult with the Congress in advance. We have consulted with American interest groups such as the U.S. tuna industry and we anticipate little opposition.

**Peter Tarnoff<sup>3</sup>**

*Executive Secretary*

---

<sup>3</sup> Wisner signed for Tarnoff above Tarnoff's typed signature.

---

**287. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to Secretary of State Vance<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, January 9, 1979

SUBJECT

Disputed Islands Negotiations—Gilbert Islands

The President has approved the proposal of the Department of State to enter into negotiations at the end of January with the United Kingdom and the Gilbertese authorities concerning disputed islands in the Gilberts chain. (C)

During these negotiations, U.S. negotiators shall seek:

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Platt Chron File, Box 66, 1/1-22/79. Confidential.

(a) Acceptance by the Government of the Gilberts of the substance of the 1970 US-UK agreement. (C)

(b) A commitment by the Gilbert Islands that they will give us a veto should any third party wish to use former U.S. military installations on Gilberts territory for military purposes. (C)

(c) Agreement that the Government of the Gilberts will give sympathetic consideration to requests by the United States for use of Canton, Enderbury, and Hull after November 1980. The modalities for possible use should be kept open. (C)

(d) A commitment to give non-discriminatory treatment to U.S. fishing vessels and to the non-U.S. fishing vessels that supply American canneries in Pago Pago. (C)

(e) An expression of intent to cooperate in conservation, management, utilization, and exploitation of fishery resources. (C)

(f) Willingness to consider arrangements that would permit access by non-US owned fishing vessels that supply canneries in Pago Pago. (C)

(g) Agreement to cooperate in scientific research, especially in marine research on Canton and Christmas Islands.<sup>2</sup> (C)

**Zbigniew Brzezinski<sup>3</sup>**

---

<sup>2</sup> Representatives of the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Gilbert Islands met on several occasions after January 1979 to negotiate the resolution of claims to the disputed islands before the independence of Kiribati, as the Gilberts were called after independence, on July 12, 1979. The U.S.-Kiribati Treaty of Friendship was signed on September 20, 1979. (35 UST 2095; TIAS 10777) The negotiations were reported in telegram 293655 to London, November 18; telegram 27690 to all East Asian and Pacific diplomatic posts, February 2, 1979; telegram 103449 to Suva, April 24, 1979; and telegram 111751 to Canberra and Suva, May 2, 1979; and telegram 195630 to Port Louis, July 27, 1979. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780476–0039, D790050–1279, D790188–0903, D790201–0797, and D790343–0182)

<sup>3</sup> Aaron signed for Brzezinski above Brzezinski's typed signature.

## 288. Telegram From the Embassy in Australia to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Canberra, February 21, 1979, 0538Z

1429. Subject: Pacific Islanders Voice Concerns to Australians. Refs: A) Canberra 0366; B) Canberra 0122.<sup>2</sup>

1. As Department is aware, Australians have maintained that Pacific Island states remain nervous about renewed US interest in their area, and are concerned about what this implies for their emergent independence and general security. Australians most recently made this clear to DAS Colbert during her consultations here in early February.<sup>3</sup> We have been inclined to believe that Australians are overly sensitive on this subject, perhaps more reflecting their own doubts than concrete expressions from the Islanders themselves. DFA Officer in Charge of Pacific Affairs has shared with Embassy officer three confidential messages from Australian Missions in the Pacific (protect) which support this Australian thesis.

2. One report, concerning the Gilberts and dating from December, discussed a conversation with Chief Minister Tabai, held just prior to his talks with US officials in Hawaii during January.<sup>4</sup> Tabai said his main objective was to secure US renunciation of sovereignty claims over disputed islands, adding that the Canton situation was of secondary importance. Should the US balk on the sovereignty question, Tabai was sure the Gilberts would have overwhelming support for its cause in the world community. He said there would be no problem negotiating a new agreement on Canton, however Tabai indicated that the price would be higher, and Air Tuarua (the Gilberts airline) would wish to have use of Canton's air field. Tabai claimed he detected a possible State-Defense "conflict" in USG thinking about the future of its Canton facility. Finally, Tabai assured his Australian listener that the Gilberts were not really interested in a security clause for its treaty with the

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330-86-0054, 1, Bilateral Defense Consultations, 1979. Confidential. Sent for information to Port Moresby, Suva, Wellington, and CINCPAC also for POLAD.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 366 from Canberra, January 15, addressed Australian interest in U.S. policy toward the emerging Pacific states. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790019-0932) Telegram 122 from Canberra, January 5, described a recent meeting in the Australian Foreign Ministry concerning Pacific Island affairs. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790006-1090)

<sup>3</sup> Reports on Colbert's February 12 meetings are in telegrams 1133 and 1152 from Canberra, February 12. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790066-0667 and D790068-0768)

<sup>4</sup> Jeremia Tabai. See footnote 2, Document 286.



US, adding he felt Tuvalu “was taken for a ride by the US” regarding the US-Tuvalu Treaty.

3. The second report originated in Honiara, and included a discussion with two senior public servants in the Solomons Government. Reference was made to a recent speech in Parliament by Finance Minister Kinika,<sup>5</sup> in which he welcomed US friends but said the Americans “have more in mind than handshakes and cocktail parties.” According to one of the senior civil servants, this statement was a genuine reflection of at least mild concern over US intentions, and was “not a throw-away line.” Some threat to Solomon interests and to those of other Island states was perceived because of increased levels of US participation in Pacific affairs. Until the Solomons can feel confident of handling the US, in terms of protecting its own interests, the Solomons would prefer to see the United States at a “benevolent distance.” The conversation mainly focussed on fishing matters, and both Solomon officials felt more time was needed to assess the US presence on fisheries. In effect “the US is too big for micro-states and could bulldoze small states into accepting US positions inimical to their interests”, one declared. To conclude, the officials said that basically US-Solomons relations were good. Kenilorea’s meeting with President Carter in September<sup>6</sup> had been “excellent”, and they praised the efforts of DAS Colbert and William Bodde. The Solomons wants to keep a low public profile in dealing with the US. Thus while it opposed US participation in SPRFO it would not openly attack US membership, as Ratu Mara and others have done.

4. In a recent report from Suva, [1 line not declassified] complained that Tuvalu was “unwise” to have signed its treaty with the US, thus compromising Tuvalu’s “nonalignment.” The GOF is not happy with Tuvalu’s action, but will refrain from public comment about it.

5. This information is reported at some length to indicate that DFA feels there is genuine [garble] to its claim about Islander concern over US intentions in the South Pacific. There do appear to be instances where, presumably out of traditional concepts of courtesy, the Islanders are positive with us, while revealing inner doubts to their perhaps more familiar Australian friends. This ambivalence is natural and its importance should not be exaggerated. However, in calculating our moves regarding the expanding Pacific family we cannot ignore the fact that nervousness about our real intentions lies below the surface in some if not all of the micro-states with which we deal.

**Alston**

---

<sup>5</sup> Benedict Kinika.

<sup>6</sup> See Document 284.

**289. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the  
Department of State (Tarnoff) to the President's Assistant for  
National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 11, 1980

SUBJECT

Nauru and the Asian Development Bank

At the credentials ceremony June 6, Nauru Ambassador T.W. Star raised the issue of Nauru's interest in membership in the Asian Development Bank (ADB).<sup>2</sup> Nauru has sought membership as a developing-member country eligible for bank assistance. Based on Nauru's per capita income of over \$6,000 from the mining of extensive phosphate deposits, the ADB management (with U.S. concurrence) turned down Nauru's request that it be granted developing-member status. Nauru's position is that the phosphate is a non-renewable resource and that after the phosphate is exhausted in fifteen years Nauru will be economically crippled. Nauru believes, however, that it can diversify its economy now through favorable development loans from the ADB and other international financial institutions.

Ambassador Star discussed this situation in detail on the morning of June 6 with Frank Maresca, Director of Treasury's Office of Multilateral Development Banks. Maresca suggested to Ambassador Star that alternatively Nauru might seek technical assistance on a reimbursable basis from the ADB to undertake an economic survey leading to recommendations for Nauru to take over the long term. We believe this would be the most productive course for Nauru to follow.

**Peter Tarnoff**  
*Executive Secretary*

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, Unfiled Files, Box 143, Nauru, 6/80. Limited Official Use.

<sup>2</sup> The ceremony took place from 2:51 to 2:55 p.m. at the White House. (Carter Library, Presidential Materials, President's Daily Diary) No record of the discussion has been found.

**290. Letter From President Carter to Vanuatuan President Kalkoa<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, July 30, 1980

Dear Mr. President:

The American people join me in sending best wishes to you and the people of Vanuatu as you attain your independence.

I am pleased to inform you that the United States Government extends full recognition. It is our hope that you will agree to the establishment of diplomatic relations and that a productive friendship will develop between the United States and Vanuatu.

The ties between our two countries began in the 19th Century with the sandalwood trade, grew warmer with the American presence in the New Hebrides during World War II, and form a rich part of American history in the Pacific. We hope to continue these ties, and to work closely with Vanuatu for economic progress, human rights, and democratic government.

We are confident that the relations between our two countries will grow closer in the years to come. The Government and the people of the United States share your aspirations for the progress and welfare of Vanuatu, and we look forward to working together with you in your efforts to realize those goals.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 21, Vanuatu, President George Kalkoa, 7/80. No classification marking. Vanuatu gained its independence on July 30.

# Philippines

## 291. Presidential Review Memorandum/NSC-14<sup>1</sup>

Washington, January 26, 1977

TO

The Vice President  
The Secretary of State  
The Secretary of Defense

ALSO

The Secretary of the Treasury  
The United States Representative to the United Nations  
The Director, Office of Management and Budget  
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT

Philippine Base Negotiations (U)

The President has directed that the Policy Review Committee, under the chairmanship of the Department of Defense, review our policy with respect to the Philippine base negotiations. The review should be completed by March 7, 1977<sup>2</sup> and should:

1. Review briefly the record and current status of the negotiations.
2. Identify U.S. interests at stake in the base negotiations and, in particular, analyze the utility of U.S. facilities in the Philippines in terms of their importance to U.S.-Philippine security relations and our broader regional and global interests, including an indication of alternative means of performing major functions, and the possible impact of relinquishing certain facilities upon our position in the Pacific, Indian Ocean, and elsewhere.
3. Analyze GOP strategy and objectives in future base negotiations in the light of the Philippine internal situation and prospects, and its evolving foreign policy orientation; and assess probable impact on our flexibility in exercising base rights.
4. Examine alternative courses of action for dealing with the following issues:

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, 1977–1980, Box 2, PRM/NSC 1–24 [1]. Secret.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 293.

- (a) Future level of U.S. forces and base requirements in the Philippines, including the option of terminating the agreement and relinquishing our bases;
- (b) The scope of the mutual defense relationship;
- (c) Financial compensation to the Philippines for continued base access rights;
- (d) Major base rights issues, e.g. operational control, privileges and immunities, tenure, etc.; and
- (e) Timing and approach to the resumption of negotiation.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski**

---

**292. Telegram From the Embassy in Malaysia to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Kuala Lumpur, February 9, 1977, 0400Z

900. Subject: U.S. Military Bases in the Philippines.

1. With base negotiations currently in suspense, I should like to raise for examination the apparently accepted and unquestioned premise that it is essential for the United States to maintain its military bases in the Philippines, and that we should be ready to pay the Philippine Government very substantial amounts in military and economic assistance for permission to do so.

2. This seems to me a legitimate foreign policy issue which affects not only our relations with the Philippines, but also with its ASEAN partners and the rest of Southeast Asia. It is a question that should be argued, and the necessity of maintaining bases should not be considered as obvious and self-manifest. Those that support a base agreement should be required to state and defend their case, as of course should those who question the need for this kind of presence.

3. This telegram is classified because it is desirable to keep personalities and arguments separate, but there is nothing in the discussion

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330–80–0017, 78, Philippines 323.3 (Jan–Jun) 1977. Confidential. Sent for information to Bangkok, Canberra, CINCPAC for POLAD, Hong Kong, Jakarta, Manila, Moscow, Beijing, Rangoon, Seoul, Singapore, Taipei, Tokyo, and Wellington. A stamped notation on the first page indicates that the Secretary of Defense saw the telegram. Brown wrote at the top of the page, “Gene McA[uliffe], 2/9, This should be a significant input to the PRC on the Philippines. We should seek similar input from other US Ambassadors in SEA. HB.”

itself that cannot be in the public domain. Scrutiny of the arguments pro and con by the Congress, the press, and the public should be consistent with the foreign policy decision-making approach advocated by the new administration. There are no arguments on either side that an intelligent Filipino, (or an intelligent Russian or Chinese) could not adduce for himself. Awareness of the substance of our discussion could help the Philippines (and its ASEAN partners) in considering, from their point of view, the desirability of continuing an American base presence.

4. Following are the arguments usually advanced for maintaining the bases:

A. They are necessary if we wish to project our military power on the mainland of Southeast Asia and its neighboring waters;

B. They are a politically and militarily stabilizing factor in the area, and demonstrate the sincerity of our commitment to Southeast Asia;

C. They serve as a deterrent to USSR and PRC adventurism.

D. They are elements of the global, strategic power balance;

E. The USSR and the PRC are quite prepared to see them remain, each for its own reasons.

5. The "projection of military power argument" is valid if you accept the premise that the United States must have this capacity. Our bases in the Philippines unquestionably provide the essential fulcrum for the exercise of military leverage in Southeast Asia beyond the Philippines. (Studies done in 1969<sup>2</sup> demonstrated the astronomical differences in cost in maintaining a carrier task force off the coast of Vietnam without the facilities furnished by Subic. Clark Field was shown to be significantly less vital.) We must ask ourselves, however, whether we need the capacity to project this level of military power in the region today. I think that the answer is that we do not. The nations of Southeast Asia are not threatened by a conventional attack, but by internal subversion and insurgency. Our experience over the past two decades has shown the severe limitations of our capacity to intervene successfully in such conflicts. The bases are not militarily relevant to Southeast Asia needs.

6. Perhaps true, for the time being, runs the counter argument,—but the bases might be necessary some day. Accepted, but do we need to furnish a live-in fireman and pay a handsome board-and-room fee to the householder on the possibility that the house may some day catch fire? Cannot the fireman return to the firehouse and wait until he is called? The base facilities will remain, as similar facilities remained

---

<sup>2</sup> Not further identified.

in Singapore after the departure of the British. Like Singapore, there is no reason to suppose that they would not be available for our use at the level of military presence that the Philippines and its ASEAN partners would consider appropriate.

7. "The projection of power" argument contains another important flaw. The central rationale for a military base is that it permits a country to maintain and exercise without restraint military force from an area beyond its shore. This power is already limited by the U.S. Congress and will be further restricted by the Philippine Government in any agreement likely to come from current negotiations. Before the fireman can move he needs two chops agreeing that it is the right kind of fire. The whole idea of the base is that you can use it without restriction in times of emergency. Why pay a high price to maintain a capacity you can't exercise.

8. Southeast Asia has developed in the past two decades beyond the point where we need to assume a unilateral position of guarantor of territorial integrity and political independence. ASEAN, while still in the developing stage, is helping to create a sense of regional cohesion. If at some point in the future our friends in Southeast Asia should feel themselves threatened by either a regional or outside power, and should seek our assistance, the use of military facilities in their territories would be assumed without question in any response we might choose to make.

9. The bases as a stabilizing factor and evidence of commitment. The nations of SEA are concerned about the role the U.S. intends to play in the area. They need our markets, our capital, our technology, our management techniques, our educational facilities, and there are ample opportunities in these fields to show our concern for the welfare of the peoples of Southeast Asia. They refuse to define it precisely, but they also see a continuing politico-military role for the U.S. in Southeast Asia. At the same time, the Southeast Asian countries find little relevance of the bases to their security. Some talk to us in private about our security role, but they are on public record in an ASEAN declaration that foreign bases should be removed from the area and a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality established.<sup>3</sup> Marcos has said that the bases have a negative effect on Philippine security in that they could attract an outside attack. The Philippines, he maintains, might be drawn into a conflict against its interests. (So much, incidentally, for the concept of mutual security.)

---

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to the declaration signed on November 27, 1971, at the end of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers meeting at Kuala Lumpur. The declaration called for a Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) in Southeast Asia. ("5 Asian Lands Join In Hands-Off Pact," *New York Times*, November 28, 1971, p. 6)

10. Singapore Prime Minister Lee has made strong statements about the need for an American presence, but he has not publicly endorsed the bases, nor has he, to our knowledge, told Marcos that Singapore has a direct interest in the outcome of the negotiations.

11. Indonesia, with Singapore, the most vocal in reminding the U.S. of our obligations, sees the bases as a "bilateral matter" between the United States and the Philippines. General Murdani, a highly sophisticated and intelligent man, who in three years as his country's representative in Seoul, had an opportunity to observe at close hand an American military presence, recently asked Under Secretary Habib what we needed the bases for. The Indonesians are probably concerned that \$200 million a year in base rental would mean less MAP for them.

12. In summary, the Philippines ASEAN partners would like to have us around militarily as a residual insurance policy, but are not prepared to share with Marcos the political costs of permitting the bases to remain.

13. The bases as a deterrent to Communist adventurism. There is general agreement that the PRC inclination towards adventurism in Southeast Asia is low. The Russians may be a different matter, but it is difficult to see what kind of Soviet actions the bases might deter. The bases did not deter the North Vietnamese in the past. Why should they inhibit the SRV now?

14. The bases in the global strategic power balance. This argument suggests that we might [have] an interest in them beyond the role that they might play in the defense of Southeast Asia. This interest is not apparent to me. The bases would appear to weigh very marginally in maintaining the strategic equilibrium with the USSR and the PRC, and to be remote from the areas of vital concern to us.

15. This argument is linked to the next that the Russians and Chinese are quite prepared to see the bases remain. If they saw the bases as a U.S. asset in a contest for influence, they could hardly accept their continuance. Why then do they take this position? One explanation is that in their own rivalry, each would prefer U.S. "influence" to that of their Communist rival. But there is little chance that the Philippines would lean sufficiently towards either to significantly destabilize the USSR-PRC balance.

16. It is possible that neither the PRC nor USSR see their interests seriously affected by our presence, and that both feel that the bases are consistent with their conception of us as a capitalist power, and help them portray us as colonialist and imperialist to the Third World. They may believe also that the bases will intensify the contradictions in U.S.-Philippines post-colonial relations, strengthen class struggle, and hasten the day of a revolutionary move toward socialism. In any



case to do something because the Russians and the Chinese would like us to or don't object to seems a dubious rationale.

17. Marcos has already said that one billion in military and economic aid over five years isn't enough, and I assume that there are other price tags in the form of jurisdiction and control still not settled. We should also consider other indirect costs of a military base presence in the Philippines. Our relations with the Philippines can never be normal while our bases remain. For the Filipinos they create contradictions and strains which twist and warp every aspect of their attitudes toward us. On the one hand the bases symbolize the "special relationship" with us, they are visible evidence of our continuing need for the Philippines, and become thereby a hostage for attention and favors and a hole in all their dealings with us. They would feel lost without this leverage. On the other hand the bases are also regarded as an affront to Philippine national pride, and a symbol of imperfect independence and continuing dependency. The Filipinos have long since persuaded themselves that the bases serve only U.S. interests and that their generous acceptance of a serious abridgment of their sovereignty has been inadequately recognized and shabbily rewarded. In the Third World circles they yearn to join, the Filipinos are condemned and ostracized because of the bases, and the solution they now seek they see as modest compensation for the obloquy they suffer on our account. Manuel Quezon<sup>4</sup> once said "better a country ruled like hell by Filipinos than one ruled like heaven by Americans." While Clark and Angles, Subic and Olongapo are the Jekyll-Hyde sides of the same coin, for the Filipino they put the heaven and hell in stark, immediate, confidence-destroying contrast. The base relationship also helps to perpetuate in the Philippines a neurotic, manipulative, psychically crippling form of dependency. As a consequence it is a country that is difficult to take seriously. We acknowledge Philippine independence, but we still think of bases extraterritorially. Messages still move in our communications channels addressed to "Clark Field, P.I.," the P.I. standing for Philippine Islands, a geographic name as obsolete as "Batavia, Netherlands East Indies". Perhaps most indicative of this anomalous relationship is that 32 years after independence we are still recruiting into our Navy (and the Philippine Government is still permitting us to enlist) Philippine citizens who must enter our service as servants.

18. In the memory of virtually all living men, there have "always" been American bases in the Philippines, and this presence seems to us normal and natural. To any visitor to Clark or Subic they seem more permanent and more substantial than the tawdry, jerry-built Filipino

---

<sup>4</sup> President of the Commonwealth of the Philippines from 1935 until 1944.

communities that lie beside them. We should recognize, however, that a base situation is abnormal and inherently unstable because the receiving state must accept the presence within its boundaries of the supreme symbol of a foreign sovereignty,—its coercive instruments. The presence must be essentially extraterritorial in that the sending state cannot accept to any significant degree host country jurisdiction over its troops. This situation is acceptable only if the two states share a common perception of an imminent military threat. It is more tolerable if the two states are of the same racial stock, have common cultural roots, and roughly similar standards of living. These conditions do not exist in our Philippine base relationship. And the inherent frictions in the situation are intensified because we were the former colonial master.

19. Considering all of the foregoing arguments, I reach the conclusion that the benefits which we derive from the bases,—benefits which I see as steadily eroding—do not warrant the economic and political costs of maintaining them. Southeast Asia is an area of secondary importance to the United States. We have significant interests here, but they do not face a threat that would justify, in the face of GOP demands and ASEAN indifference, the level and kind of a military presence represented in Clark and Subic. The choice is not however between the full base facilities we have now and no facilities at all. With the question of sovereignty and control finally resolved, the GOP would probably be as delighted as Singapore is to provide us with base facilities when we need them, for a fee. It would probably also accept the presence of small U.S. maintenance and repair teams on a permanent basis. Rather than negotiating to remain, we should be negotiating for an orderly and gradual withdrawal that would maintain the physical facilities and reservoir of trained manpower and minimize the severe economic, social, and psychic consequences of our departure.<sup>5</sup>

**Underhill**

---

<sup>5</sup> In a February 18 memorandum to Brown, McAuliffe analyzed Underhill's argument, contrasting the difference between defense and foreign policy agendas. (Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330-80-0017, 78, Philippines 323.3 (Jan-Jun) 1977)

**293. Study Prepared by the Interagency Group on Philippine Base Negotiations<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, March 7, 1977

[Omitted here are the index and a map of Asia.]

*SCOPE OF THE STUDY*

The United States has long operated major naval and air force bases in the Philippines in a friendly and cooperative environment. We could legally operate under the existing agreement<sup>2</sup> for another 15 years but, in response to Filipino requests for new arrangements, we have repeatedly told them that we are willing to make appropriate changes. The current round of base negotiations began in April 1976,<sup>3</sup> and negotiations are now in suspense pending completion of this review of our policy. Manila has not pushed to conclude negotiations, but President Marcos expects word from us by May on how we expect to proceed.

This response to Presidential Review Memorandum/NSC 14 proceeds as follows:

—Part I looks at the record and issues in the base negotiations and analyzes Philippine objectives and strategy. This analysis focuses on how Marcos uses the negotiations to achieve Philippine objectives regarding manifestations of sovereignty, financial compensation and security guarantees. An assessment appears at page 6.

—Part II examines the bases and their capabilities, their relation to our broader interests in the area, and alternatives to our existing posture.

—Part III develops four alternatives for dealing with the inter-related questions of our force presence, the scope of the Mutual Defense Treaty,<sup>4</sup> financial compensation and major base rights issues in light of the differing viewpoints of the United States and the Philippines. It also discusses options regarding timing and approach to negotiations.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, 1977–1981, Box 35, PRM 14 [2]. Secret. Michael Hornblow, Acting Staff Secretary of the National Security Council, sent a copy of the study to Mondale, Vance, Brown, Blumenthal, Young, Lance, George Brown, and Turner under a March 8 memorandum. (Ibid.)

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to the Military Bases Agreement signed on March 14, 1947. For the text of Acting Secretary of State Acheson's statement about the agreement, see Department of State *Bulletin*, March 23, 1947, p. 554.

<sup>3</sup> See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. E–12, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973–1976, Documents 345 and 346.

<sup>4</sup> The Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Philippines was signed on August 30, 1951. (3 UST 3947; TIAS 2529)

This study is not a re-examination of our force posture in the Pacific. That work is proceeding under PRM 10.<sup>5</sup> The study takes note of that central problem and other general issues raised by a review of the bases.

*PART I: THE STATUS OF THE U.S. DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP  
WITH THE PHILIPPINES*

The United States has been dealing with Philippine dissatisfaction with provisions of the Military Bases Agreement (MBA) ever since the Agreement became effective in 1947. Forty-one amendments and many negotiations later, the Philippines continues to seek adjustments in the relationship, suggesting that keeping the base issues open may be an end in itself for the Philippine Government. The most recent attempt to conclude a new agreement sputtered to an anti-climax at the end of 1976<sup>6</sup> amidst uncertainty as to the future of our defense relationship.

*The Negotiations*

*Why has the United States been negotiating?*

The US does not need a new agreement. The MBA is valid until 1991 when either party can terminate it on one year's notice, unless terminated sooner by mutual agreement. Its provisions are highly satisfactory to the US—granting rent-free, relatively unfettered base operating rights.

The Philippines does not like the existing arrangement and has requested change. We know that dissatisfaction can grow to the point that our presence is no longer sustainable. We recognize that the post-World War II environment which gave rise to the defense relationship has changed, and that events in Vietnam and in the Philippines add urgency to the quest for a more equal and modern relationship. In turn, Philippine demands cause us to examine base requirements and alternatives.

*What has been our experience in negotiations?*

It remains unclear whether Marcos has ever been willing to make the choices necessary to conclude negotiations. Formal negotiations began in 1971 but Marcos terminated them in 1972 because of domestic turmoil. The Philippines again voiced interest in talks in 1973. The US again presented negotiating positions in 1974 but Marcos never

---

<sup>5</sup> PRM 10, Comprehensive Net Assessment and Military Force Posture Review, February 18, is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. IV, National Security Policy.

<sup>6</sup> See *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, vol. E–12, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973–1976, Documents 361 and 362.

responded. In December 1975 he and President Ford issued a joint communique,<sup>7</sup> emphasizing the importance of bases to both countries and announcing base negotiations in full recognition of Philippine sovereignty. By September 1976 the negotiations had produced a list of 25 unresolved issues reflecting Philippine demands of varying degrees of unacceptability to us.<sup>8</sup>

In the meantime Marcos raised broad questions about the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT). In a meeting with Dr. Kissinger October 8,<sup>9</sup> Foreign Secretary Romulo appeared to accept general assurances about mutual defense and asked for the US compensation package. He subsequently raised questions about our treaty assurances, however, and rejected the US compensation offer. He made a counter proposal which we rejected. On November 30 Romulo appeared to accept the US offer but, after consultation with Marcos, refused to announce an agreement, thus ending the latest round.<sup>10</sup>

Marcos has since publicly expressed dissatisfaction with the US approach to negotiations, demanded payment of rent for the bases, sought clarification of the MDT, and hinted at closing the bases. The Philippines says its domestic concerns prevent reopening negotiations before May, but indicates anxiety about the silence of the new Administration on our intentions.

*What are the issues?*

Three agreements define our security relationship. Each contains significant issues which relate to the base negotiations.

*The Military Bases Agreement.* The problem is to reconcile persistent Philippine demands for full recognition of its sovereignty over the bases (and nationalistic overtones of seeking to abolish “extra-territorial rights and privileges”) with our need for unhampered operation of forces and bases.

An April 1976 US draft agreement contained some concessions we believed possible in this regard. It included a role for a Philippine base commander, increased Philippine participation in base security, and reversion of some base lands with clear recognition that the remaining bases belong to the Philippines. The Philippine Government was not

---

<sup>7</sup> For the text of the joint communiqué, see *Public Papers: Ford, 1975*, Book II, pp. 713–714.

<sup>8</sup> For an overview of the unresolved issues, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, vol. E–12, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973–1976, Documents 351 and 353.

<sup>9</sup> See *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, vol. E–12, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973–1976, Document 354.

<sup>10</sup> See *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, vol. E–12, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973–1976, Document 360.

satisfied and insisted upon positions (summarized in Annex A)<sup>11</sup> which would interfere with the following US requirements:

1. *Integrated facilities*—including cohesive land and water operating areas at the bases.

2. *Operational control*—determination by the US of the purposes for which the facilities are to be used, US force levels, the conduct of base operations and armament configurations, provision of security by US forces at US facilities and participation wherever else necessary, and free access to and free movement within and between facilities.

3. *Privileges and immunities*—US jurisdiction over official duty cases and offenses solely involving the US and US personnel, and exemption from Philippine taxes and customs.

4. *Tenure*—sufficient duration of the agreement to assure continuity of the US regional defense posture (i.e., more than the Philippine proposal of 5 years).

*The Military Assistance Agreement (Revised 1952).*<sup>12</sup> The Philippines does not believe we have lived up to the implicit *quid pro quo* between our use of bases free of rent and the Military Assistance Agreement we signed when we gained our base rights.

*Marcos wants more money because:* The Philippines has received less military assistance than other allies, although providing significant facilities. Since 1962 cumulative US grant military assistance to the Philippines has totaled 20% of the assistance provided Turkey, 47% of that for Greece, 35% of that for the Republic of China, and 76% of that for Thailand.

—Marcos needs additional funds for force modernization and to counter insurgencies.

—Manila presented a \$3.6 billion military shopping list during negotiations of which we estimate about 10% can be absorbed and supported for realistic Philippine security needs.

—He demanded a five-year package of \$1 billion in military aid (3/4 grant) with economic aid to be negotiated separately.

Insisting that compensation be tied to real Philippine needs, the previous Administration offered a “billion dollar” five-year package, equally divided between military and economic assistance. (Spain received a “\$1.2 billion” package and Turkey was offered a like amount.) The \$1 billion tag is misleading. The economic part of the

<sup>11</sup> Annex A, an undated paper entitled “Unresolved Base Rights Issues,” is attached but not printed.

<sup>12</sup> The Military Assistance Agreement revised in 1952 was finalized in an exchange of notes on June 26, 1953. (4 UST 1682; TIAS 2834)

package would probably have gone to them anyway and was added to make the package more appealing in the Philippines.

The breakdown of the five-year totals is as follows:

	Grant Military Assistance	FMS Financing	AID & EXIM	Totals
Philippine Request	\$750 M	\$250 M	—	\$1,000 M
1976 US Offer	\$200 M	\$300 M	\$500 M	\$1,000 M
Projected Expenditures at Present Levels without New Package	\$100 M	\$100 M	\$500 M	\$700 M
Additional Amounts of US Offer over previous Projections	\$100 M	(\$200 M in loan guarantees)	—	\$300 M

*Manila objects to the uncertain process of MAP grants:* The Philippines wants a “congress-proof” assurance of compensation for the bases. Increasingly Filipinos refer to rent as more certain and less demeaning than reliance on the annual legislative process for military assistance. They also see rent as preferable to US statutory constraints on assistance, which include the monitoring and approval and human rights provisions of current legislation. We have refused to consider rent, maintaining it to be contrary to the spirit of mutuality in our relationship.

*The Mutual Defense Treaty.* Under the treaty each party obligates itself in the event of an armed attack in the Pacific area on either party “to act to meet the common danger” in accordance with its constitutional processes. This commitment includes armed attacks on either’s metropolitan territory, island territories, or armed forces in the Pacific. It has never been invoked.

The Philippines has expressed increasing dissatisfaction:

—That US constitutional processes would delay or obstruct a US response, and that the US could determine that something less than an all-out military response might satisfy its obligation to “act.” It has consistently sought embellishment of these provisions to make the US obligation more automatic. Early Eisenhower and Dulles statements pointed out that US forces were so distributed throughout the Philippines that any attack would necessarily involve them, and that they would, of course, defend themselves. Subsequently, President Johnson gave more assurances. Manila now wants a reaffirmation of these earlier assurances as a precondition to progress in the bases negotiations. However, US forces are no longer so widely distributed throughout the Philippines that they would automatically be involved in every attack.

—That the treaty lacked applicability to insurgencies which receive external support. The Philippines has not tried to invoke the treaty because of our indications that we would not consider it to apply. Filipinos view the MDT as irrelevant to their immediate security concerns.

—That the treaty gives no commitment to its disputed territorial claims. Manila sought recognition that the treaty would apply in the event of an attack on its oil extraction activities in the Reed Bank and Spratly Islands claimed by the Philippines, Vietnam, Taiwan, and China. The MDT might apply to such attacks under some circumstances; the US has resisted clarification because of the dangers of specifying which circumstances would make it applicable, and because of the risks of provoking the other claimants. The Philippines has now refined the demand by asking obliquely whether the South China Sea comes under the “Pacific Region” to which the treaty applies.

### *The Philippine Setting*

Marcos’ negotiating behavior embodies the ambivalence of the Philippine relationship with the United States. Long-standing discomforts with the patron-client relationship now interact with new perceptions of the international scene and of national interests. While still valuing the American connection, Filipinos see the bases as benefitting the United States more than themselves.

### *How stable is the Marcos Government?*

With the 1972 declaration of martial law,<sup>13</sup> Marcos eliminated the political free-for-all—often violent and always corrupt—characteristic of Philippine democracy. He has established a political system completely dependent upon his leadership. The opposition is weak and fragmented and there are no immediate threats of any consequence to his power or to Manila’s control over the country. A generally prospering economy—the average real growth rate has been about 6% since 1972—cushions the impact of widespread economic inequities and population growth. The long-standing communist insurgency constitutes no real threat to the government, nor is Manila’s control over most of the country affected by the Muslim insurgency in the South.<sup>14</sup>

Marcos is responsive to but not governed by the senior military, the mainstay of his regime. They have confidence in him. While the

<sup>13</sup> On September 21, 1972, Marcos imposed martial law on the Philippines.

<sup>14</sup> Reference is to the armed insurgency against the Philippine Government waged by the Moro National Liberation Front beginning in 1973. See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. E-12, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973–1976, Documents 321, 323, and 328.



extent of Imelda Marcos' influence over her husband is uncertain, it is not decisive and her power and position depend upon him.

*What factors support retention of the defense relationship?*

*The strength of old ties.* The military relationship is only part of a broad range of historic and current ties that link Filipinos to Americans; these ties could not be abruptly broken without serious disruption to the economy and social fabric as well as to Marcos' own power base. Especially among the older generation with memories of World War II and cooperation in Korea, attachment to the American connection remains strong. This is particularly true of senior military officers; almost all of them received American training and operate under a doctrine that centers around the MDT.

*The economic relationship.* The Philippines needs the US as a trading partner, source of investment, and aid giver (bilateral military and economic aid 1946–1975 was \$2.4 billion; some \$80 million per year economic aid is now 12% of their total foreign assistance). Filipinos also need the bases for foreign exchange (over \$200 million per year) and employment (32,000 directly employed, many more indirectly).

Economic negotiations, started in 1974 at US initiative, are suspended. The issues are Philippine desires for duty free access to US markets, especially for coconut oil and mahogany, and US desires for investment guarantees to replace the Laurel-Langley economic agreement.<sup>15</sup> Manila occasionally seeks to link its objectives in these negotiations to our interests in the bases.

*Military sales and assistance.* Because the US has been virtually its sole source of supply, the Philippines depends on us for spare parts and munitions, and cannot maintain its armed forces without our continuing military cooperation.

*The regional perspective.* The Philippines shares the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) view that a continuing American presence in Southeast Asia is important for the security of the region. Because of their commitment to ultimate neutralization and the elimination of foreign bases, it is difficult for ASEAN countries publicly to call for retention of the bases. However, Marcos is conscious that his removal of the American military presence from the Philippines would cause great nervousness in ASEAN.

---

<sup>15</sup> The Laurel-Langley trade agreement, signed on September 6, 1955, granted the Philippines preferential U.S. tariff treatment for sugar and other exports. (6.3 UST 2981 (1955); TIAS 3348) The agreement expired in 1974.

*What are the factors that weaken the defense relationship with the US?*

*Nationalism.* The desire to eliminate the stereotype of the Filipino as the American's "little brown brother" is strong. The base presence is the most potent symbol of this inequality in Filipino eyes, limiting the jurisdiction of the Philippine government on its own soil and conspicuously confronting the ordinary Filipino with an alien standard of living much higher than his own.

*Disparities in defense interests.* Although not irrelevant, the global competition of the superpowers is no longer the main framework within which the Philippines defines its security. The present perceived threats stem from national and regional problems. The Muslim insurgency draws heavily upon Philippine resources, ties down 75% of its armed strength, and complicates relations with the oil producing Arab states. Disputed territorial claims loom as a potential source of military involvement. The Philippines finds the US unwilling to involve itself in these problems, but fears that the defense relationship will involve it in disputes in which it has no real stake or—as in the Middle East—in which its own interests could be jeopardized. As a result the Government seeks to develop greater self-reliance in national defense while still looking to us for general security, protection of the sea lines of communication, and military assistance.

*Foreign policy reorientation.* The Philippines has endeavored to develop a more independent foreign policy. Its defense relationship with the United States has not impeded its efforts to establish relations with communist countries or prevented it from playing an active role in some Third World councils—the Group of 77, for example. It has, however, prevented the Philippines from gaining much-desired membership in the non-aligned movement.

*Human Rights.* Measures stifling political activity, muzzling the press, controlling the judiciary and suppressing dissent—although not as harsh as in many other countries—have attracted unfavorable American attention. Critics of Marcos in Congress and among the public desire a more distant official relationship with him. Marcos, in turn, has been irritated by what he regards as American interference in Philippine domestic affairs.

#### *Assessment*

Marcos and the Philippine people want us to stay in the Philippines for the near term; but they also want to alter the arrangements. The greatest danger is that Philippine negotiators will be backed into corners of national pride which could result in an impasse and eventual harassment of the bases. Marcos has not yet given us clear signals of his priorities or bottom-line positions. The best assumptions on which we can proceed are:

—*The mutual defense issue is not the critical factor.* Marcos probably knows that the United States is not going to give him the assurances which he has sought, e.g., on internal security. He expects the Carter Administration to reaffirm the US role as the ultimate guarantor of Philippine security against outside powers. He will continue to press for explicit guarantees whenever he thinks he can use that tactic to drive up the assistance level by demonstrating that the Philippines must arm to protect itself against threats to which the US refuses to respond.

—*Money is an important ingredient.* Marcos has no real idea how much he can get. He believes the Philippines has gotten unfair treatment and looks at Spain and Turkey as examples of what persistence in bargaining can achieve. He would find it difficult to accept the level we already offered or less without a different overall arrangement that satisfies aspirations for sovereignty. He is likely to press for a rental arrangement in which we pay for bases and he continues to enjoy a security guarantee.

—*The range of solutions to base operations/sovereignty issues is limited.* Marcos is not yet willing to make major concessions. Money can soften his position but he will never permit himself to deserve the criticism that he traded Philippine sovereignty for it. Marcos and his advisors overestimate our room to compromise.

—*Marcos may want to keep the negotiations going indefinitely.* Expressions of discontent have succeeded in eliciting ever more forthcoming responses from us, enhanced Marcos' credentials in the Third World, and served his own domestic interests while keeping the bases intact. But, by failing to sign an agreement, Manila has passed up several years of possible benefits such as increased military assistance and has no assurance that the US will ever make as favorable an offer again.

—*The US has almost run out of negotiating room* within the present definition of the problem. Our tactics of taking the initiative in proposing changes to an agreement we find quite satisfactory have succeeded in our continuing to operate in the Philippines on a favorable basis. So far Marcos' delay has worked to our advantage. If Marcos pushes for a conclusion of negotiations we must either convince him to reduce his demands, or the US must find new ways to modernize the relationship.

The options open to us in pursuing either of these courses of action depend in large measure on our assessment of the importance of the bases and alternatives to our basing structure discussed in the following section.

[Omitted here is a map of U.S. Facilities in the Philippines.]

---

*PART II—THE BASES*

This section addresses the following questions:

1. What military capabilities do the bases help provide?
2. What broader strategic and policy purposes do they serve?
3. What alternatives are available for performing existing functions?
4. What would be the impact of relinquishing facilities?

*What military capabilities do the Philippine bases help provide?*

The location of the bases permits the US to sustain or interdict naval or air operations along the periphery of Asia and project this power throughout the Western Pacific and Indian Ocean areas and over China and the Asian mainland. For the same geographic reason the location plays a key role in worldwide and regional communications networks. They are the only US bases near mainland Asia which are not vulnerable to combined Soviet air and naval attack from bases in the Soviet Far East. The utility of the location of the bases with regard to the vast expanse of the Pacific theater is demonstrated in the table at the end of this section.

The two primary components of the US presence in the Philippines are Clark Air Base and the Subic Bay naval complex. Both have a wide range of activities and are supported by a network of less extensive facilities providing largely communications support. The bases serve mutually supporting military purposes, but one base is not dependent on the other. We have invested over \$1 billion in these facilities.

*Clark Air Base*—Clark is the main Air Force operating and logistic base for the South Pacific and Indian Ocean areas. It occupies 130,000 acres and can handle 3,700 tons of cargo and 28,000 passengers daily. Clark is a major communications nodal point with automatic switching systems, satellite terminals, and high frequency radio facilities. Its communications control all aircraft operating throughout the area, as well as supporting Presidential and in-theater command and control requirements. Collocated Air Force and Navy signals intelligence facilities satisfy national and tactical intelligence requirements; Clark is also the major fall-back site for signals intelligence functions located in Japan, Okinawa, and Taiwan. The Crow Valley gunnery range is the only Pacific range with integrated electronic warfare strike and air-to-air facilities and is a major element in the readiness of all combat air assets in the Pacific.

*Subic Bay Naval Complex*—The natural harbor anchorages, collocated ship and air capabilities, weapon range complex and amphibious maneuver areas of Subic Bay/Cubi Point provide a full range of naval aircraft and ship repair, logistics, command and control, communications, training and medical functions available at no other naval facility

outside the United States. The ship repair facility, including floating dry docks, performs 65% of the ship repair work for the Seventh Fleet. The current man-day rate of \$22 at the facility is by far the lowest in the area and probably in the world (\$96 at Yokosuka and \$142 at Guam). If we do the repairs at Yokosuka that we presently do annually at Subic the added costs will be \$70–80 million more per year. Cubi Point is the only facility in the Western Pacific where aircraft can be offloaded for repairs directly from a carrier and the air wing can maintain proficiency while the carrier accomplishes upkeep. It has the capacity to perform complete engine repair in addition to other maintenance support functions. The supply depot includes a freight terminal operation which moves over one million tons of supplies annually and stores 2.5 million barrels of POL. The ammunition depot holds over 85,000 tons of ammunition. Marine Corps training exercises also rely on the Subic Complex.

*Personnel Strengths—1977*

	<u>US Military</u>	<u>US Civilians</u>	<u>Phil Nationals</u>
Clark	7,660	256	10,000
Subic	5,079	330	20,000
Other	1,004	9	2,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Totals	13,743	595	32,000

*US Forces*—The principal US forces in the Philippines are two tactical fighter squadrons and one tactical airlift squadron. The fighters now perform the air defense mission for the Philippines and are available for contingencies anywhere in the theater. All Seventh Fleet ships visit Subic but only a submarine is homeported there.

*Military Capabilities*—In summary the bases are an essential element in maintaining the following military capabilities at very low costs:

- A continuous naval presence in the Western Pacific and occasionally in the Indian Ocean with surge augmentation;
- Naval contingency capability in the Persian Gulf, Arabian Sea and East African waters;
- A high state of readiness of existing Pacific forces;
- Land and sea-based tactical air assets—both fighters and airlift—and the ability to redeploy those assets rapidly anywhere in-theater.
- Strategic and tactical logistic support during contingencies, with current planning for such contingencies focusing on Korea and Taiwan;
- Comprehensive support for all forces in-theater, including communications, intelligence, logistics, maintenance, training and personnel requirements;
- Major war reserve materiel storage.

*What broader purposes do the Philippine bases serve?*

The bases and their utility can only be considered in a setting broader than the Philippines. They have been part of a post-war posture of "forward defense" with forces stationed in key foreign areas for purposes of bolstering the confidence of our allies, signalling our resolve to potential enemies, contributing to the readiness of US and allied forces, and enhancing the flexible response capability of US forces to meet various contingencies.

*The Asian Environment*—In light of the transformation in Asia in the past decade we have already significantly reduced our Asian deployments and base structure, and altered the way we think about our Asian defense posture.

—The Sino-Soviet dispute and the focusing of PRC forces on the Sino-Soviet border have largely removed China in our thinking as a major military threat to neighboring countries. Defense planning now emphasizes our capability to counter the Soviet threat worldwide. Concurrently the improvement in relations with the PRC has permitted us to move virtually out of Taiwan. Our main hedges against a Chinese threat in Asia are forward deployed conventional forces, including those in the Philippines, and nuclear capable forces.

—The Soviet Union's major buildup on the Sino-Soviet border threatens China. Their slow but steady growth of naval and air assets in the Pacific can threaten the US directly and also our allies. North Korea has made significant improvements in its capability and remains our immediate concern in Northeast Asia. However the growing strength of South Korea has permitted us to reduce part of our forces and to consider further reductions.

—We have developed greater interests in the Indian Ocean and the Middle East. The Philippine bases and our naval forces in the Pacific are related to those concerns.

*US Force Posture*—Our personnel strength in East Asia, including forces afloat, has declined to about 135,000, some 50,000 less than in 1960, the year before any Vietnam buildup began. Our base structure has been reduced to Japan, Korea, the Philippines and Guam with significantly reduced base areas.

The major Asian contingencies that US forces in East Asia are specifically tasked for are a Korean one and as part of a worldwide conventional war with the Soviets. Forces also serve a wide variety of general purposes: maintaining stable regional balances of power, insuring the continuation of close US-Japan ties, maintaining Chinese confidence in our willingness to stand up to the Soviet Union, securing our allies from attack, containing the growth and spread of Soviet power and influence, and insuring the defense of the LOCs.

Despite changes in Asia our regional goals remain constant: the preservation of stability, the prevention of regional hegemony, the honoring of commitments, and keeping access to trade and investment. Normalization of relations with Peking and Hanoi and maintenance of our community of interests with the PRC against the Soviets could imply future changes in our political and military alignments. There is some uncertainty as to what extent a change in our presence in the Philippines might affect PRC-US relations. We set the greatest priority on our alliance with Japan, which while increasingly important as a stabilizing element in the whole Pacific picture, is dependent on the US for its national defense and very much concerned with our force posture in Asia. We expect further reductions in our strength in-theater through force withdrawals from Korea and minor adjustments in other areas. There is also a diminished willingness on the part of the US to be involved in foreign countries and bases without full and open acknowledgement by those countries of our mutual interests. In the case of the Philippines our interest in them depends to a greater extent than in the past on their freely acknowledged mutual interest in having US forces there.

While we can examine the benefits and liabilities of Philippine basing, the ultimate desirability of the bases must be determined in the light of a broad Pacific defense posture.

*Global Interests*—The bases greatly reduce the cost of US naval presence and power projection into the Indian Ocean area. This affects US capabilities in crises and contingencies on the east coast of Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, the Persian Gulf, Iran, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh and Australia.

—They act as a symbol of US military and political power in an area of obvious concern to the Soviet Union and the PRC. They help to demonstrate the potential importance of the United States to both sides in their continuing conflict, and may contribute to reducing potential pressure on the PRC to respond to Soviet military superiority.

—They provide unique communications and signal intelligence facilities of importance to US national and strategic nuclear interests and strategic targets.

—They provide us important capabilities in the event of a world-wide war with the Soviet Union or Soviet-PRC hostilities. At a minimum they complicate Soviet military planning.

*Regional*—The Philippine bases give the United States unquestioned naval and air superiority in Southeast Asia. (A shift of US forces to Guam or Japan might still leave the US with naval superiority and probable air superiority in most regional contingencies *at this time*.) This broad strategic certainty has the following implications:



—The Philippines remain a secure military bastion. Unless it were party to an effective insurgent effort, no outside power could challenge their security.

—The Japanese see our presence in the Philippines as important if not vital to the protection of their sea lines of communication to their sources of oil. This presence is a major protective symbol in an area where they have a large and growing stake.

—The bases contribute to the psychological well-being of all non-communist countries in the area and their interest in not being left alone to possible Soviet or Chinese pressuring. They create uncertainty in the minds of potential aggressors.

—They are a deterrent to PRC action against Taiwan and provide a major tool for defeating hostile PRC action against Taiwan.

—They directly provide support in a Korean contingency and add flexibility to deal with trouble in Korea.

*Local*—The bases ensure positive ties between the Philippines and the US as well as act as a divisive issue. They have major economic impact on the Philippines, which would face serious problems through the loss of jobs, assistance, US investment, and their status as “secure ally” in the eyes of US and Western businessmen.

—The Philippines have never asked for removal of the bases. Sudden unilateral withdrawal or major reductions would create concern regarding the future of our relations and could well affect the stability of the Philippine Government.

*Uncertainties*—PRM 10 and other policy studies will address topics that may affect our overall defense posture in the Pacific. Our view of the Philippine bases could change dramatically if these studies resulted in significant changes in our defense posture or threat perceptions, such as:

—A reduction of forces in the Pacific so that the US was no longer able to sustain adequate forces at the bases.

—A determination that contingencies which would involve the use of the bases are so remote or so limited by US domestic constraints as not to justify the costs of the bases, and that resources could better be used in NATO or elsewhere.

*Problems*—While the bases are available in peacetime they may not be available in support of some of the principal contingencies we are worried about, notably a crisis in the Indian Ocean, Middle East, or for that matter any crisis in Asia that is not directly threatening to the Philippines.

—A US military presence in the Philippines leads to the inevitable charge that we are perpetuating colonialism and a mendicant Philippine personality.



—Our presence could involve us in Philippine regional disputes. These interests do not presently present serious risks, although issues like the Spratly dispute have a potential.

—Our bases propel us into the Philippine political process and leave us vulnerable to harassment and blackmail. They inhibit a positive Philippine role in the Third World.

*The Question of Timing*—The prospect of resuming negotiations with the Philippine Government on a new base agreement comes at a time when our intent to withdraw ground forces from South Korea<sup>16</sup> has been announced and when it is generally expected that further moves will be made to fulfill the terms of the Shanghai Communiqué,<sup>17</sup> moves that are likely to involve changes in our security relationship with Taiwan. An announcement of planned significant reductions to our military presence in the Philippines, whether at our initiative or at Philippine requests, coming on top of these developments, could be widely seen in Southeast Asia, Japan, China and elsewhere as very destabilizing and as demonstrating a pattern of US conduct in which our policy changes without a real consideration of the interests of our friends and allies. The possible effects of this perception may be uncertain but they could be great.

*What are the alternatives to the present U.S. base structure in the Philippines?*

With some exceptions the functions currently performed in the Philippines might be transferred to other locations in the Pacific. In the real world, however, the technical option of relocating facilities may be optimistic since access to land or facilities in alternate host countries would be politically difficult or unfeasible. Even if such transfers proved politically possible, substantially higher operating costs would usually result and procurement of extra ships would be necessary to maintain capabilities.

Under various degrees of relocation, degradation in current military capabilities would be unavoidable. In particular the capability to employ forces in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia would be impaired, and logistic support of contingency operations ranging from the Middle East to Northeast Asia would be more austere. Some capabilities which are geographically sensitive—communications and intelligence—would be irretrievably degraded if relocated.

---

<sup>16</sup> Carter first announced his intention of moving ground troops out of South Korea when he spoke to the Foreign Policy Association, June 23, 1976. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. I, Foundations of Foreign Policy, Document 6.

<sup>17</sup> For the text of the Shanghai Communiqué, which provided the framework for normalization of U.S.-PRC relations, see *Public Papers: Nixon, 1972*, pp. 376–379.

The movement of forces if achievable to existing bases would also exacerbate the problems we already face such as overcrowding, unaccompanied tours, and urban encroachment, and might further arouse political sensitivities among host governments. At least five years would be required to carry out major relocations, after the lengthy process of planning, negotiating other sites and obtaining appropriations were completed.

We have examined four major alternatives to our present basing structure. They range from minor consolidation which retains all our present capability through relinquishment of some or all the functions of the bases. Alternatives were examined in terms of relocation (Japan, Korea, Guam, Pacific Trust Territory) and operational shifts (greater use of ships afloat, aircraft staged from greater distances). The implications of these more extensive shifts on our capabilities will depend on the location of the contingency, e.g., Straits of Malacca, Northeast Asia. Annex B summarizes this analysis in greater detail.<sup>18</sup>

*Alternative A: Consolidation in the Philippines*

Because of space limitations and the fact that many of the functions currently performed in the Philippines provide interlocking support, only minimal consolidation of facilities can be realized without degrading capabilities. Such consolidation is feasible but would be of only marginal help to the success of negotiations.

The first priority would be the reversion of unused or less used lands such as the 47,200 acre portion of Clark Air Base (about 35% of the total area and Camp John Hay, which has already been offered. We would give positive consideration to the Philippine requests for additional lands. In addition, some consolidation of outlying command and control communications facilities could be realized.

Key communications facilities could be centralized at Naval Communications Station San Miguel and at Clark Air Base. Assuming the centralization is feasible (in light of technical constraints), relocation and regeneration of capabilities would cost about \$8.9M. Operating costs and manpower requirements would require at least four years to complete and there is high technical probability of degradation.

*Alternative B: Filipinization*

Under this alternative the Air Force and Navy would both continue most functions but gradually turn them over to Philippine management, control or joint use. We would be trading in-hand operational capability and flexibility for greater Philippine satisfaction with our

---

<sup>18</sup> Annex B, an undated paper entitled "Summary of Study on Alternatives to U.S. Bases in the Philippines," is attached but not printed.

defense relationship and wider economic benefits. Elements of this alternative could include, but not be limited to:

- Training the Philippine Air Force to operate and maintain portions of Crow Valley, i.e., the standard scoreable target complex normally used for basic continuation training. This is feasible after suitable preparation.

- Removing tactical fighters and turning over air defense and area air traffic control (less the control zone at Cubi) to the Philippines. Current threat assessments indicate the effect on Philippine defense would be negligible. It would reduce 1,000 local national positions with salaries of \$4,500,000. U.S. assistance to the Philippine Air Force and a four-year training period to train Philippine Air Force controllers would be required.

- Converting base service functions to Philippine commercial operation. Areas under investigation range from routine maintenance functions through complex aircraft maintenance such as that performed in Taiwan and Singapore which is now well beyond Philippine capabilities.

Some functions such as area traffic control and air defense might be turned over in several years. Others would take considerably longer to train the necessary technical force. We could make an early statement of principle of our readiness to work out Philippine programs during the life of the agreement and continue Filipinization as long as our operational capability and flexibility were not significantly impaired.

*Alternative C: Major Reduction of Air Force Functions*

Tactical fighter and airlift operations, the gunnery range complex, and much of the base operating support including Wallace Air Station would be relocated to other WestPac bases (new land area required for the range). Aerial port facilities, war reserve materiel storage, and some intelligence and communications would be retained provided access and operating rights were guaranteed. Implementation of this alternative would:

- Decrease deterrent capability in Southeast Asia.
- Reduce the readiness of all WestPac combat air assets (in the absence of a suitable alternative range).
- Degrade strategic and tactical airlift capabilities in Southeast Asia and to the Indian Ocean.
- Decrease flexibility in logistic operational and contingency response in-theater.
- Impair other theater missions through crowding of receiving bases.

Total costs associated with this alternative are about \$147 million for relocation and an annual increase of \$3.4 million in operation and

maintenance costs. Lead times are at least 3–5 years. Air Force personnel savings in the Philippines of 1,869 are possible.

*Alternative D: Base Relinquishment*

This would be a near total withdrawal from the Philippines, including all residual combat and combat support operations, logistic support, pre-positioned stocks, base infrastructure and major portions of the communications facilities. Efforts should be made to retain high frequency direction finding and nuclear test ban monitoring facilities since these activities cannot be satisfactorily resited. Attempts should also be made to retain geographically sensitive national command control communications capabilities. We would want ship access and aerial transit rights. Finally, we would seek to obtain guaranteed operating rights in crises, although the actual availability of usable facilities could be in doubt.

Operationally, this alternative would mean:

- Decreased presence/deterrence in the Southwest Pacific/Southeast Asia region.
- Severe impairment of naval capabilities in the Indian Ocean.
- Decreased flexibility for support of WestPac contingencies.
- Reduced readiness of tactical air assets.
- Impairment of other theater missions through crowding of receiving bases.

Relinquishing bases and trying to maintain current capabilities would involve the procurement of additional forces and increasing O&M costs. Assuming no changes in strategy and deployment patterns, total costs associated with this alternative could be over \$5 billion for relocation and procurement and an increase of \$340 million in annual operating costs. Increased personnel requirements would vary around 10,000. Lead times are estimated to be more than 4–5 years.

[Omitted here is a chart outlining the distances and transit times from Clark and Subic Bay to selected points.]

*PART III—COURSES OF ACTION*

Parts I and II dealt with the status of our defense relationship with the Philippines and the U.S. interests in the bases as separate topics. In examining U.S. options we must deal with their interrelationships. The decision as to the future need for and nature of the U.S. military presence limits U.S. options on base rights issues, financial compensation, and scope of the Mutual Defense Treaty. At the same time all of these issues impact on our ability to maintain our desired force presence and may themselves influence the decision regarding that presence. We have interrelated the issues into packages which can be selected as a unit or with variations as outlined below. It is possible to select

a course of action which permits movement from a higher level of U.S. base requirements to a lower one depending on negotiating demands or on changed circumstances.

*Option A—Consolidation Under The Status Quo*

This option recognizes that only limited consolidation of facilities and functions is possible without degrading capabilities and that major changes in basing will take years to accomplish and be costly. Maintaining our activities and base operating rights in a satisfactory host country environment is the goal. Its elements are:

*Force Presence:* Maintain all major facilities with limited consolidation.

*Base Rights Issues:* Maintain established U.S. positions, employing variables such as returning more baselands like Camp John Hay and shortening the duration of the agreement (e.g., ten years, subject to review after five years). Remain firm on such Philippine demands as:

—Restriction on U.S. use of the bases to regional defense and prohibition on their use for combat operations without Philippine consent.

—Ultimate determination by Philippine courts of whether an offense by a U.S. serviceman grew out of the performance of official duty.

*Financial Compensation:* Start at lower levels but be prepared to work up to the Ford Administration's offer (\$200 million military assistance over 5 years with additional economic and FMS credits to bring it to the cosmetic "\$1 billion" level).<sup>19</sup>

*Scope of the MDT:* Reaffirm U.S. commitment to the Treaty.

*Discussion*

Our stance on base rights issues would demonstrate some degree of compromise without affecting operational effectiveness. The compensation offer can be explained to Congress for its true value in terms of the limited increases over programmed levels of aid, and to Marcos and the Congress as both consistent with offers to Spain, Turkey and as commensurate with the military requirements of our defense partner. We reaffirm a treaty to which we are already legally committed without embellishing it in ways inconsistent with current foreign policy realities.

---

<sup>19</sup> Reference is to Kissinger's proposal during a December 1, 1976, meeting with Romulo. For a summary, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, vol. E-12, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973–1976, Document 358.

*Pro:* This option would preserve the global, regional, and local military and political interests outlined in Part II. It continues a course of negotiations with which both partners are already familiar. It could also offer some variables that may be more attractive to Marcos.

The bases now exist and the relocation options do not. We must be cautious about paper trade offs. Real world trade-offs take time and, are usually more costly than initial estimates indicate. They also are likely to be subject to intense domestic political debate, and it is unlikely that plans to carry out significant force/base changes would emerge from Congress in the way they went in. It may be difficult to maintain the Administration's control over what happens if the U.S. makes major cuts in its Philippine bases.

The political and strategic uncertainty about our defense posture in Asia argues for slow and considered action. The present negotiations are an irritant but no crisis exists in our relations with the Philippines which forces us to take precipitate major base or force structure positions in the absence of a well-conceived, well-integrated notion of what we want to do in the Pacific.

*Con:* There is little new in this approach and Marcos has rejected many elements of it. It would not reflect the lessened U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia. It could draw increasing U.S. domestic criticism as reaffirming our close association with a repressive regime.

Marcos would continue to press us for assurances that we will, in effect, "instantly repel" any attack on the Philippines and we can not meet these demands without going beyond the obligations we have under the Treaty's language. Any declaration about the Treaty emphasizes a potential involvement by the U.S. in distant conflict.

*Variations:* To meet some of Marcos' likely objections we could move closer to the Filipinization option described later. Such variation would include:

—*Making broader concessions* on base operating issues (e.g., assistance in converting facilities, responsibilities of the Philippine base commander). All would carry some costs or reduction of existing capabilities. We could for Philippine political purposes or for shock value reduce or remove entirely Air Force tactical fighters. These additional changes do not go to the heart of Philippine demands on sovereignty but provide Marcos a face-saving device to reduce his demands on compensation.

—*Changing the compensation offer.* We reject a substantially higher package than the Kissinger proposal as being unacceptable to the Congress. We believe that a lower offer is possible but it may not be feasible without important U.S. concessions on our presence or other elements of the negotiations. We also reject linking the concessions on trade

sought by Marcos with the bases issue because a separate set of constraints apply. We could offer an increased economic assistance component or a totally economic package, which would be more acceptable in the U.S.; this would provide a fresh approach to the compensation issue without increasing costs and free other GOP resources for military purposes. Probably neither Marcos nor the Philippine military will like this. It also would be mostly a face-saving device.

—*Indicating to Marcos the conditions* under which we believe foreign attacks on Philippine armed forces protecting resource extraction activities in the disputed Reed Bank would come under the Treaty. By careful draftsmanship we would attempt to demonstrate the utility of our defense commitment to legitimate GOP activities. Such an approach might be based on the applicability of the Treaty to forces in the Pacific (including Reed Bank) but be limited by the provisions of the Treaty concerning peaceful settlement of disputes and restraint from threat or use of force. The danger is that it might encourage Marcos to test the limits of our assurances and entangle us in Philippine disputes or even armed clashes with China or Vietnam.

*Congressional Dimension:* Congress views with suspicion the Kissinger package on the Philippine bases, feeling it was ill and hastily conceived and too high a price. In addition, Congress may not accept the idea of a multi-year package (except on a rental basis), which in any event would be subject to annual authorization and appropriation. While the Administration could reconfirm our commitments under the present Mutual Defense Treaty, any reinterpretation of those commitments would face strong opposition, and an effort to modify or replace that treaty would be a hazardous undertaking.

*Option B: Filipinization Under a New Defense Relationship*

This option examines a range of variations both in our basing presence and in the relationship we are prepared to offer the Philippines. It emphasizes the changes in our regional interests and relationship with the Philippines. It recognizes that reductions in our facilities, functions, and operating rights are likely to lead to a decrease in existing capabilities but assumes a willingness to examine a range of such risks. It would also involve a more protracted and complex negotiating arrangement.

So long as we retain major base activities in the Philippines Marcos' demands will remain similar regardless of the size of our presence. Indeed, he may look for assistance to offset effects of any drawdown. Nonetheless, as we consider a continuum of reduced presence alternatives we also expand the room for both sides to maneuver in modernizing the other aspects of the defense relationship and we provide a framework for future adjustments. Marcos would have to share the



initiative with us in exploring these new approaches. Leaders of both nations would have to agree on the extent of the new relationship and the principles to guide it. Its elements could be:

*Force Presence:* Reduce our own forces including the removal of tactical fighters. Reduce facilities while enhancing Philippine capabilities to perform functions such as: control and operation of portions of bombing and training ranges; air defense and area air traffic control; base service functions.

*Base Rights Issues:* Maintain our key positions as under the status quo, but exercise considerably more flexibility in making concessions on land areas (e.g., return Wallace Air Station), assistance in conversion of facilities to civilian use, length of the agreement, and labor issues.

*Compensation:* Offer a package consisting of: Increased FMS financing for Philippine self-reliance; declining levels of grant military assistance as Filipinization progresses; and economic assistance and military cooperation for specific projects to utilize relinquished facilities and serve continued needs, e.g., assistance in creating an aircraft maintenance industry or a thermal power plant.

*Scope of the MDT:* Retain the Treaty but de-emphasize its importance and resist any attempts to embellish it. The self-reliant defense posture we are helping the Philippines to create is its protection against threats of external support for insurgency or incidents involving disputed territory.

### *Discussion*

*Pro:* This option would allow the U.S. to lower somewhat its silhouette in the area but still retain major military capabilities. It would be evidence of U.S. willingness to adjust its position on base issues in response to Philippine desires. The adjusted compensation package would place emphasis on economic development and is more likely to gain congressional support. It would also force Marcos to think more seriously about the importance of the bases to the Philippines rather than his ability to exploit our own requirements. Our limited treaty commitment should deter Marcos from taking rash actions which could embroil us with China or Vietnam and retain our own flexibility. This should be more defensible to Congress and avoid setting precedents for U.S. policy toward resource extraction in other disputed areas.

*Cons:* We risk both some decrease in existing capabilities and escalating costs by relying on the Philippines to take over important functions for us. The approach requires collaboration on Marcos' part to a degree that he has not demonstrated in the past.

Minimal reductions in our presence would not materially reduce friction with the Philippines; but, as the reductions become more significant the risks to our capabilities, limitations on military flexibility, and the relocation problems would all increase.



We would deny Marcos the cosmetic effects of the “billion dollar” package while U.S. opponents of Marcos might well view the arrangement as a potentially open-ended commitment to him. The more narrow definition of the applicability of the MDT would confirm Marcos’ argument that it is irrelevant to his immediate security concerns. Encouraging the military development of the Philippines could stimulate Philippine adventurism.

*Option C: Major Reduction of Air Force Functions*

This option accepts the degradation and costs associated with removal of most Air Force assets and functions. The goal is to retain essential air and naval facilities by trading major revisions to the Philippines for reduced demands on their part. Elements would be:

*Forces*—Remove USAF F-4s, C-130s, and T-38s; cede Wallace, John Hay, Crow Valley and all of Clark but retain use of aerial port facilities, war reserve materiel storage and some intelligence and communication sites.

*Base Rights Issues*—Maintain the essentials of the U.S. position and trade concessions on base lands and related issues for continuing operating and access rights.

*Compensation*—Economic assistance and/or rent would be paid commensurate with our remaining base rights.

*The MDT*—We would retain the Treaty but de-emphasize its importance and avoid any attempts to embellish it.

*Discussion*

*Pro:* We would attempt to pay less for our remaining presence and we would reduce Air Force manpower requirements in the Philippines by 1800. We would remove a highly visible element of our military presence. We would show some separation from Marcos.

*Con:* Manila has never asked the Air Force to leave nor indicated that its demands on the key base rights issues, compensation or the MDT would be any less if we did. The impact on the Philippine economy and stability would be severe and we could incur relocation costs of \$147 million and additional annual costs of \$3.4 million while substantially degrading our capabilities. We would still be involved in Philippine security.

*Option D: Base Relinquishment*

Implementation of this option could arise from a hardening of Marcos’ demands to the point that we were no longer willing to maintain our basing presence or from a U.S. decision to reduce capabilities or requirements. Our goal would be to retain some ability to meet important needs and to gain sufficient time to make necessary adjust-

ments. Once out of facilities, we could not base military plans on ever again being able to return to them, though the Philippines might want us to return if they later saw a need for our protection.

*Force Presence*—Return all bases to the Philippines. Try to retain high frequency direction finding, nuclear test ban monitoring and access rights.

*Base Rights Issues*—Maintain the essentials of U.S. position as long as we have forces and bases in the Philippines.

*Compensation*—Any payment would be based on services rendered and assistance, whether economic or military, would be based on the merits of the specific proposal.

*The MDT*—Lacking an extensive and flexible basing presence we would no longer have an interest in the Treaty. A limited commitment to the defense of the Philippines might be necessary to secure continued support for our remaining defense interests, but new congressional approval would be unlikely.

#### *Discussion*

*Pro:* Reductions of forces and of our commitment to the MDT would reduce the potential for friction with the Philippines and involvement in conflicts throughout the region. We would pay less to the Philippines. It would please critics of U.S. involvement with Marcos.

*Con:* We would reduce our general defense capability and signal a major reduction in our interest in the area. We could incur costs of over \$5 billion if we tried to replace all lost capabilities and need to engage in extensive base rights negotiations elsewhere. In the end, we would likely have sacrificed great military capabilities and gained little in our relations with the Philippines whose economic interests and political stability would be severely damaged by our complete withdrawal.

#### *The Question of Rent*

The possibility of paying rent rather than providing MAP grants has been suggested as having potential applicability to all of the options. Rent would be a more assured form of compensation than legislated military assistance. The Philippines could plan more confidently and it would carry a higher value for Marcos as a “free dollar.” It might also be easier to justify to Congress (as an annual line item in the budget) than a multi-year assistance package, but this is uncertain; it could also involve new Congressional procedures. Paying rent would encourage the cost/benefit evaluation of basing requirements. Philippine demands in any event may compel us to consider rent or some other form of compensation such as security supporting assistance.

Paying rent is not likely to reduce the level of Marcos’ demands. Moreover such payment for extensive bases like those in the Philippines

is unprecedented and would contravene the present global policy of not paying rent to allies. Because this issue goes beyond the Philippines, its implications for our worldwide basing position would have to be assessed. If we did proceed, we would also have to negotiate a very tight arrangement providing a definite sum for a specific period and allowing us flexibility in changing circumstances. Without such firm guarantees rent would leave us open to constant and exorbitant demands and to a process of fragmentation of functions as we were forced to justify each one in terms of Philippine national interests or to pay an increased price for exercising it, or both. Finally many Americans (and foreigners also) will find it difficult to understand an arrangement (Options 1–3) whereby the Philippines continues to receive economic benefits from our basing and a Treaty guarantee against external enemies but charges us rent as in any landlord-tenant arrangement.

*Timing and Approach to Negotiations*

The way we approach Marcos may be based on the option he chooses but it does not have to be. The three courses of action discussed below assume that with regard to the U.S. military presence, we will choose to continue our presence in some form. We will have to discuss with Marcos how we wish to proceed with the negotiations. This could be done either by our Ambassador in Manila or by a high level USG emissary. Marcos has privately expressed his desire for such an envoy. Given the lapse in negotiations and the transition to a new U.S. administration, early dispatch of a special emissary has merit. Regardless of the modalities the following negotiating approaches could be put to Marcos:

*A. Inform Marcos we are ready to negotiate, but that the next move is up to him.* Put no new proposals on the table until he does.

*Pro:* This is consistent with the fact that the original initiative for new base negotiations came from Marcos and that the immediate cause of impasse was his rejection of the previous Administration's offer; might pressure Marcos to adopt a more realistic position on the key negotiating issues; provides little ground for Philippine suspicion that we are stalling.

*Con:* This is likely to be resented by Marcos and to promote friction and irritation (small country being browbeaten by large country); would give initiative to Marcos and might lock us in with reduced room for maneuver.

*B. Sound out Marcos on which approach he finds more acceptable.* Giving some of our thinking to the extent we have developed choices, tell him that our final consideration among possible basing arrangements will be heavily influenced by Philippine preferences. Whether or not they feel a mutual interest in U.S. basing will influence us. This would be

the first step in a dynamic process in which our responses would be keyed to Philippine reactions and our desires. We should be prepared to resume the negotiating panels after the initial approach if Marcos desires. At the same time we should hold back compromises on specific issues until we can gauge Philippine flexibility.

*Pro:* This would place on Marcos the responsibility for difficult choices and force him to reassess his own interests; would offer him a real choice in light of his own view of his interests; would constitute a more cooperative U.S.-Philippine effort; would provide an opportunity to give Marcos a more realistic understanding of the limitations in our positions.

*Con:* This would limit our own choices and flexibility; might encourage Marcos to insist on selected portions of our compromise alternatives (e.g., rent, conversions) outside of the context in which they were suggested and without inducing any compromise on his part; could reveal our positions prematurely.

*C. Postpone direct approach to Marcos until we have explored Philippine flexibility on operating rights once again in negotiating panels.*

*Pro:* This shows Marcos we are not about to discuss things he is interested in (compensation, treaty obligations) until we see the shape of a base agreement.

*Con:* This is very likely to be a sterile exercise and be seen by Marcos as an unconstructive ploy.

### SUMMARY OF OPTIONS

#### A. Consolidation Under the Status Quo

Forces: Minimal consolidation.

Base Rights: Maintain established positions or make broader concessions.

Compensation: 5-year package up to \$200 million MAP, FMS credits, economic assistance, or rent.

Treaty: Reaffirm or extend to Reed Bank.

#### B. Filipinization Under a New Defense Relationship

Forces: Reduce U.S. presence, give functions to Philippines.

Base Rights: Extensive concessions on non-essential operating requirements.

Compensation: Lower level of MAP over time, FMS financing, economic aid or rent

Treaty: Retain but de-emphasize.

#### C. Major Reduction of Air Force Functions

Forces: Eliminate most of Clark functions.

Base Rights: Major AF land reversions, maintain U.S. essential operating requirements.

Compensation: Lowered levels of assistance or rent commensurate with remaining rights.

Treaty: De-emphasize.

*D. Base Relinquishment*

Forces: Give up all bases, retain access rights.

Base Rights: Negotiate transitional Status of Forces Agreement.

Compensation: Payment only for services rendered.

Treaty: Abrogate.

*Timing and Approach to Negotiations*

A. Inform Marcos we are ready to negotiate but the next move is up to him.

B. Sound out Marcos on which approach he finds more acceptable.

C. Postpone direct approach to Marcos until we have explored Philippine flexibility on operating rights in negotiating panels.

---

**294. Interagency Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the  
Central Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>**

NI IIM 77–007

Washington, April 1977

MARCOS, THE PHILIPPINES, AND THE BASE  
NEGOTIATIONS<sup>2</sup>

KEY JUDGMENTS

—In the years since independence, Philippine economic and cultural links to the United States have remained strong and Filipinos have relied on the United States as the ultimate guarantor of their security. But the pressures of nationalism, the desire to achieve Asian identity, and the perceived humiliations of client status have interacted to trouble the relationship, causing intermittent pressures for new and more equal terms.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330–80–0017, 78, Philippines 323.3 (Jan–Jun) 1977. Secret.

<sup>2</sup> Produced in connection with the preparation of the response to Presidential Review Memorandum 14, *Philippine Base Negotiations*, under the auspices of the National Intelligence Officer for East Asia and the Pacific and coordinated at the working level by representatives of CIA, DIA, NSA, and State/INR. [Footnote in the original.]

—These pressures are currently focussed on the security tie, particularly on the US base presence. This presence is now widely seen as more advantageous for the United States than for the Philippines; President Ferdinand Marcos is speaking for most concerned Filipinos when he demands a higher price for continued tenure. Money is an important part of this price. But it does not outweigh the demand for some genuine concessions to Philippine sovereignty.

—Marcos exercises final authority over negotiating terms and tactics as he does over all other aspects of Filipino political life. For the military leaders—who play a major part in administering the government and the economy—he is the venerated patron; he, in turn, is responsive to their wishes but not necessarily governed by them. He has accorded his wife, Imelda, a prominent role in domestic affairs and foreign policy. However, the extent of her influence over him is uncertain, she is disliked and distrusted by the military, and she has no constituency of her own.

—Marcos' negotiating style conforms to Philippine patterns for extracting maximum concessions from the United States without either sundering basic ties or precluding further alterations at some future date. Nevertheless, there are important elements in the military and economic power structure who, if they saw acrimony over the base issue beginning to pose a major threat to the fundamental relationship with the United States, would try to hold Marcos back or—if this proved impossible—to remove him. Their tricky problem would be to know when the moment had come. If, in resumed negotiations, it begins to appear that Marcos is on the verge of painting himself into a corner from which self-esteem will not permit him to escape, perceptions of probable US reactions will play an important part in shaping the behavior of Filipino interest groups.

[Omitted here is the Discussion portion of the memorandum.]

**295. Letter From President Carter to Philippine President Marcos<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 2, 1977

Dear Mr. President:

At the outset of my Administration, I wish to express my hope that the close ties and mutual respect that bind our two countries will grow stronger in the years ahead. I assure you that the United States will continue to be a good friend and a steadfast ally. We will work diligently to resolve all outstanding issues between us, including the most important, our military base negotiations.

I would also like to stress my strong hopes for continuing peace and stability in Southeast Asia. I regard the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations as the key to these hopes. While the United States hopes to be able to establish more normal relations with the Indochinese states, as do the ASEAN nations, this will not lessen our support for the traditional friends of the United States. In particular, we remain firmly committed to the independence, security and territorial integrity of the Philippines. We support our Mutual Security Treaty.<sup>2</sup>

You know that I have directed that a thorough review of the entire matter of the base negotiations be undertaken.<sup>3</sup> That review will be completed shortly. We will then be ready to resume the negotiations and hope to work with your representatives to reach a mutually satisfactory conclusion. Guided by the spirit of friendship and trust, I am confident we will be successful.

Mr. President, as you are aware, I personally attach major importance to the advancement of human rights, particularly personal liberty and due process. I intend to improve our record in the United States, and I hope that you will give your personal consideration to what might be done in the Philippines in this area as well.

Mr. President, the United States has no older or more loyal friend in the Pacific region than the Philippines. The American people and I are confident that this friendship is solidly based on shared interests and values and will endure. It is in that spirit that I have written. And

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 16, Philippines: President Ferdinand E. Marcos, 4/77–4/80. No classification marking. Brzezinski sent a copy of the letter to Carter under a March 31 covering memorandum, recommending that Carter sign the letter "if you agree that a letter to Marcos is needed." (Ibid.)

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to the Mutual Defense Treaty; see footnote 4, Document 293.

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to PRM-14; see Document 291.

it is in this spirit that I would welcome your views on these matters and any other matters of mutual concern.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter

---

## 296. Record of a Policy Review Committee Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, April 21, 1977, 4-5 p.m.

### SUBJECT

Philippine Base Negotiations

### PARTICIPANTS

#### *State:*

Secretary Cyrus Vance  
Richard Holbrooke  
Philip C. Habib

#### *Defense:*

Secretary Harold Brown  
Charles W. Duncan  
David E. McGiffert  
Morton Abramowitz

#### *JCS:*

General George S. Brown  
Lt. Gen. William Smith

#### *CIA:*

Admiral Stansfield Turner  
[*name not declassified*]

#### *OMB:*

Edward R. Jayne

#### *NSC:*

Zbigniew Brzezinski  
David Aaron  
Mike Armacost

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 39, Philippines, 1977. Top Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. Carter wrote "C" at the top of the first page.



*Marcos' Desires*

It was agreed that Marcos is not interested in forcing us out of our bases at an early date; that his primary interests are in maximizing the financial quid pro quo and eliciting from us a strong reaffirmation of our defense commitment; and that his demands on both these counts are unrelated to the precise size of our military presence. The Mindinao problem,<sup>2</sup> moreover, is Marcos' principal preoccupation at present; until he makes progress in resolving the conflict in the South, he is unlikely to wish to move ahead with the base negotiations. Indeed, he may neither expect nor intend to bring the base negotiations to an early conclusion.

*U.S. Military Requirements in the Philippines*

There was general agreement that Subic Naval Base remains essential to our ability to project military power into the Southwest Pacific and Indian Ocean and to protect our sea lanes of communication in that region. Retention of Clark Air Base was regarded as "highly desirable", though all agreed that it would be possible and desirable to achieve some consolidation of our presence at Clark through more efficient management. All participants agreed on the political importance of avoiding *major* reductions in our presence at this time, given the prospect of ground force withdrawals from Korea and widespread uncertainties in Asia (including Japan and China) concerning our future intentions.

*State, Defense*, and the NSC agreed that we should seek to retain access to our key facilities; that it would serve our interests in the Philippines and on the Hill to consolidate our base presence to some degree; and that we should "Filipinize" to the extent possible our defense relationship by transferring to Philippine control certain operations such as depot maintenance, and other base service functions. The Defense Department will undertake an assessment of possible reductions at the bases.<sup>3</sup>

*Compensation*

President Marcos would prefer a "rental" agreement. The *Defense Department* feels that the payment of rent as such to an ally is incompatible with the mutuality of interests that presumably underlies the security relationship, and would amount to our paying for the right to defend the Filipinos. In addition, a shift from MAP/FMS to "rent" (which would be included in the Defense budget) could invite unman-

---

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to the Moro National Liberation Front insurgency; see footnote 14, Document 293.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 297.

ageable jurisdictional problems between the Foreign Relations Committee and Armed Services Committee on the Hill. State feels much less strongly about this; considers our MAP as "rent" in essence; and would like to preserve the payment of "rent" as a possibly necessary fallback to achieve an agreement. All agreed that we need to look for possible semantic ways of bridging our differences on this question.

As for the upper limit of our financial offer, it was generally agreed that our chances for reaching an agreement with a lower offer than the last Administration's are not promising, but that we should examine ways of repackaging the elements of our quid pro quo to possibly induce Marcos to accept lower amounts and/or to elicit Congressional support for the level we offered last year. It was generally agreed that we have a public relations problem here; the U.S. constructed an offer in 1976 which was designed to look big to the Filipinos without imposing a large claim on U.S. grant assistance funds. Congress views it as a bigger package than it actually is. A *Defense, State, NSC* task force will be organized immediately to put together by June 1 possible compensation packages.

#### *U.S. Defense Commitment*

There was general agreement that we cannot accede to Marcos' desire for a more "automatic" commitment to Philippine defense, and that our interests would not be served by interpreting our treaty obligations in more unequivocal terms in contested areas like the Reed Bank or the Spratly Islands. All agreed that Marcos is unlikely to press us on this issue. Marcos does, however, appear concerned that passage of the War Powers Act<sup>4</sup> has eroded our commitment. It was agreed that at some point in the negotiation we will need to assure him that our existing commitment still stands even though we cannot extend its coverage or give it greater "automaticity".

#### *Special Emissary*

It was agreed that a special emissary might possibly be utilized to resume the negotiations, and that his task might usefully discuss privately with Marcos such tricky issues as our security commitment, and nuclear weapons transit, in addition to exploring Marcos' general views on the broader base questions. As for timing, there is no reason for haste; we can afford to let the Filipinos set the pace. We need not think of sending an emissary before July, and we could get a longer reprieve.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> P.L. 93-148, passed on November 7, 1973. (87 Stat. 555)

<sup>5</sup> Beneath the final paragraph, Carter wrote, "all OK. J."

**297. Memorandum From the Director of the Joint Staff of the  
Joint Chiefs of Staff (Hannifin) to Secretary of Defense  
Brown<sup>1</sup>**

JCSM-348-77

Washington, August 19, 1977

SUBJECT

Reductions in US Philippine Military Presence (S)

1. (S) Reference a memorandum by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, 27 April 1977,<sup>2</sup> subject as above, which requested that the Joint Chiefs of Staff review plans<sup>3</sup> of the Secretary of the Navy and Secretary of the Air Force concerning reductions in US military presence in the Philippines for their impact on the US military posture in the Pacific.

2. (S) The US Naval Base complex at Subic Bay and the airbase at Clark are essential for support of the CINCPAC mission in the Western Pacific and Indian Ocean. These bases, and the forces they support, are very important elements of US forward strategy and serve as visible reminders to US allies of US national commitment.

3. (S) Implementation of the personnel reduction plans provided by the Secretary of the Navy would have a severe impact on US naval capabilities in the Pacific. Forward bases permit more efficient operations and a higher level of operations with the given level of mobile logistic support. A 10-percent reduction would cause substantial loss in the capability to maintain Seventh Fleet readiness, responsiveness, and flexibility. A 30-percent reduction, with contracting alternatives, would degrade the support capabilities at Subic Bay to the point where expansion at other bases in the Western Pacific would be necessary. Appendix A<sup>4</sup> contains further details of the impact on the Navy of the reduction plan provided by the Secretary of the Navy.

4. (S) The Secretary of the Air Force plans identify management initiatives already programmed equating to an approximate 10-percent cut in Air Force presence. Other relocation actions which would not

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330-80-0017, 78, Untitled. Secret. Copies were sent to the Directors of DCA, DIA, and NSA.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> (1) Memorandum by the Secretary of the Navy, 13 June 1977, "Reductions in Our Philippine Military Presence (S)—INFORMATION MEMORANDUM." (2) Memorandum by the Secretary of the Air Force, 1 July 1977, "Reductions in our Philippine Military Presence—INFORMATION MEMORANDUM (U)." [Footnote in the original.]

<sup>4</sup> Appendix A, an undated paper entitled "Impact of Personnel Reductions at Subic Naval Base/Cubi Point," is attached but not printed.

reduce the Air Force's combat capabilities and support to other Services in the Western Pacific would enable the Air Force to make additional personnel reductions of approximately 20 percent. These actions, however, would increase US presence in the ROK and Japan. Further details on the impact of Air Force personnel reductions and relocation are contained in Appendix B.<sup>5</sup>

5. (S) The Navy and the Air Force have already completed transfer of those functions and operations which can be performed by the Philippines without having a detrimental effect on US operations and base negotiations. Except in a few limited instances, additional contracting is neither feasible nor desirable because of strike potential, reduced flexibility, operational difficulties, and possible impact on the Military Bases Agreement negotiations (see Appendix C).<sup>6</sup>

6. (S) It is important that any reduction in US presence in the Philippines be considered in the context of its potential effect on future US-Philippine base negotiations. Further, any reductions should be considered in conjunction with other ongoing personnel/facility reductions elsewhere in Asia, particularly since the nearly simultaneous and appreciable reductions in the ROK, Taiwan, and the Philippines would probably have a distinct, negative effect on Asian perceptions of US resolve throughout the region. In this regard, any relocation and reduction of major US headquarters at this time could have a particularly unfavorable impact. Accordingly, a decision on relocation of Headquarters, 13th Air Force, should be deferred until its impact on US-Philippine base negotiations and, in conjunction with other ongoing reductions, its effect on perception of US resolve and staying power in the region can be reassessed.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

**Patrick J. Hannifin**  
*Vice Admiral, USN*  
*Director, Joint Staff*

---

<sup>5</sup> Appendix B, an undated paper entitled "Impact of Personnel Reductions/Relocations at Clark Air Base," is attached but not printed.

<sup>6</sup> Not attached.

**298. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, August 25, 1977

SUBJECT

Philippine Base Negotiations (PRM-14) (S)

(S) Decision minutes of the April 1977 PRC meeting on the Philippine Base negotiations<sup>2</sup> directed an interagency Task Force to develop possible compensation packages and the Department of Defense to undertake an assessment of reductions at Clark Air Base and the Subic Bay naval complex.

(S) *US Compensation for use of Bases*. Attached is the Philippine Base Compensation Study which was undertaken in an Interagency Task Force chaired by the Department of Defense with participation by representatives from State, Treasury, AID, and OMB.<sup>3</sup> In preparing its recommendations, the Task Force considers the following factors as being the most important:

—*President Marcos* has rejected our offer of \$500 million in military assistance (grants and FMS credits) over five years and there is no indication that he would now reverse his position on a similar offer of grant MAP and FMS financing. Since a lower offer would seriously diminish prospects for a new agreement and the USG is not prepared to substantially increase its offer, new elements are necessary to develop a mutually acceptable compensation package.

—“*Filipinization*” shows promise as a major new element in any compensation package and should be included. This seeks to exploit concessions which we may be prepared to make in connection with the bases themselves, i.e., the value of returned facilities, defense cooperation, direct-hire, contractual services, and transfer of excess property. The precise dimensions of this new element will require further study should this approach be deemed feasible.

—*Rent*. The Philippines prefer this form of compensation (any direct US monetary payment to them without US conditions or controls on resulting GOP expenditures). Rent, however, is fraught with uncer-

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Armacost Chron File, Box 4, 8/26–31/77. Secret.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 296.

<sup>3</sup> Not attached. The interagency study on the compensation package, August 22, is in Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Armacost Chron File, Box 4, 8/26–31/77.

tainties and should be considered only as a fallback if our position on the bases becomes more precarious than seems likely. Major obstacles associated with the payment of rent are:

—Establishment of a precedent which can work against us in any other base negotiations worldwide;

—Diminution of the concept of mutuality in our relationship with the Philippines and vulnerability to exorbitant demands;

—Introduction of an element without major precedent for congressional consideration with implications for congressional responsibilities and legislated restrictions such as the Foreign Assistance Act.

—*Security Supporting Assistance* has the advantage of satisfying a key Philippine demand and of facilitating the elimination of MAP while avoiding the dangers of rent. Its use in the Philippines is consistent with its established purpose of supporting national security objectives, has precedent in other negotiations (Spain), retains the concept of mutuality in our relations with the Philippines, and is a familiar concept in the US Congress. As a substitute for MAP, Security Supporting Assistance would eliminate direct grant support to the Philippine Armed Forces. This may gain additional support for the agreement in the US but could hamper its acceptability to the influential Philippine military establishment.

—As noted in Tab B of the Interagency Study, AID does not concur with the use of Security Supporting Assistance in the base negotiations on the grounds that such use would conflict with other AID priorities, place them in a position of having to justify military objectives to the US Congress, and undermine their leverage in a development assistance strategy which is directed at the poor majority of Philippine society.

—*General Economic Assistance* (AID, EXIM, PL-480) will continue to be a key underpinning of a satisfactory relationship with the Philippines. We should seek to exploit this valuable contribution to Philippine development, but an explicit link to the base negotiations already has been rejected by Marcos. Such a direct link would not gain the US additional leverage but might complicate a highly successful AID program.

(S) Notwithstanding AID's nonconcurrence, the Task Force recommends that at such time as negotiations may resume;

—The US negotiator be authorized to utilize a five-year Compensation Package "C" (pp. 18-19 of the study) which embodies the following security-related elements:

Filipinization	\$ 50-120 million
FMS Financing	250-300 million
Security Supporting Assistance	<u>190-200 million</u>
Total:	\$490-620 million

—The US negotiator be instructed to remain as close as possible to the base figures totalling \$490 million over five years (of which \$215 million would be grants). In this regard, the FMS financing and security supporting elements of Package “C” total \$60 million lower than corresponding elements of the previous offer.

—The US negotiator be authorized to use selectively additional amounts in each category of compensation only as necessary to secure final agreement and in no case to exceed the ceiling for any given category.

—The US negotiator avoid any offer to include \$65 million for the phaseout of MAP unless we run into serious obstacles with the Philippine military establishment.

(S) The Department of State should coordinate an effort to consult early with appropriate committees of the US Congress on the general outlines of Package “C” and prior to any discussions with the Philippines.

(S) *US Reductions at Clark and Subic.* With respect to the US presence at Clark Air Base and the Subic Bay, we have identified reductions sufficient to reduce our profile and support the “Filipinization” aspects of our compensation package. These reductions do not jeopardize combat readiness and should not signal a withdrawal of US military power from the Western Pacific. The political circumstances in Asia, however, necessitate caution in managing this program to prevent it from signifying what is clearly not indicated or intended.

(S) Within these parameters, we plan to implement a three-year (FY 78–80) plan to reduce the Air Force presence at Clark by 25–30% and the Navy presence at Subic Bay by 5–7%. The F–4’s will remain at Clark and relocation of the 13th Air Force Headquarters will be deferred and reexamined in 1978, but the hospital will be reduced to a base facility and the aeromedical evacuation and C–130 engine maintenance functions will be shifted to Yokota, Japan. This plan may be reduced if we are not able to find adequate housing for these units at Yokota or nearby Tachikawa. There will be no significant change in functions or services provided by the naval shore establishment at Subic Bay. Because of the political and other factors involved we will not implement this plan without further guidance from the White House.

(S) *US Negotiating Posture.* As the next step, I suggest that the Secretary of State proceed to integrate all elements of our approach to the Philippine base negotiations for early consideration by the Policy Review Committee.

**Harold Brown**

**299. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the  
Department of State (Tarnoff) to the President's Assistant for  
National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 13, 1977

SUBJECT

Philippine Base Negotiations: Interagency Task Force Recommendations on  
Compensation; Defense Plans for Force Reductions

State's concurrence and comments on the Philippine Studies you  
included under cover of your August 29, 1977 memorandum<sup>2</sup> follow.

*COMPENSATION*

State concurs in the Interagency Task Force recommendations and  
Study on Compensation in the Base Negotiations. With regard to the  
elements of the recommended compensation package we note the  
following:

*Filipinization*

A. The U.S. needs to know if President Marcos considers this impor-  
tant new concept worth pursuing. The September visit of Dick Hol-  
brooke provides the first opportunity to explore the idea with the  
Philippine leadership.

B. If the Philippines is interested in the concept, it needs to be  
fleshed out considerably for both the short and long term:

—What facilities can be transferred?

—What functions (e.g. portions of air defense) can be turned over  
to Philippine operation?

*FMS Financing and Arms Transfers*

The Administration's arms control policy may inhibit expansion  
of military assistance and FMS sales and financing to the Philippines.  
We will need to take account of U.S. objectives in limiting arms transfers  
before making any commitment to the Philippines. This will be a prob-

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, 1977–1980,  
Box 35, PRM–14 [1]. Secret.

<sup>2</sup> Two documents were sent under an August 29 covering memorandum from  
Dodson to Tarnoff and Saunders: Brown's August 25 memorandum to Brzezinski on  
the Philippine base negotiations and the August 22 interagency study on compensation.  
The covering memorandum and the interagency study are in Carter Library, National  
Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Armacost Chron File, Box 4, 8/26–31/77. Brown's  
memorandum to Brzezinski is printed as Document 298.



lem even without a new agreement, particularly given Philippine plans for military expansion.

*Security Supporting Assistance*

A. Public Law 95–88, Section 110, amends Section 115 (a) of the Foreign Assistance Act in order to relax the prior prohibition on Development Assistance and Security Supporting Assistance to the same country, cited by the Task Force as the major obstacle to use of SSA in the Philippines.

B. The AID position opposing the inclusion of SSA in the compensation package was largely based on the fact that a transfer from MAP (which previously was included under the National Defense Function) to SSA (which was included under the International Affairs Function) artificially inflated the International Affairs Function within the budget. However, effective September 1, 1977, MAP too was transferred to the International Affairs Function. Accordingly, the amount of the International Affairs Function will not reflect whether we chose to employ MAP or SSA funds.

C. We understand that the Development Coordination Committee under NSC-EPG auspices should soon complete a review of foreign assistance programs<sup>3</sup> which may include recommendations on the use and administration of SSA. In the light of AID's non-concurrence, any final decision regarding the use of SSA in military facilities negotiations should take into account the other studies going on concurrently.

D. In any event, we plan to explore this concept with Marcos during the Holbrooke visit and then with the Congress before taking a definite position on it.

*FORCE REDUCTIONS*

The Department generally concurs in the plans of the Defense Department for reductions in our air and naval presence which neither reduce our combat readiness nor signal a withdrawal of U.S. military power from the Western Pacific. We would emphasize the following considerations:

*Timing of Decisions and Announcements*

A. Force cuts will not *per se* gain us additional leverage in negotiations with the Philippines though a reduction of our profile helps our relationship. However, we have recently learned of Philippine Air Force plans to seek the use of portions of Clark. We should hold the announcement of force reductions for use as a bargaining chip in the

---

<sup>3</sup> Regarding the Development Coordination Committee study, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. III, Foreign Economic Policy, Document 277.

event we are able to accommodate the Philippine request under a reduced presence.

B. We have reduced our forces by 50% in the Philippines in the last decade without making sweeping public announcements. There is no reason to lump these limited new consolidations into a major package for decisions which would make the reductions appear more dramatic than the facts warrant, particularly if it should become public. A means of avoiding this might be to decide now on certain immediate parts of the program, with decisions on other parts to be taken later.

C. We agree that the movement of the 13AF Headquarters should be deferred and re-examined in 1978.

#### *LONGER-TERM BASES PRESENCE*

We have time to take stock of our longer-term ability to increase the Philippine stake in our basing presence.

A. The Defense study addressed solely the question of short-term limited adjustments to our force posture.

B. State believes that, consistent with the decision of the Policy Review Committee meeting on the Philippines in April,<sup>4</sup> it is important to examine the extent to which the U.S. could transfer to Philippine control other operations after sufficient training and preparation, for example participation in air defense, area air traffic control and operation of joint training facilities. Would it be possible to envisage a joint use arrangement such as that which we have with Spain or other countries?

C. We recommend that a special task group under Defense Department management undertake a thorough review of such possibilities if Holbrooke's initial explorations with President Marcos indicate that the Philippines has an interest in this concept.

**Peter Tarnoff<sup>5</sup>**  
*Executive Secretary*

---

<sup>4</sup> See Document 296.

<sup>5</sup> Wisner signed for Tarnoff above Tarnoff's typed signature.

**300. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, the White House, Department of Defense, and Commander in Chief, Pacific<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 22, 1977, 1544Z

227946. Military addressee handle as Specat Exclusive, Fol tel sent action SecState from Manila dtd 22 Sep 1977 DTG Z221239Z.

Qte White House for Brzezinski and Armacost, Jakarta for Ambassador Newsom, DOD/ISA for Abramowitz Eyes Only and CINCPAC for Admiral Weisner Eyes Only. Secret Manila 15019. Nodis. For the Secretary from Holbrooke. Please pass to Jakarta for Newsom only. Please pass to Armacost/NSC; Abramowitz/ISA; CINCPAC for Weisner. Subject: Holbrooke/Marcos Meeting.

1. In six hours of discussions today with Marcos we covered wide range of issues, reached few conclusions. Marcos indicated considerable flexibility on the timing of the conclusion of any agreements on the bases, although he seemed to prefer the idea of a resumption of the negotiations this year. He says he needs to finish the base issue before “normalization”. That is, before he holds elections. This would be sometime next year. Other hand, he questioned whether we should begin negotiations this year if congressional calendar precludes consideration until 1978. I explained our intention to consult closely with Congress and pointed out that content of agreement would affect timing.

2. He has not yet committed himself in any way on the question of size and composition of compensation package. Although we stated clearly that last year’s offer would be hard to match, I identified compensation package as most important item from US point of view. Marcos focused on the twin issues of sovereignty and legal jurisdiction over American servicemen under certain circumstances. I stressed that we had already accepted concept of Philippine sovereignty but that we had to retain for ourselves the right to determine whether or not an American serviceman alleged to have committed a crime was on official status or not—a key factor in Philippine eyes.

3. Marcos and Defense Minister Enrile stressed theme that under the War Powers Act,<sup>2</sup> the value of American treaty commitment was either sharply reduced or eliminated. I said that this was simply not

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Cables File, Far East, Box 11, 9–11/77. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Printed from the copy received in the White House Situation Room.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 4, Document 296.

the case, and that the War Powers Act did not affect the validity of the treaty.

4. Marcos reacted with predictable anger at my raising of human rights issue, saying that he was fully committed to human rights and that, as a result of my raising the issue again, he was wondering if there was not a serious misunderstanding even in the State Department of all that he had done to promote human rights in the Philippines. I said that I did not come to Manila to tell him how to run his country, but that he must understand that the human rights situation would be an important ingredient in the American reaction to any package for the bases when submitted to Congress. In Marcos' eyes, the only possible victims of any torture or unfair confinement have been Communists, and he professes not to know what all the shouting is about. Suggested GOP is being "blackmailed" by subversive elements appealing for external sympathy. Enrile said that it was clear that the Americans believed anything negative that opponents of the regime told us, while we did not believe them. Marcos at one point termed questioning GOP compliance "offensive," and questioned the very value of trying to find a basis for new agreements at this time if there was such misunderstanding in the U.S. but later backed off this posture. Marcos concluded that GOP still has major human rights PR requirement in U.S.

5. We will conclude tomorrow. We did not expect any specific agreements to come out of today's session, and none did. But with the notable and deliberate exception of compensation, we did hear their preliminary views on the entire range of issues that might come up between us during a negotiation, and we got a better sense of what Marcos wants. A recurrent theme was the lack of satisfaction with the existing consultative arrangements regarding our defense relationship. This was included in Marcos' concerns about: the perceived vulnerability of the Philippines to attack due to our presence [*less than 1 line not declassified*], the need for a self-reliant defense posture, and characterization of the MDT as "useless" in resolving operational issues.

6. Marcos clearly expressed preference for informal discussions at a "political level" to resolve policy issues first, rather than a resumption of the unwieldy and unproductive formal talks. I agree with this preference, and believe that Dave Newsom will be the appropriate person to handle these. Marcos also showed a pronounced interest in moving in GOP-Embassy channel to settle several secondary issues immediately. This I believe would be helpful in order to remove some highly visible irritants from the situation, as long as it can be done in full cooperation with our military. It was interesting to note that his own Cabinet members were clearly more resistant than he was to this approach.

7. The mood and tone of the meetings was extremely friendly, except during the human rights discussion. Marcos has clearly lowered

his sights from what they were a year ago, and wants to make a deal more than he did in the past. In this sense our strategy over last eight months has had some beneficial effects.

8. In reference to the idea of inviting Romulo to meet with the President during UNGA, I think that to make such an invitation tomorrow would be premature.

9. I advised Marcos of U.S. decision to make available to GOP an additional \$30 million FMS for FY 77 program as one-time exception and made all the points agreed to in our discussions prior to departure. Stull Unqte

Vance

---

### **301. Telegram From the Department of State to the White House and the Mission to the United Nations<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, September 23, 1977, 0956Z

229132. For Dr. Brzezinski, Amb Young. Following telegram from Manila dated September 23, 1977 sent SecState WashDC is repeated to you:

Quote Secret Manila 15064. Nodis. For the Secretary from Holbrooke. White House for Brzezinski. Subject: Philippine Proposal That Mrs. Marcos Meet With President Carter at UNGA

1. At beginning of second day of talks,<sup>2</sup> Marcos asked to see me alone. During one-hour conversation in which many other things were covered which will be reported septel,<sup>3</sup> Marcos said that he was sending his wife to New York to head Philippine delegation to the UNGA. Romulo and Defense Minister Enrile will also attend.

2. He said that his Embassy in Washington had alerted him to President's intention to have a limited number of bilateral meetings in New York. He had considered going to New York himself in order to

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Cables File, Far East, Box 11, 9–11/77. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Printed from the copy received in the White House Situation Room.

<sup>2</sup> A brief report on the second day of Holbrooke's meetings with Marcos is in telegram 15120 from Manila, September 23. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770347-0344)

<sup>3</sup> Telegram 15119 from Manila, September 23. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770347-0536)

meet the President, but had decided it would be better to send "the First Lady." He then asked me if the President could meet with her in New York.<sup>4</sup> He did not ask for her to be received in Washington.

3. I said that it was quite late and that the President's schedule might already be full, but that I would relay the request to Washington immediately. I added that in any case, as head of delegation, Mrs. Marcos would have opportunity to meet the President in a luncheon meeting including other Asian leaders. This pleased Marcos.

4. A Presidential meeting with Imelda, (with Romulo also attending) has both pluses and minuses. Her power and authority are unquestionable and Marcos clearly indicated that he does not have full confidence in Romulo, whom he regards more as an ornament than a functioning Foreign Minister. Such a meeting would presumably focus on human rights and on a reaffirmation of the American commitment to the Philippines—the latter message would have considerable value throughout the region and a beneficial effect on the continuing discussions on our bases. The former subject, which cannot be avoided, is one where the President's personal involvement might also prove helpful. (In this regard, Marcos also said he was planning to move early next year on "normalization"—i.e., elections.) On the other hand, such a meeting might not be regarded as carrying the proper symbolic qualities desired in a Presidential bilateral in New York, given Imelda's general image.

5. Given the long history of US-Philippine relations, the importance of defining a more stable basis for the continued presence of the bases, the potential value of a personal discussion of the importance of human rights, and the negative impact of turning Marcos down, I would recommend that a short meeting with Mrs. Marcos and Romulo be scheduled if there is time available.

6. Marcos asked if it would be possible to have a reply before I leave, and said he attaches very high importance to the requested meeting. I said that I would not guarantee an answer before my departure (10 pm, Friday, September 23, EST), but that I would relay his request immediately. Stull Unquote

Vance

---

<sup>4</sup> Marcos met with Carter on September 29. See Document 305.

**302. Letter From Philippine President Marcos to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Manila, September 24, 1977

Dear Mr. President,

Allow me first of all to apologize for the *faux pas* that seems to have been committed by the unexplained non-delivery to you of my reply to your kind letter of April 1977 hand-carried by Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke.<sup>2</sup>

I have taken the welcome opportunity of the second visit to us of Assistant Secretary Holbrooke to send you my hand-written letter.

Allow me to express my appreciation as well as that of the Filipino people for the sentiments of friendship you conveyed in your letter of April 1977 as well as in your verbal messages through Assistant Secretary Holbrooke and Assistant Secretary James Cooper who was with us on the U.S.-ASEAN dialogue in Manila.<sup>3</sup>

I reiterate my strong and unabashed support for your human rights policy and have demonstrated such support not only in the conduct of Philippine domestic policy but also in international affairs. It is my hope that Assistant Secretary Holbrooke will be able to talk to you in more detail about this.

We are gratified by your message to me that you would like to see the issues pending between our two countries resolved as soon as possible on the basis of mutual respect and mutual benefit. Accordingly, in the consultations with Assistant Secretary Holbrooke, I have gone out of my way to bring about a resolution of the issues pertaining to the military agreements between our two countries with the active and brilliant cooperation of Assistant Secretary Holbrooke.

Rest assured, Mr. President, that it shall be my pleasant task to demonstrate that you and the American people continue to enjoy a reservoir of good will in the Philippines.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Correspondence with Foreign Leaders File, Box 16, Philippines: President Ferdinand E. Marcos, 4/77–4/80. No classification marking. The letter is handwritten. In a September 30 covering memorandum to Aaron, Armacost wrote, "This is a copy of the Marcos letter which Dick brought back with him. I thought you might find it amusing. Were it not for the fact that Marcos' handwriting is superior, you might think Dick drafted the letter himself!" (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron Files, Box 39, Philippines: 1977)

<sup>2</sup> See Document 295.

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs Richard Cooper, who addressed the first U.S.-ASEAN Dialogue. See footnote 5, Document 196.

Allow me again to assure you of my continued respect and goodwill.

Sincerely yours,

**Ferdinand Marcos**

---

**303. Letter From Philippine President Marcos to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Manila, September 25, 1977

Dear Mr. President:

I take pleasure in presenting to you through Mrs. Imelda Romualdez Marcos, my wife, who heads the Philippine delegation to the current session of the General Assembly, my sincerest compliments and most profound good wishes on the occasion of your visit to the United Nations.

While the occasion does not permit us to meet at this time, I trust you will allow Mrs. Marcos to inform you on the latest developments in the Philippines. She is joined by senior members of the Cabinet, including Foreign Secretary Carlos P. Romulo and Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile, who are under instruction to make available to you any information you may need, either directly, or through Secretary Vance.

We have just had the pleasure of receiving in Manila, Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke whom you sent with your good wishes to discuss broad aspects of our general security relationship. I found Mr. Holbrooke to be well-informed and receptive to our ideas. On the basis of those conversations, there is ample evidence to suggest that the relationship between our two countries is turning on a new leaf.

There has been much unfair criticism in the American and foreign media of the Philippine position in the negotiations with the United States of a new treaty on the military bases. I was anxious in my conversations with Mr. Holbrooke, as I am anxious in this letter to you now, to lay this to rest.

The Philippines has no desire and no intent to seek a huge outlay from the United States Government in terms of dollars and cents as a price for the maintenance of the bases on our territory. Our main

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 39, Philippines, 1977. No classification marking.



interest is in setting up a credible and viable defense posture both for the United States and for the Philippine Armed Forces to deter aggression, both open and veiled, including that which comes in the form of illegal arms shipments, the landing of foreign trained guerrillas and the like, and disguises itself as purely internal insurgency.

We realize that the Philippines has a role to play in the defense scheme in Western Pacific, and we defer to the view expressed to us by Mr. Holbrooke that the bases on Philippine soil are meant not only to protect particularly defined metropolitan areas but to form part of a system of global nuclear and non-nuclear deterrence. Accordingly, we are prepared to play our role and contribute our share to the enforcement of world security and peace.

However, in reviewing the existing defense arrangements between the United States and the Philippines, certain deficiencies are revealed which, in my view, do not contribute to the viability of such arrangements. It had been my painful duty to point these out to the previous American administration, hoping that action would be forthcoming in curing those deficiencies. Since those deficiencies have remained, I am now constrained to bring them to your kind personal attention, since they are too vital to our defense.

First, there is to this day lack of competent radar coverage from central to southern Philippines, or almost entirely half the archipelago, particularly in the soft underbelly south. Despite the heavy concentration of hardware and men in the north, where Clark Air Base and the Subic Naval Base are situated, the country remains vulnerable to attack.

Second, as a dependable and historical defense partner, the Philippines is expected to participate in meeting a theoretical external enemy 300 miles off its coast. The Philippine Air Force, armed only as it is with F-5 fighters, does not have this capability. Neither is the Philippine Navy equipped with fast enough small-type patrol boats with accurate guided missiles for the purpose. It is our information that even the U.S. naval forces in the country do not have such armaments and equipment which we consider necessary to the defense of our waters.

Third and most important, the United States and the Philippines have never worked out to this day a common, integrated defense plan for the Philippines.

We believe, Mr. President, the time has come for our two countries to work out such a plan, one that would truly serve our mutual interests. We feel that with such a plan we would be strengthening the part played by the Philippines in the Pacific defense scheme and in the overall global deterrence, while permitting the Philippines at the same time a more viable posture with respect to problems of internal insurgency.

It remains our basic policy that no foreign troops should ever be involved in meeting any threat to our internal security or in quelling actual rebellion or insurgency. It is in recognition of this policy that our defense arrangements as defined by our mutual defense pact, our military bases agreement and military assistance pact, were meant only to deal with aggression and not insurgency. This to us is a wise and mature policy, and we do not wish to see it diluted or changed.

Accordingly, it has been the policy of my government to evolve a self-reliance program for our Armed Forces, and this has received expressions of support from American authorities. It was in pursuit of such a program that the estimated cost required to fill up our present security and defense deficiencies unfortunately gave rise to much-publicized figures of the reported compensation or rent that we seek for continued American use of the bases in the Philippines.

I have since proposed, in our conversations with Mr. Holbrooke, that the required arms and equipment, and training as to their use, be now made available to the Armed Forces of the Philippines as an important step in meeting the present deficiencies, and to take the place of any consideration of rent in terms of dollars and cents. I have also proposed that if such arms and equipment cannot for any reason be directly transferred to the Philippine Government, a stockpile similar to the war arms reserve in South Korea be maintained by the United States in the Philippines, to be made available to the Philippine Armed Forces in the event of emergency. Indispensable to this is a program of training for our Armed Forces in the use of those arms and equipment.

I have communicated all these points to Mr. Holbrooke with the request that they be brought to the highest level in Washington. In recording the same points here, it is my hope that you will take a direct hand in curing these deficiencies.

The Philippines remains a strong friend and proud ally of the United States, and is willing to discharge its responsibilities under this partnership. I for one have been proud to express my support for many of the policies of your Presidency and am determined to show to the American people that this support goes beyond words.

In the field of human rights, where you have staked the moral leadership of the United States, our commitment is truly irrevocable and not insignificant in scope. It forms the rationale and the basis of all our reforms, and constitutes the ultimate measure of the validity of our actions in the New Society.

I am confident that under your leadership the relationship between our two countries will continue to grow in meaning and scope, and that our two peoples will find for themselves the blessing of a less troubled world.

With my highest esteem, and sincere good wishes for your continued happiness and success.

Very sincerely,

**Ferdinand E. Marcos**  
*President*  
*Republic of the Philippines*

---

### 304. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

New York, September 29, 1977, 5:40–6:45 p.m.

#### SUBJECT

U.S.-Philippines Relations

#### PARTICIPANTS

##### *The Philippines*

Mrs. Imelda Romualdez Marcos, wife of President Ferdinand Marcos

Foreign Secretary Carlos P. Romulo

Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile

Ambassador Eduardo Z. Romualdez

Solicitor General Estelito P. Mendoza

##### *The U.S.*

The Secretary

Undersecretary Habib

Assistant Secretary Richard Holbrooke

Kenneth Bleakley, EA/PHL (notetaker)

*Greetings.* The Secretary noted that a number of our colleagues have visited the Philippines recently, particularly Under Secretary Cooper and Assistant Secretary Holbrooke. Mrs. Marcos said that another visitor, Mrs. Portillo, wife of the President of Mexico, sends her greetings to the Secretary. Secretary Romulo opined that the U.S. had sent two good men—the two Richards. In response to a joking aside by the Secretary, Romulo responded that they had behaved very well. Mrs. Marcos whispered to Holbrooke that she wished to speak privately with the Secretary and all other participants departed.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Archives, RG 59, Office of the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, 1976–1978, Lot 81D5, PCH Log, Sept. 17, 1977–October 31, 1977. Confidential; Exdis. Drafted by Kenneth Bleakley (EA/PHL); approved by Wisner (S/S) on October 11. The meeting took place at the UN Plaza in New York.

*Private Talks.* During the private sessions Mrs. Marcos said that President Marcos faced difficult problems. He sent his personal messenger because he did not feel he should come to the United States until human rights was no longer a potential embarrassment. She explained her views about human rights in the Philippines and raised several other questions about the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) and the War Powers Resolution, which were addressed again when the full group reconvened. The Secretary reassured her on both the MDT and the War Powers questions.

*Base Negotiations.* When the full meeting reassembled the Secretary reported that he and Mrs. Marcos had exchanged views on a number of issues in our relationship. He asked Holbrooke to review where we stand on base negotiations.

Holbrooke invited the Philippine Delegation to interrupt with their views as he outlined his understanding on the military relationship as follows:

(1) We have agreed to constitute a task force chaired by Secretary Ingles<sup>2</sup> and Chargé Stull to remove irritants independently.

(2) Several major problems have been identified but the specifics remain to be taken up with Ambassador Newsom after his arrival the third week of October. (Secretary Vance interjected that Newsom has his full backing and that of the President.) Both sides agreed that formal panels were not the most efficacious means to achieve our objectives of agreement based on mutual respect and mutual benefit.

(3) The specific issues, "with which Romulo may or may not agree," are:

a. [2 lines not declassified]

b. Mutual Defense Treaty—There is a question of its present value and the Philippines has sought clarification. We are ready with a written statement but do not believe that legalistic answers to hypothetical questions best serve our mutual interest. We reaffirm our intention to fulfill our obligation under the Mutual Defense Treaty of 1951. Secretary Vance said "we do reaffirm it."

c. Sovereignty—There is no issue. (Vance and Habib reaffirmed U.S. full recognition of the Philippines sovereignty. Mrs. Marcos accepted the affirmation.)

d. Jurisdiction—There is a technical issue regarding jurisdiction which can be resolved by Solicitor General Mendoza and his colleagues.

e. Compensation—This is our big problem. We must find a mutually beneficial way to meet the Philippines requirements and get

---

<sup>2</sup> Jose Ingles, Philippine Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs.

a package through Congress. We do not mean to be contentious but must emphasize that congressional perceptions of human rights at the time any agreement is submitted will affect greatly their reaction to the overall agreement.

Holbrooke concluded by thanking the Philippines for their graciousness and hospitality. Vance and Habib stated that the above presentation reflected their views. The Philippine Delegation did not disagree with the outline of the issues as presented. Mrs. Marcos asked her colleagues to bring up individual matters of interest.

*Sovereignty/Jurisdiction.* Mendoza said he wanted to demonstrate that sovereignty and jurisdiction were identical. But Mrs. Marcos interrupted by saying that Secretary Vance had stated that sovereignty is no longer an issue and that she believes mutual defense is the most important topic. Secretary Vance said sovereignty is no problem; we reaffirm it. Holbrooke said: we can reach agreement on measures to demonstrate sovereignty. We made progress last year, for example, on flags. Secretary Vance noted that jurisdiction is a complicated legal issue as he well knew from his experience on SOFAs in the Defense Department in the 1960s. This is separate and apart from sovereignty and should be discussed among lawyers. (Mrs. Marcos nodded agreement.)

*Mutual Defense.* Secretary Vance emphasized that the War Powers Resolution does not preclude the President from acting and taking any steps he sees necessary. The Congress must act later. Mrs. Marcos replied defensively “this was what had transpired in the past and some quarters held the President impotent.” Holbrooke noted that Congressman Lester Wolff was floor manager for the resolution and had demonstrated to her earlier that afternoon that it did not negate the validity of the Mutual Defense Treaty. Mrs. Marcos stated that Wolff was knowledgeable on the Philippine situation. She invited questions from others.

Secretary Enrile said, “we have our reservations about the Mutual Defense Treaty. I am not here to complicate exploratory discussions and believe that we can discuss military cooperation at the proper time. What is important now is to know what the U.S. intentions really are.” Secretary Vance replied “we stand four square behind the treaty and there is no question about it.” Enrile said that the Philippines has been assured repeatedly by U.S. officials, still believes that the Philippines must contribute to mutuality in defense but is not in a position to do so. The Philippines has the manpower but requires some assistance to develop its own capability.

*Insurgencies.* Enrile talked of the serious threat in the Southern Philippines. He stated that though the insurgents were receiving foreign support the GOP had no intention of involving the United

States in the problem by invoking the Mutual Defense Treaty. He and Mrs. Marcos stated that they did not wish to alarm their people about renewed fighting in Mindanao but they did need equipment, particularly small arms. They need a military arrangement with the U.S. to provide adequate external defense (e.g., the Southern Philippines is blind to external attack due to lack of radar. They cannot see if an air or sea attack is coming and need patrol ships.) Vance said these are issues we can discuss and Holbrooke added that Bleakley had already taken up the concerns previously outlined by President Marcos, such as radar, with CINCPAC.

*Compensation.* Enrile said that, knowing the Philippine situation, they know their request for assistance is right. They don't want to ask for grant aid from Congress every year and seek a more clear cut form so that people will know that it is not really a gratuitous allotment but rather a legal contribution for use of territory free of political questions, not based on outright dependency on the U.S. Mrs. Marcos added that the Philippines are a magnet for attack but do not have the capability to defend themselves and the President is apprehensive. Enrile said, "the U.S. has given strong words, but before you can act there is a time gap: in the interim we must defend ourselves." Mrs. Marcos added that they were not talking of a sophisticated defense. She returned to the subject of Southern Insurgency.

Mrs. Marcos and Enrile talked of Libyan and Russian cooperation with Moro leaders<sup>3</sup> and Philippine need for small weapons rather than sophisticated equipment to counter the threat in the South. Enrile stated that Libya was elevating the Moro question to the Islamic Conferences and that if they provide more help the Philippines will be in a terrible situation. The GOP has been afraid to alarm the people but two APCs have just been destroyed, overall 3,000 Philippines troops have been killed in action and 15–20,000 civilians have died. Enrile said 10,000 Muslims had been killed. Mrs. Marcos claimed 30,000. They repeated that they did not want to complicate relations with the U.S. but needed equipment and appreciated our help in the past. They did not want to seek alternatives from the Soviet bloc or others. "You use our bases; please help." Vance noted that we are resolving questions about our cooperation and Mrs. Marcos said "yes." Holbrooke noted that some aspects will require Congressional approval and that we will have to discuss timing which is important and has not yet been resolved. Vance indicated we can work this out as we go along. Enrile said that Marcos has given him permission to say "we will take care of our internal

---

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to the Moro National Liberation Front.

problems; we need your assistance in providing equipment. The communists are active.”

*Communist Threat.* Secretary Vance asked if the communists were active all over. And Enrile said they were active in Luzon, the Visayas and Northern Mindanao. He said the Philippines could handle it but wants to avoid fighting on two fronts, especially with the Southern Secessionist Movement. In response to a question from Secretary Vance he indicated that the Peking oriented communist forces had around 2,000-armed regulars and that they caused problems around our bases. Mrs. Marcos added that they stole PX goods and threatened base security. In response to Vance’s questions on the type of equipment, Enrile enumerated “M-14s, grenade launchers, assorted M-16s, 80 millimeter mortars, Russian P-14 rockets, land mines, AK-47s in the south, and Belgian firearms.”

In response to another of Vance’s questions, Enrile said the insurgents were well trained, particularly those who trained in Sabah. President Marcos has moved to resolve the Philippine claim to Sabah. Holbrooke interjected that this was a statesmanlike action which strengthened ASEAN. Mrs. Marcos said that President Marcos as a former guerilla leader was aware that not much training is needed to make a guerilla as effective in the mountains as regular troops. Enrile noted that the Philippines had survived before but Mrs. Marcos countered that despite the eternal optimism of the Philippines there would be many sleepless nights ahead if the fighting goes on. Enrile concluded by stressing the Philippine desire not for compensation in dollars for the bases but rather that the U.S. provide equipment for mutual defense as allowable under U.S. law. Holbrooke stated that the most hopeful sign was President Marcos’ imaginative and creative attempts to arrive at a new approach to the issue. Vance said he would keep a personal eye on developments.

305. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

New York, October 5, 1977, 5:30–6 p.m.

## PARTICIPANTS

*U.S.*

President Carter

Zbigniew Brzezinski, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs

Mike Armacost, Staff Member, National Security Council

*Philippines*

Mrs. Imelda Marcos

Ambassador Eduardo Z. Romualdez, Ambassador to the United States

Juan Ponce Enrile, Minister of Defense

Estelito P. Mendoza, Solicitor General

Carlos P. Romulo, Minister of Foreign Affairs

The President expressed appreciation for the letter from President Marcos which Mrs. Marcos had given him at lunch.<sup>2</sup> He informed Mrs. Marcos that he had instructed Dr. Brzezinski to examine it and to consult with Harold Brown and Cy Vance to assure expeditious follow-up. The President affirmed the U.S. desire to strengthen mutual defense arrangements with the Philippines. He said he regarded President Marcos' proposal for an overall analysis of mutual defense plans, a constructive idea. In particular he believed that joint assessment of Philippine defense requirements was in order. Out of such an assessment could come specific recommendations concerning air defense, improvements in radar coverage and provisions for war reserve stocks in the Philippines.

The President acknowledged Philippine concerns over the question of sovereignty over the bases. He affirmed that the United States Government understands that sovereignty over the bases rests with the Philippines and indicated that we would be happy to reaffirm this understanding publicly. He added that there is one area in which we have a problem—namely, criminal jurisdiction cases. We have arrangements for dealing with this issue with other allies, and these arrangements—which appear to be working satisfactorily—establish limits on the adjustments we can make in our procedures in the Philippines. But we would be glad to discuss this issue if the Philippine Government has a problem.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Armacost Chron File, Box 5, 10/1–14/77. Secret. The meeting took place in the Presidential Suite at the Plaza Hotel.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 303.



The President took note of the fact that the new U.S. Ambassador, David Newsom, would be taking up his new assignment in Manila in late October. When Newsom arrives in the Philippines, he said, one major task would be to work out satisfactory arrangements for sustaining or modifying our base arrangements. The President expressed the belief that we have a good opportunity at this point to terminate slight differences that have existed in the past and he said he attached great importance to this effort.

Mrs. Marcos expressed appreciation for the opportunity to meet President Carter. She expressed the hope that those deficiencies in our defense arrangements to which President Marcos had referred to in his letter could be worked out with Ambassador Newsom. She emphasized the serious problem the Filipinos faced with the Muslim insurgency in the south. She suggested that while the acquisition of radar, all-weather planes, and other modern defense equipment were important to the Philippines, these would not be in and of themselves a sufficient deterrent to subversion—which she added posed greater dangers in Southeast Asia than direct conventional attacks.

She noted that the Philippines finds itself in a somewhat beleaguered position, located close to neighbors with alien systems and ideologies, and occupying an intermediate position between the East and the West and between Christianity and Islam. In this situation, she said, the Philippines requires strong leadership. “Without a strong leader like Marcos, we would long since have disintegrated.” While Mrs. Marcos allowed the inference that her government has various foreign policy options, she affirmed that the Filipinos have always been most comfortable with the United States, and prefer to maintain close ties with the U.S.

She urged understanding on the human rights issue; asserting that the Philippines sought to approximate the United States’ political system within the limits imposed by its economic development and security situation. Mrs. Marcos said that her husband had asked her to convey to President Carter his own desire to come to the United States when he could come as an asset to the President rather than as a liability.

The President indicated that President Marcos would always be welcome and that he considered him a firm friend of the United States. The President also affirmed that we consider the Mutual Defense Treaty to be binding upon us; the Philippine Government need have no concern that we would violate its terms. Our friendship is important, the President said, not merely for its benefits to the Philippines and to the United States but because it contributes to the stability of the region. The President then noted that he did not fully understand how the acquisition of advanced aircraft and enhanced radar coverage would

enable the Philippines to deal more effectively with the primary security problem of internal subversion.

Mrs. Marcos explained the requirement for advanced planes, radar, and patrol boats in terms of potential threats from the outside, e.g. Vietnam. But she emphasized again that the most immediate threat derived from the Mindanao secessionist movement supported by some outside elements. She referred to President Marcos' belief that if the United States cannot relate its defense treaty to this pressing problem, then the Philippines would have to extend its own military self-reliance. Mrs. Marcos pinpointed the primary Filipino concern: (1) their inability to secure necessary equipment in a timely way, and (2) resentment at having to ask for aid like mendicants when the Filipinos regarded this as a legitimate *quid pro quo* (rent) for the bases.

Dr. Brzezinski asked what military threats worry the Philippines the most. Defense Secretary Enrile indicated that there are two problem areas. First, there are internal problems. The New People's Army poses problems in the north; the Muslim separatists pose a threat in the south. Some, he said, define the problem in the south as an internal problem, but there is an international dimension given the support provided the Muslims from countries like Libya. Secondly, the Philippines faced possible threats from outside, most notably from a unified Vietnam which asserts claims to some islands close to Palawan. President Marcos has asked the Defense Department to undertake an assessment of what was needed to cope with these threats. With regard to the external threats, Enrile suggested improved radar coverage, additional naval capabilities to patrol Philippine territorial seas, and a more credible air defense are among priority requirements.

Dr. Brzezinski asked why the Philippines needs a more advanced interceptor aircraft, and he pointed to the impressive performance of F-5s in the Ethiopian-Somali conflict.

Enrile indicated the Ethiopians have F-5E's; the Filipinos have older F-5A models.

The President asked what kinds of threats did the Philippines foresee at sea.

Enrile said they need a capacity to cope with interference in their territorial seas by foreign vessels up to destroyer size. Specifically, they wanted additional patrol boats equipped with missiles like the Gabriel or the Harpoon.

The President suggested that we should start with a joint examination of mutual defense needs in the Philippines.

Enrile said that they had been thinking of requesting U.S. help in analyzing the defense position of the Philippines. This assessment could then be used to provide a basis for a joint plan for Philippine defense and for determining equipment priorities.

The President said he felt it would be best that he and President Marcos review the same assessment.

The President asked what were the most urgent equipment deficiencies.

Enrile said that the most urgent need was for the replacement of equipment lost in fighting in Mindanao, particularly 105 howitzers and armored personnel carriers. While the U.S. had promised to provide these items to the Philippines, he said, delivery is not scheduled until 1981.

Dick Holbrooke suggested that recent developments put us in a new era culminating in the letter from President Marcos. The primary task now is to capitalize on this new emphasis on mutual benefit and mutual respect to negotiate a mutually satisfactory base agreement. He identified the key difficulties as problems of timing and of securing Congressional support.

The President said that a fruitful beginning could be made by looking jointly at requirements. He said he saw no major differences between our views and those expressed in President Marcos' letter. If we come to slightly different assessments of Philippine defense needs, we can work that out later.

Mrs. Marcos noted that there had been a complete change in the atmospherics of US-Philippine relations in recent months. In the past it was difficult to get through to Washington. There was no response to Filipino requests. U.S. officials were not prepared to look at problems in a comprehensive way. Thus she expressed satisfaction with the straight-forwardness of the Americans who had recently come to Manila to discuss economic and defense issues. A new leaf has been turned, she said, toward a relationship of equality.

The President said he should be frank about one matter, namely, the Congressional and public perceptions of the human rights situation in the Philippines. He said he was gratified by President Marcos' recent statements on this issue, but noted that a question still remains in the minds of many Americans. He suggested it would be especially beneficial for Philippine accomplishments in this field to be widely publicized. Initiatives and implementation of President Marcos' plans ought to be widely known. The President added that the United States also has problems in this area, that we expect to be criticized when criticism is warranted, and that we intend to disseminate information about our own progress widely.

Mrs. Marcos said that she expected "normalization" soon. When the "southern problem" cools down, normalization (i.e. national elections) will occur—perhaps within the next several months.

**306. Letter From President Carter to Philippine President Marcos<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 18, 1977

Dear President Marcos:

It was a pleasure to meet the First Lady of the Philippines and to learn from her, as well as through your constructive letter of September 25,<sup>2</sup> your views on the situation in the Philippines and current relations between our two countries. I believe your letter provides a particularly significant point of departure for developing a clearer mutual understanding of the nature of our partnership. My government is urgently reviewing the proposals you advanced, as well as the recent exchanges which have taken place in New York and Manila.

Ambassador David Newsom is participating fully in this review. When he arrives in Manila as my personal representative, he will convey to you specific proposals on the issues under discussion. I can assure you that our approach will be a positive one, which takes account of the views that you and Mrs. Marcos have expressed to me.

I look forward to continuing goodwill and cooperation between our nations.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 39, Philippines: 1977. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Documents 303 and 305.

**307. Paper Prepared by the Interagency Group on Philippine Base Negotiations<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 22, 1977

*PHILIPPINE BASE NEGOTIATIONS**SUMMARY*

For the last several years, the Philippines have increasingly questioned the value of their defense relationship with the United States. They feel the U.S. does not help them with their main security concerns—the Muslim rebellion in the South and the protection of the disputed Spratly Islands—and that we have inadequately compensated them for our use of the bases at Clark and Subic. They have approached these concerns by focusing on the inadequacies of the Mutual Defense Treaty and the demanding negotiation of a new Military Bases Agreement.

In November 1975 President Ford and President Marcos agreed to proceed with negotiations in accordance with principles that would respect Philippine sovereignty over the bases without hampering the operational effectiveness of U.S. forces.<sup>2</sup> Negotiating efforts reached an impasse at the end of 1976. Twenty-five issues having to do with base operating rights remained unresolved and the GOP rejected our offer of \$500 million in MAP grants and FMS credits over a five-year period.

The causes of this impasse and our stake in the base negotiations were reviewed by the Policy Review Committee (PRC) in April 1977.<sup>3</sup> The PRC confirmed the value of the bases but adopted a “wait and see” attitude toward renewal of negotiations. It also initiated studies of our Treaty commitment, our military profile at Clark and Subic, steps we could take to enhance benefits of the bases for Filipinos, and a new compensation package.<sup>4</sup>

In August Marcos delivered an Aide Memoire demanding immediate negotiations of a new bases agreement.<sup>5</sup> Since then we have seen

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Armacost Chron File, Box 5, 10/15–25/77. Secret; Sensitive.

<sup>2</sup> Ford met with Marcos in Manila on December 6 and 7, 1975. See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. E–12, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973–1976, Document 341.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 296.

<sup>4</sup> See Documents 297–299. The interagency study on the compensation package, August 22, 1977, is in Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Armacost Chron File, Box 4, 8/26–31/77.

<sup>5</sup> Reference may be to the diplomatic note Romualdez delivered to Oakley on August 17. The text of the note was transmitted in telegram 198196 to Manila, August 20. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770301–1306)

a significant shift in the Philippine approach to the negotiations and to US-Philippine relations in general. Marcos now appears to want an agreement and he seems willing to make the compromises necessary to reach it.

—He has accepted our oral clarification of the application of the Mutual Defense Treaty and has downplayed demands for formal written assurances.

—He has taken the emotionalism of “Philippine sovereignty” out of GOP approach to issues bearing on the bases and appears to have decoupled this from the criminal jurisdiction question. He has acknowledged the importance of effective U.S. operation of the bases.

—He is emphasizing US-Philippine defense cooperation; he has dropped the demand for “rent” and now treats the question of base compensation more in terms of U.S. support for Philippine self-reliance in the defense field.

Marcos also has taken personal charge of the negotiating process and wants to begin as soon as the new U.S. Ambassador arrives in Manila. He probably expects the Ambassador to bring a substantive response to the letter delivered by Mrs. Marcos to the President.<sup>6</sup>

The change in Philippine approach clearly presents us with some opportunities and some problems. We welcome signs of greater Philippine flexibility and their willingness to deal with issues in a more pragmatic way. In response we have taken steps to indicate our interest in a mutually satisfactory relationship:

—We have established a Joint US-RP Task Force in Manila to examine irritants at the bases.

—We have offered to provide a new range of proposals having to do with criminal jurisdiction and specifically with the review of U.S. official duty certificates.

—We have expressed our willingness to review the whole question of joint defense planning.

—We have agreed to examine their equipment requirements.

We do not know, however, precisely what the GOP has in mind when they speak of joint defense planning and a common integrated defense. Thus, we have asked Secretary of Defense Enrile to provide us his thoughts on this matter. We have asked for a statement of their equipment requirements by priority. We must approach these requirements with caution because of Philippine problems in Mindanao and our uncertainty about Philippine equipment demands.

---

<sup>6</sup> See Document 303.

We also have emphasized to Marcos the difficulties of obtaining from Congress the previous levels of compensation that had been offered. Congressional concerns about human rights in the Philippines, tighter control of the budget, and limitations on arms transfers all continue to complicate our ability to deliver an agreement acceptable to the GOP.

While the mood in US-RP relations has changed, many difficult issues remain to be resolved. Some have been set aside momentarily such as base operating rights and those having to do with the status of US forces. Criminal jurisdiction remains an active issue which we will try to resolve with new proposals concerning the review process. Other issues having to do with joint defense planning, equipment requirements, and compensation cannot be fully assessed until the Philippines give us their promised thoughts on the subject.

[Omitted here is the remainder of the paper.]

---

### **308. Letter From President Carter to Philippine President Marcos<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, October 27, 1977

Dear Mr. President:

I am very encouraged by your letters of September 24 and 25,<sup>2</sup> and by recent exchanges between our two governments. They convince me that we can improve even further the close and cooperative relationship the Philippines and the United States have long enjoyed.

I am pleased that David Newsom will soon take up his new assignment as U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines. I regard him as my personal representative in working with you to resolve the central issues in our relationship. He has my full confidence.

We must now build on the general understandings that have been reached on several key issues. First, the United States Government understands that sovereignty over the bases rests with the Philippines. My predecessor, President Ford, affirmed this understanding to you in Manila in December 1975.<sup>3</sup> I reiterated that view to Mrs. Marcos

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 39, Philippines: 1977. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Documents 302 and 303.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 2, Document 307.

in New York on October 5,<sup>4</sup> and have no hesitation about affirming it publicly.

Second, I agree that we need to examine the adequacy of current planning for the defense of the Philippines. Your proposal for a broad analysis of mutual defense efforts to meet potential external threats to the Philippines has merit. I have asked the Department of Defense to recommend ways our two governments could conduct such an analysis. I look forward to your own further thoughts as to how we might best proceed. Let me assure you again that the United States Government considers the Mutual Defense Treaty to be binding upon us, and that we will fulfill our obligations under the Treaty. I welcome your own affirmation that the Philippines is prepared to discharge its own responsibilities under this partnership.

Third, I understand your desire to increase your self-reliance in defense matters. We are prepared to move forward with a joint assessment of Philippine defense requirements. Out of such an assessment—beginning with the definition of Philippine priorities which we understand is now being prepared—specific recommendations regarding air defense requirements, improvement in radar coverage, and the provision of other materiel can emerge. Our Department of Defense is prepared to send a team to Manila at an appropriate time to assist in the review of your requirements. We will try to respond to your legitimate needs in this area consistent with our world-wide arms transfer policy. Naturally, I appreciate your recognition of our budgetary limitations.

I hope that Ambassador Newsom can work closely with you in reaching further agreement on these and other issues in a spirit of mutual benefit and mutual respect. The warm welcome you recently extended to U.S. emissaries to the Philippines, and the messages Mrs. Marcos and your officials brought to the United States make me share your belief that our close ties will grow. I am especially pleased by your declared intentions to advance human rights in the Philippines. I look forward to working closely with you in our pursuit of these many shared goals.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>4</sup> See Document 305.



**309. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Philippines<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 26, 1977, 0458Z

283136. For Ambassador from Holbrooke. Subject: Human Rights.

1. I am sure that you will find a means of handling human rights issue with Marcos as effectively as you did with the Indonesians, and you are fully familiar with the position of the administration, the attitudes of Congress and the importance it has for long-term relations between the GOP and the U.S. The announcement of Aquino's sentencing to death by firing squad<sup>2</sup> and press reports of torture of the head of the Communist Party—coming after erroneous press reports of a new base agreement—will have a devastating effect here. This makes it still more imperative that you have a long talk with Marcos on the entire issue as soon as you can conveniently arrange it. You should make clear that you are speaking for the highest levels of the administration, including the President, the Secretary, and Holbrooke.

2. In talking to him about Aquino, you already have my thoughts (with which Patt Derian concurs). There is one point that you could usefully add; namely the serious misunderstanding and damage caused to the image of the GOP by the press announcement that Aquino has been sentenced to death by the firing squad. The announcement did not provide any indication that the sentence will be appealed to the Supreme Court and that there remains the possibility of the sentence being commuted. Marcos needs to find a means to correct this misimpression before reaction here gets out of control. You can remind Marcos that he told Holbrooke in April that Aquino could leave the Philippines if he really received an invitation from Harvard, and if he was "not lionized by U.S. officials."<sup>3</sup> The first condition has been met, on the second he has our assurance for the executive branch, although we cannot control Congress or the press. But it is certain, you may tell Marcos, that Aquino in Bonifacio Jail will harm our mutual objectives

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Global Issues, Mathews Subject File, Box 10, Human Rights: Philippines, 11/77–8/78. Confidential; Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information Immediate to the White House for Brzezinski. A stamped notation at the top of the page reads, "LD [Leslie Denend] has seen."

<sup>2</sup> Benigno Aquino, Jr., was one of Marcos's staunchest critics. On November 25, a military court found Aquino guilty of murder, illegal possession of firearms, and subversion and sentenced him to death by firing squad.

<sup>3</sup> Holbrooke accompanied Representative Wolff on a trip to the Philippines April 17–19. He discussed human rights, among other issues, with Marcos in Manila on April 19. Telegram 5898 from Manila, April 20, summarized the discussion. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770137–0153)

vis-a-vis the bases far more than Aquino in Harvard Yard. And, with today's developments, speed becomes essential.

3. Another specific case which we think you should raise is that of Father Reuter and other Catholic clergy recently charged with subversion for publication of church newsletter. We do not understand why action is now being taken against these people ten months after newsletter ceased publication. You should state that, in general, GOP actions against Catholic clergy are not understood by Americans and raise fundamental questions here about freedom of religion. This particular case also raises questions of freedom of speech by Church and treatment of U.S. citizens. For these reasons, the Reuter case has received wide attention by the press and Congress.

4. More serious over the long term is fact that despite Marcos' consistent disclaimers, reports continue to be received of torture or disappearance of prisoners. You should take line that we do not question Marcos' good faith in rejecting torture as an instrument of national policy, but it appears that his wishes in this regard are not being carried out in lower echelons of security services. Our sources go far beyond Amnesty International on this difficult matter. Political beliefs or actions of individual are no justification, in view of U.S.G. and world community, for use of torture. We urge Marcos to assert his authority to bring torture to an end once and for all. You should add that we are highly disturbed by increasing number of reports being received about "disappearances", i.e., people picked up by security services, usually without being charged, who have not been heard of again and cannot be located. This trend has already come to notice of interested Congressmen. If patterns of torture and disappearance continue, it could only result in serious damage to U.S.-Philippine relations.

5. In discussing torture and disappearance, Marcos will almost certainly claim that reports are without foundation. You should reaffirm our desire to work as closely as possible with GOP to assess accuracy of reports which could become an irritant. You might wish to suggest that Marcos designate someone (such as General Vu) with whom we could check reports of specific cases. I leave it to your judgment as to whether or not to identify to Marcos reports of specific cases which we believe to be correct.

6. You should also call to Marcos' attention recent U.S. legislation (copies being pouched), which cites arbitrary detention as one of factors specifically constituting "consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights".<sup>4</sup> As such, it can be grounds that would require by

---

<sup>4</sup> Reference is to Section 112 of the International Development and Food Assistance Act of 1977, signed by the President on August 3. (P.L. 95-88; 91 Stat. 533)

law U.S. opposition to or abstention on loans to a country through international financial institutions (e.g., IBRD, Asian Development Bank) and automatically weighs heavily in consideration by Congress and administration of levels of military and economic assistance (including P.L.–480). Three ADB loans for Philippines currently under consideration are case in point.

7. Obviously, you will need to find the most effective means of presenting Marcos with such a bitter bill of goods. We need to be careful not to give him the impression that we are unaware of the actions he has taken or stated his intention of taking (e.g. elimination of curfew, lifting of travel ban, transfer of jurisdiction over detainees to civilian courts, release of a number of detainees, possibility of legislative elections by end of 1978), and you might wish to raise these at the outset as matters which we applaud.<sup>5</sup>

Vance

---

<sup>5</sup> When Newsom met with Marcos on December 2, Marcos denied the charges of widespread use of torture and “disappearances.” (Telegram 19055 from Manila, December 3; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770448–0973)

---

**310. Memorandum From the Director of the Joint Staff of the  
Joint Chiefs of Staff (Hannifin) to Secretary of Defense  
Brown<sup>1</sup>**

JCSM–447–77

Washington, December 1, 1977

SUBJECT

Joint Use of Philippine Bases (C)

1. (C) Reference a memorandum by the Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs), I-24165/77, 12 October 1977,<sup>2</sup> subject as above, which requested the views of the Joint Chiefs

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330–80–0017, 78, [untitled]. Secret.

<sup>2</sup> The memorandum is in Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330–80–0035, 27, Philippines 560–680.1 1977.

of Staff on joint use with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) of US facilities at bases in the Philippines.

2. (S) Joint use arrangements with countries in the Pacific generally have been successful. This is due to the establishment of proper terms of reference and to a clear understanding by the host governments of benefits derived from a US presence. The major pitfall to be avoided is a lack of, or imprecise, delineation of the jurisdiction, authority, and responsibility of each party over joint use areas and services. Joint use agreements with allied governments, including those currently in effect between the US Air Force and the AFP, are discussed in Appendix A.<sup>3</sup>

3. (S) Among the principal advantages of joint use are that it encourages the Government of the Philippines (GOP) to continue the mutual defense relationship with the United States and to reach an accord on a new Military Bases Agreement. It also would improve AFP capabilities and the relations of US Forces with the GOP. On the other hand, expanded joint use would have an adverse effect on operational flexibility and mission performance, create cost-sharing problems, and limit the ability of the United States to expand capabilities to meet war or contingency requirements. Additional views on advantages and disadvantages of joint use are contained in Appendix B.<sup>4</sup>

4. (S) In order to minimize the impact on US Forces, additional joint use arrangements with the GOP must insure that activities undertaken by the AFP do not hamper US operational effectiveness. Terms and conditions which should be contained in a joint use agreement are outlined in Appendix C.

5. (S) US installations in the Philippines play an essential role in supporting US interests in WESTPAC and the Indian Ocean. Although some operational flexibility exists to relinquish or share US Air Force facilities in the Philippines, the scope of such joint use would be greatly constrained by current and programmed use. No operational flexibility exists to relinquish US Navy facilities, but some sharing might be accommodated. Details on relinquishing or sharing US facilities are contained in Appendix D.

6. (S) Most US facilities are presently being used to capacity; therefore, increased joint use would require major expenditures to expand or replace shared facilities. Expanded joint use would also necessitate increased training to raise Philippine managerial and technical skills to a level which would minimize the disruptive effect of relinquishment or sharing on US Forces.

---

<sup>3</sup> Appendix A, attached but not printed, is entitled "Joint Use Agreements with Allied Governments."

<sup>4</sup> Appendices B, C, and D were not attached.

7. (S) Overall, substantial joint use with the AFP of US facilities does not appear feasible due to the adverse impact on the US capability to support its forces operating in WESTPAC. With careful planning and thorough preparation, however, some limited joint use could be implemented at US Navy facilities and further expanded at US Air Force facilities. It should be noted that the GOP has not requested any broadening of the scope of joint use currently in effect at the bases. Accordingly, the United States should offer expansion of joint use arrangements only to gain major Philippine concessions during the base negotiations.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

**Patrick J. Hannifin**  
*Vice Admiral, USN*  
*Director, Joint Staff*

---

### **311. Telegram From the Department of State to the White House<sup>1</sup>**

Manila, December 23, 1977, 0002Z

305572. Following repeat Manila 20092 sent action SecState 22 Dec 77.

Quote Secret Manila 20092. Nodis. For the Secretary. Subject: U.S.-Philippine Relations.

1. When I saw President Carter on October 27,<sup>2</sup> he asked me, after my first weeks in Manila, to send him my personal appraisal of our situation. The following message is for submission to the President.

2. My first impression is of the intensity and complexity of our ties to the Philippines.

3. We have significant assets: good will bordering on adulation, substantial investment and trade, a political orientation favorable to our interests, and our military base structure. These assets are balanced by an acute sensitivity to our criticism and involvement and by the emergence of a new general [opinion] less tied to us and to our common past.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Cables File, Far East, Box 11, 12/77. Secret; Immediate; Nodis.

<sup>2</sup> Carter and Newsom met on October 27 from 4 to 4:10 p.m. (Carter Library, Presidential Materials, President's Daily Diary)

4. At the moment, the focus is on the future of the bases. In them, we have an efficient and economical military outpost as well as a symbol of our presence in Asia and the Indian Ocean. President Marcos appears to reflect a general public opinion in wanting to find a politically acceptable formula to preserve our facilities. He is personally conducting the talks with me. At least the outline of a possible understanding is in sight. Your personal interest, manifested in your meeting with Mrs. Marcos and your letter to him,<sup>3</sup> has undoubtedly been a major factor in the President's positive attitude.

5. Even with an agreement with President Marcos which gives us continued access on reasonable terms, I realize we must gain approval in the face of strongly negative feelings in the public and Congress based on the perception of the Philippine human rights situation.

6. Philippine democracy collapsed with the declaration of martial law in 1972. Many respected observers here tell me that corruption, irresponsibility, and a breakdown in public order contributed to the collapse. Marcos insists, with somewhat less evidence, that the country was seriously threatened by existing Communist movements.

7. The record since martial law was declared has been mixed. It seems clear that economic development has advanced. Per capita GNP has doubled. Partial land reform has been started. Investment has risen. Rice production has increased 25%. There may have been a modest adjustment in income distribution favoring the lowest 40%. At the same time civil liberties have been severely curtailed, the judicial process has lost some of its independence, and there have been cases of inhuman treatment and of detention without charges and trial.

8. Marcos now faces the question: what next? He is clearly firmly in power. The opposition is disorganized and weak. Nevertheless, the legitimacy of his regime is challenged, both externally and internally, and few accept his referenda as the answer. He still faces the Moslem revolt in the south and scattered activities of the Maoist New Peoples' Army in Luzon and the other islands.

9. It is clear that (a) he will not return to the old form of democratic institutions and (b) he will reject new forms which might threaten his continued rule. His views are undoubtedly a mixture of personal ambition, a feeling that the country is threatened by the Communists and an irresponsible opposition, and the belief that his rule is the answer both to insuring order and to fostering development. He does not feel we fully comprehend the problems he faces.

10. Within this context, he wants to respond to our concerns. He has agreed to meet privately with me each week to discuss human

---

<sup>3</sup> See Documents 304 and 306.

rights issues. He is examining how he can more effectively explain his point of view directly to key members of Congress and opinion makers in the U.S. Aware of charges of torture and disappearance, he appears to be seeking to curb the excesses of his security forces. In the case of his strong-willed opponent Aquino, currently under death sentence, he will probably ultimately compromise—if Aquino will agree. He seems to believe that some priests and nuns have cooperated with the Communists, but understands the external problem caused by their imprisonment without trial. He has permitted some greater freedom of criticism. He says he is moving toward a form of elected legislature. He is continuing an emphasis on rural and urban development.

11. While it is possible that within another three to four months, we can reach agreement here on the future of the bases, I am acutely aware that we must simultaneously persuade President Marcos to take steps in the treatment of his citizens and in due process of law which will make our defense of the relationship credible with the American people and the Congress. I am also aware that such steps are a prerequisite to any direct meeting between you and President Marcos—something he very much desires.

12. The task will not be easy. Marcos will only go so far. His ultimate conditions for continuing our bases could yet turn out to be unreasonable. Marcos' critics in the United States will maintain their campaign. Some are undoubtedly genuinely seeking a return to democracy; others are probably more interested in removing Marcos than in promoting human rights. While I believe Marcos will take steps to eliminate the inhuman treatment of those under arrest, we may have to present and defend a bases agreement important to our national strategic policies against a Philippine human rights background that in other respects may be less than perfect.

13. In the task ahead, I deeply appreciate your continuing personal interest, the fine support of Secretary Vance and Dick Holbrooke and the officials of the Department of Defense and the Armed Services. I am hopeful that we can in the end preserve our significant assets here and this complex and important relationship with the Philippines.

Newsom Unquote

**Vance**

**312. Memorandum From the Administrator of the Agency for International Development (Gilligan) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, February 10, 1978

SUBJECT

The Quid for Military Installations and A.I.D.-Assisted Philippine Projects

This is in response to your January 20 memorandum.<sup>2</sup>

I am sensitive to the need to satisfy President Marcos' desires in order to stabilize our access to key military facilities in the Philippines. However, if the A.I.D. program were to be used as part of a base rights compensation package, we are concerned that we would pay too high a price in terms of its negative impact on other U.S. foreign policy objectives—both global and specific—to the Philippines. It is particularly important to consider the general issue of using economic assistance as payment for base rights in terms of its potential impact on the President's decision to seek substantial increases in foreign aid funds. If effectively executed, the President's decision should help persuade the South of the seriousness of U.S. concern about worldwide basic human needs. On the other hand, if a substantial portion of aid funds is used to buy access to military facilities, our credibility will suffer.

*A. A.I.D. Development Assistance Projects*

A.I.D. can play a positive and constructive role in supporting U.S. foreign policy objectives in the Philippines. Based on my recent visit to the Philippines, I am confident that we can make a significant contribution to alleviating the miserable social and economic conditions of the population living adjacent to Clark Air Force Base and Subic Bay and help alleviate a serious irritant in U.S.-Philippines relations. We are now actively engaged in programs benefiting the population of those areas within the structure of A.I.D.'s current development assistance strategy. Furthermore, we see opportunities to direct greater resources to those areas over the next five years without damaging the

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Armacost Chron File, Box 6, 2/13–22/78. Secret.

<sup>2</sup> In his January 20 memorandum, "Aid Projects in the Philippines," Brzezinski asked Gilligan to provide recommendations concerning aid that could be offered as compensation in the base negotiations, with particular emphasis on an assistance program for the areas next to Clark and Subic Bay and the provision of Security Supporting Assistance. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 39, Philippines, 1978)



integrity of our development assistance program. Some of the activities we foresee undertaking include:

- a new Housing Investment Guarantee program to provide low income housing and related services to the area;
- an integrated health, family planning program for the entire area;
- a substantial increase in small-scale community development services under the auspices of U.S. and Philippine private voluntary agencies (PVOs) but financed by A.I.D.;
- local government administration which would include, for example, the provision of small-scale potable water systems and feeder roads.

I believe this geographic focus would be supported by the Government of the Philippines.

*B. An A.I.D. Quid for Base Rights*

It is A.I.D.'s position that economic assistance should not be used in a manner which would link it to U.S. base rights. Accordingly, I believe it would be a serious mistake to move to a Security Supporting Assistance program in the Philippines. In the first place, as a general policy, we believe that economic assistance should not be used to pay for military bases or other related facilities. From a budget standpoint, it is easier to weigh the costs and benefits of related requirements—in this case military requirements—when they are in the same budget account. Now that the Congressional budget process has been established, inclusion of this military item in the International Affairs category makes it more difficult than in the past to prevent funds for base rights from being appropriated at the expense of, for example, contributions to international financial institutions, or some other International Affairs purpose. The International Affairs category is relatively small, without the elbow room that the National Security category has to accommodate such items.

In addition to the budget problem, it seems anomalous for A.I.D. to defend before the Congress and administer a program that is intended to meet military objectives. The Department of Defense is in the best position to calculate realistically, and convey to the Congress the true value of the facility to the United States—including the increased security to the area in which the base is located because of its association with the United States and the nature of mutual military obligations if an alliance is involved.

Furthermore, there is a serious question as to whether Congress would agree to the continuation of the Development Assistance program in the Philippines if it accedes to the use of SSA funds as a *quid* for base rights. While the legislative prohibition restricting the use of DA and SSA funds in the same country has been somewhat eased, we

would have to seek explicit approval of the Congress at a time when Congressional attitudes relating to the Marcos regime are largely negative.

Finally, a U.S. multi-year commitment to an economic assistance package would undermine whatever leverage the U.S. has in carrying out development assistance strategy for the benefit of the poor. If A.I.D. gets locked into a commitment to provide a predetermined amount of resources, there would be little opportunity to encourage the GOP to take the policy actions required to give the poor majority a more equitable share of the development benefits. Predetermined aid commitments also would diminish U.S. influence on improving GOP human rights performance.

For all of these reasons, I strongly recommend that whatever leverage we need for the base rights negotiations be divorced from any A.I.D.-administered account. If economic incentives are needed as part of an arrangement for military facilities, the cost should be calculated as part of the U.S. military budget, and the Department of Defense should make and defend the request for funds.

As you know, an Interagency Task Force has been examining the general question of payments for overseas military facilities. I suggest that the Philippine base rights issue represents an appropriate occasion to bring this broader issue forward for Presidential resolution.

We are aware that State and DOD do not fully share our views on the SSA question. In the interest of time, we have asked State and DOD to submit their comments separately.

**John J. Gilligan**

### 313. Summary of Conclusions of a Presidential Review Committee Meeting<sup>1</sup>

Washington, February 28, 1978, 3–4 p.m.

#### SUBJECT

Philippine Bases

#### PARTICIPANTS

##### *State*

Secretary Cyrus Vance  
Mr. Richard Holbrooke  
Asst Secretary for EA and  
Pacific Affairs  
Ambassador David Newsom

##### *Defense*

Dep Secretary Charles Duncan  
Mr. Morton Abramowitz  
Dep Asst Sec for EA, Pacific  
and Inter-American Affairs

##### *JCS*

Lt General William Smith

##### *CIA*

Mr. Nathaniel Thayer  
National Intelligence Officer

##### *Treasury*

Mr. C. Fred Bergsten  
Asst Secretary for  
International Affairs

##### *OMB*

Mr. Randy Jayne

##### *AID*

Governor John Gilligan  
Mr. David Bronheim  
Special Asst to the  
Administrator

##### *White House*

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski  
Mr. David Aaron

##### *NSC*

Mr. Michael Armacost

#### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

The PRC met on February, 1978 to consider financial compensation aspects of Philippine base negotiations. Agreement was reached on the following:

—An amendment of the current Military Base Agreement would serve U.S. interests by placing our access to important facilities on a more stable and durable basis. This justifies a major effort in the coming weeks to resolve outstanding base issues and secure agreement with President Marcos on levels of compensation we will attempt to secure from the Congress in order to wind up negotiations, if possible, by April 14–15 when Vice President Mondale will visit Manila.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, 1977–1981, Box 68, PRC 056: Philippines Base Issues, 2/28/78. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. Carter initialed the top of the first page. No minutes of the meeting have been found.

<sup>2</sup> Mondale's trip was postponed until May 2–4.

—We should include Security Supporting Assistance as a grant element in the Philippine compensation package. It was agreed that this would not constitute a precedent for other base negotiations.

—We should be prepared to include modest levels of MAP in the compensation package, but should phase out MAP as rapidly as practicable, e.g., in FY 1981.

—We should avoid linking our economic assistance package directly with the base negotiations, but within the framework of our Philippine aid program should fund additional ways of ameliorating deplorable economic conditions in areas directly adjacent to the major bases, i.e., Olongapo and Angeles City.

—Ambassador Newsom should be authorized to present an initial offer to President Marcos—following consultations on the Hill—to include in the period FY 80–85 up to \$150 million in Security Supporting Assistance; \$30–\$50 million in MAP; and \$200–\$250 million in FMS credits. This should be presented not as a binding commitment but as levels of compensation the Administration will make every effort to obtain from the Congress. Within these broad guidelines, the negotiator will retain latitude to adjust the package to enhance its negotiability.

—State and Defense will brief key Congressional leaders immediately on the outlines of the amended agreement we envisage, indicating only in general terms the range of compensation we plan to propose to the Philippine Government.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski<sup>3</sup>**

---

<sup>3</sup> Brzezinski initialed "ZB" above his typed signature.

**314. Memorandum From Michael Armacost of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, March 21, 1978

## SUBJECT

Philippine Base Negotiations

We got our response to our compensation offer from Marcos today.<sup>2</sup> In a nutshell they are not “buying” our package yet; signalled their intent to make a counter proposal; and took a fairly hard line on several key base issues. They presented us with an aide memoire which requested that we give up the Subic waters (the Navy is adamantly opposed to this), the watershed around Subic (some compromise can probably be worked out on this), Wallace Air Station and the John Hay R&R facility (something can presumably be worked out here). In addition, they sought greater authority for the Philippine Base Commander (this amounts to some regression from the January 9–10 understandings)<sup>3</sup> and promised a Philippine counterproposal to the “unsatisfactory” U.S. compensation offer sometime after the April 7 interim legislative elections. Finally, they raised anew the naughty [*Knotty*] criminal jurisdiction issue which we thought had been laid to rest.

Marcos described the aide memoire as a response and not a rejection. In the meeting he adopted a somewhat aloof stance, allowing his Defense and Foreign Ministers to do most of the talking.<sup>4</sup> Newsom will seek a private meeting with Marcos to explore his own views. What we got, I suspect, is (1) a Marcos ploy to let Romulo and Enrile blow off some steam; (2) a typical Philippine bargaining maneuver designed to extract further concessions formulation; (3) a genuine expression of some disappointment at compensation levels that are \$100 million below what Kissinger offered on the military assistance side; and (4) Marcos' method of holding off any further movement on

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, 1977–1981, Box 35, PRM 14 [1]. Secret. Sent for information. Armacost did not initial the memorandum.

<sup>2</sup> In telegram 4590 from Manila, March 21, the Embassy transmitted the text of Marcos's aide-mémoire responding to the U.S. offer. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780124–0297)

<sup>3</sup> A summary of the January 9–10 negotiations, headed on the U.S. side by Holbrooke, is in telegram 483 from Manila, January 10. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780014–0586)

<sup>4</sup> Telegram 4589 from Manila, March 21, transmitted an account of the meeting. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780124–0308)

this issue until after the elections in order that he not be accused of entertaining seriously during the pre-election period a formula for agreement on the bases that would be difficult to portray in Manila as a great political triumph.

The Inter-agency Group will meet on Thursday<sup>5</sup> to discuss next steps. We still have some negotiating flexibility. Newsom withheld \$20 million in MAP and \$30 million FMS from the levels authorized by the PRC and the services have not gotten to their bottom line on base issues such as Subic waters, Subic watershed, John Hay, and Wallace Air Station. I will keep you advised of the judgments we reach about next steps in the negotiations. One question which we must address fairly soon is whether to bring Dave Newsom out on schedule. At present he is planning to return to Washington on March 27. If the Vice President's trip remains on schedule, I believe he should stay in Manila through April 15 to handle both the next steps in the base talks and to place the groundwork for a successful visit.

---

<sup>5</sup> March 23.

---

**315. Telegram From the Embassy in the Philippines to the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Certain Military Commands<sup>1</sup>**

Manila, March 28, 1978, 1130Z

4888. Military addressees treat as Specat Exclusive. Subj: Base Discussions: March 28 GOP Aide Memoire.

Provided below is full text of GOP aide memoire presented at March 28 meeting.

Begin quote:

Aide Memoire

The Philippine Government is aware that a state of continuing deadlock between the Philippines and the United States on the bases negotiations does not promote the best interests of both countries. Both

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330-81-0202, 68, Philippines 323.3 1978. Secret; Immediate; Specat; Exdis. Also sent to CINCPAC, CINCPACAF, CINCPACFLT, 13th AF, and CINCPACREPPHIL.

governments recognize the need to keep the negotiating process alive, maintain the momentum of discussions and ensure further progress.

In the hope that it would contribute to this objective, the Philippine Government feels that it is desirable to formulate new approaches.

In this spirit and in the desire to facilitate the early resolution of the military base negotiations, the Philippine Government wishes to state its preference for the settlement of the issue of sovereignty on a priority basis. The matter of "compensation" for the use of the bases shall be considered as a separate issue which may be discussed in detail at an appropriate time.

The Philippine Government therefore wishes to propose to the United States Government the turn-over of all base areas occupied by the United States Forces at the earliest practicable date.

In this respect, the Philippines is prepared to designate Philippine base commanders who shall receive the military bases from the U.S. Government on behalf of the Philippine Government. Philippine base commanders shall control and administer the military bases in accordance with agreed mechanics of administration.

After the turn-over of the base areas, the Philippines shall undertake to give full permission to the U.S. to use the built-up areas within the Philippine military bases in which its facilities are presently located. In this connection, the Philippines offers its guarantee to allow the U.S. to manage and direct certain activities inside these facilities, including certain designated portions of Subic Bay, in order to ensure unhampered military operations for its forces.

After the formal relinquishment and turnover of all base areas to the Philippine Government, the United States may also be allowed to operate under such arrangement as lease back or other similar devices certain tracts of land such as Grande Island, Camp Wallace, Camp John Hay, Crow Valley Gunnery Range, San Miguel Communications Station, the Subic watershed, etc., within the relinquished base areas for continued U.S. use, subject to rules and other provisions promulgated by Philippine authorities in consultation with appropriate U.S. authorities which will be contained in separately worked-out documents between the two governments.

On the cost-sharing for the security and administration of the military bases at Clark and Subic, the Armed Forces of the Philippines will be spending for the next five years approximately \$15.0M per annum at current prices and dollar-peso conversion rate. The estimated total capital expenditure of \$35.0M, although incorporated as an amount equivalent to roughly \$7.0M per year, spread over the five-year period, may in fact be spent within the first few years of implementation. In anticipation of the proximate installation of Philippine base command-

ers, the Philippine Government would welcome specific suggestions or arrangements from the United States Government on how the concept of cost-sharing on the maintenance of the bases could be achieved.

On the question of criminal jurisdiction, the Philippines proposes that when jurisdiction over a criminal offense committed by a member of the U.S. Armed Forces, a member of the civilian component or a dependent, is not resolved by agreement of both governments, the issue shall be decided by the Philippine court which has jurisdiction over the offense. In this manner, the issue will be decided objectively on the basis of the evidence.

End quote

**Newsom**

---

**316. Memorandum From Vice President Mondale to  
President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 13, 1978

SUBJECT

Philippine Election Aftermath and Options for Pacific Trip

President Marcos' conduct of the legislative elections,<sup>2</sup> his arrests of some opposition leaders in Manila, and his threats to U.S. correspondents in the Philippines complicate planning for my visit to the Pacific in your behalf. At Marcos' instruction, the Philippine Foreign Minister informed our Embassy on April 12:

"We welcome the visit of the Vice President but wish him to know beforehand that any visit to Aquino or any dealings with the opposition would have explosive and seditious effect. Accordingly, we would not want any such visit or dealings."

Clearly, we cannot accept these conditions. When I go to the Philippines, I would not plan to visit Aquino in prison, but I must have the latitude to have contact with Cardinal Sin and members of the opposition who request a meeting. I believe that whether the visit goes forward

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Overseas Assignments—Trip Files, 1977–1980, Box 20, VP's Visit to the Pacific, 4/29/78–5/11/78: Background [2]. Confidential. Mondale did not initial the memorandum.

<sup>2</sup> Legislative elections were held on April 7.



as currently planned or is postponed, we will have to make sure that President Marcos understands this requirement. A proposed message to him on this subject is at Tab A.<sup>3</sup>

There are three basic options for handling the visit.

1. *Proceed with visit as currently scheduled.* This would have me arrive in Manila on May 2–4 with subsequent stopovers in Jakarta, Bangkok, Canberra and Wellington, and with return to Washington on May 10. We have been advised that these dates are acceptable to all the host governments (the Thailand and Indonesian visits would have to be switched to accommodate the Thais). This scheduling would permit us to follow-through with the visit as soon as possible after the vote on the second Panama Canal Treaty<sup>4</sup>—an objective we had earlier agreed was desirable.

The principal drawback is that we cannot control events in the Philippines between now and May 2. Further opposition protests are planned for this weekend. In the aftermath of the election, announcement of my visit for early May could fan the flames, rouse the opposition to even greater protests and possibly cause Marcos to take more repressive actions both against the opposition and against foreign correspondents. It would be a mistake to announce the early May schedule and then have to cancel the Philippine stopover because of unacceptable developments in late April.

I am advised by the State Department that in terms of the base negotiations—in which we are presently awaiting the Philippine response to our compensation offer—there is no reason why my visit need take place in early May, as it is highly unlikely that there will be progress sufficient to reach an agreement in the next two weeks.<sup>5</sup>

2. *Proceed with Pacific visit excluding the Philippines.* This option would enable me to travel to Bangkok, Jakarta, Canberra and Wellington, perhaps with the addition of Singapore and Kuala Lumpur, to underscore your commitment to the Pacific. However, it has very major drawbacks. The Philippine stopover is the most important leg of this trip. Our military presence in the Pacific is centered in the Philippines. Other leaders of the ASEAN countries do not interpret the human rights issue as we do, and they would not understand why I was snubbing Marcos, nor would the Japanese or Chinese. The press story from start to finish would be my omission of the Philippines.

---

<sup>3</sup> Not attached.

<sup>4</sup> The Senate approved the second Panama Canal Treaty on April 18.

<sup>5</sup> An unknown hand wrote, "No Ambassador," in the margin adjacent to this paragraph. Newsom left post on March 30.

3. *Postpone visit until early July.* Taking into account scheduling difficulties with New Zealand and Thailand, we could inform host governments that we prefer to make the visit during July 1–9 (the next Congressional recess), and state publicly that we have put the trip off until July because of scheduling complications. There would, of course, be press reports suggesting that the situation in the Philippines caused the postponement. I believe that would be manageable, and might even have a salutary effect on Marcos.

An early July schedule would give Marcos time to digest our message on my need for latitude in terms of the people I may wish to see. It would allow the post election temper of the Philippines to cool, although whatever the dates for the visit, they will still spur the opposition parties into action and lead to requests for meetings with me.

By July, we will have a new Ambassador in place and there is the possibility that the base negotiations may be brought to a point where an announcement of agreement might be possible. This, timed to my visit, would be important in terms of your strategic objective of demonstrating our commitment to the Pacific and to a continued military presence.

Cy and Zbig concur in the above review of the issues that have to be taken into account. My own inclination would be to postpone the visit until early July pointing publicly to scheduling difficulties. I would greatly appreciate your guidance.<sup>6</sup>

Schedule visit for early July

Proceed with visit in early May

Proceed with visit, minus Philippines, in early May<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> An unknown hand drew a line from this paragraph to the bottom margin of the memorandum and wrote, "What do Cy & Zbig want?"

<sup>7</sup> No option was selected.

**317. Letter From President Carter to Philippine President Marcos<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 27, 1978

Dear Mr. President:

I am delighted that Vice President Mondale is visiting the Philippines. I have asked him to convey to you my own personal interest in deepening our bilateral relationship. I was particularly pleased to learn that you rescheduled the commemoration of Corregidor/Bataan<sup>2</sup> to coincide with the Vice President's visit. This event serves to remind us of the depth and durability of those ties which bind our nations together.

I want you to know that the Vice President will be speaking authoritatively for me, and that I attach the utmost importance to the outcome of his talks with you for the interests we share in Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

The Vice President will wish to review with you recent developments in U.S.-Philippine relations, and to explore next steps in our productive dialogue. In particular, he will want to review progress in the base negotiations, ways in which the United States may be supportive of Philippine economic development issues, and our mutual interests in the advancement of human rights. I look forward to his report.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Overseas Assignments—Trip Files, 1977–1980, Box 20, VP's Visit to the Pacific, 4/29/78–5/11/78: Philippines (5/2/78–5/4/78)—President Carter's Letter to President Marcos. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> Reference is to the annual commemoration in the Philippines of the World War II Battle of Corregidor and the fall of Bataan.

### 318. Telegram From the Embassy in the Philippines to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Manila, May 4, 1978, 0955Z

7272. Military addressees handle as Specat Exclusive. Subject: Vice President's Meeting With Marcos May 3—(Staff in Attendance). Ref: (A) Manila 7196 (Notal), (B) State 30713,—(C) Manila 4888.<sup>2</sup>

(Following account has not been cleared with Vice President's party.)

1. Summary. Following 90-minute private meeting between Vice President and President Marcos,<sup>3</sup> broader session involving principal advisers on both sides was convened. In 80-minute working session involving this larger group, discussion focused on base negotiations and economic issues. On base negotiations, focus was on issue of sovereignty with shared recognition that Philippine sovereignty at the bases should be manifested and that appropriate arrangements should be made for U.S. command and control in the areas required by the U.S. Marcos suggested, and the Vice President agreed, that a joint statement indicating publicly the progress which has been made in negotiations would be desirable. (See Ref A) It was agreed that discussions (primarily military to military) should now proceed to work out the details on how agreed principles might be applied. Marcos said that the GOP would submit counterproposals to those previously submitted by the U.S., including compensation. Marcos said that the question of compensation should be set aside for later. Describing criminal jurisdiction as one of the thorniest problems, Marcos initially expressed interest in the Japanese formula but seemed to lose enthusiasm upon learning of the side minute to the Japanese SOFA<sup>4</sup> which brings the Joint Commit-

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Overseas Assignments—Trip Files, 1977–1980, Box 21, VP's Visit to the Pacific, 4/29/78–5/11/78: Philippines—Diplomatic Trip Cables 4/28–6/2/78 [2]. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information Immediate to Bangkok, SecDef, JCS, CINCPAC, CINCPACFLT, CINCPACAF, CINCPACREPPH, 13THAF, and Tokyo.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 7196 from Manila, May 3, transmitted the joint statement to be issued on May 4, and telegram 30713 to Manila, February 4, transmitted the texts of notes and implementing arrangements for an agreement on the Philippine bases. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780189–0078 and D780054–0767) Telegram 4888 from Manila, March 28, is printed as Document 315.

<sup>3</sup> No record of the meeting, which concerned human rights, has been found, but see Documents 129 and 322. See also Jay Matthews, "Mondale Suggests Marcos Release His Jailed Foes," *Washington Post*, May 4, 1978, p. A1.

<sup>4</sup> Reference is to Article VI of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, January 19, 1960. (11 UST 1652; TIAS 4510) For the text of the treaty and related documents, see Department of State *Bulletin*, February 8, 1960, pp. 184–198.

tee into the picture. The Vice President said this difficult and emotional issue should be pursued by the experts. Marcos made a pitch for economic and social help for the areas around the bases, promising specific proposals from the GOP, perhaps in a week. The Vice President said he would welcome these proposals and reiterated that the U.S. does want to help. Contrary to earlier indications, Marcos did not take up the economic issues first, nor did he link them with the base question. He enumerated the economic issues in a perfunctory manner—Philippine mahogany, coconut oil, textile agreement, and the countervailing duty on garments. He accepted readily the Vice President's responses without seeking further concessions or explanations, and he often appeared totally disinterested in the subject. End Summary.

2. Opening. The Vice President thanked President Marcos for making the meeting possible, referring to sentiments expressed by President Carter in a letter earlier conveyed by the Vice President.<sup>5</sup> Marcos expressed thanks for the letter from President Carter and the kind thoughts it conveyed. He noted President Carter's expressed desire to review base negotiations, economic issues and human rights, suggesting that this would be an appropriate agenda (human rights was not discussed at this meeting). Present on the Philippine side were Foreign Secretary Romulo, Defense Secretary Enrile, Justice Secretary Abad Santos, Director of National Development Sicat, Trade Secretary Quiazon, Industry Secretary Paterno, Labor Secretary Ople, Information Secretary Tatad, Solicitor General Mendoza, AFP Chief of Staff General Espino, Presidential Assistant Tuvera, Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs Collantes, former Vice President Pelaez, and a number of second echelon staff. Present on the U.S. side were members of the official party plus Charge Stull and Embassy officials.

### 3. Base Negotiations.

—A. Sovereignty. Marcos said that the GOP is preparing a counter-proposal to the proposals previously submitted by the U.S., including the compensation package. Marcos, assisted by Enrile, then set out to review the Philippine position on certain of the recent proposals concerning the "issues of sovereignty."

Marcos expressed agreement that the U.S. should retain control of the "built up" areas at Clark (4,500 hectares) and Subic (6,000 hectares). He said, however, that there are some problems in several of the U.S. proposals. In a somewhat disjointed fashion, Enrile went on to cite the following:

---

<sup>5</sup> See Document 317.

—1) Subic Waters. “We are taking over the entire area (bay) but we will provide assurances that a certain portion will be available to the U.S.”

—2) Grande Island. “We will take over but the facilities will be run by the U.S.”

—3) Watershed. “We proposed that the watershed be reverted but that there be a joint management plan.”

—4) Other Areas. Without being specific, Enrile suggested that the GOP has problems with the U.S. proposal on the State Department regional relay facility at Clark and perhaps with the proposed delineation for San Miguel. He explicitly cited as a problem the proposal to break out of the Wallace Reservation the VOA site. He also said “there is also the question of Camp John Hay—a R&R facility.”

Assistant Secretary Holbrooke noted the progress that has been made in the discussions since last year suggesting that there is now a need to determine how best to continue this process.

—Marcos said that the fundamental issue of sovereignty has been largely settled by the U.S. proposals. He observed that what is needed now is to spell out the manifestations of sovereignty. Marcos cited, for example, the rules and regulations required for the Philippine and U.S. commanders. The Vice President agreed that there is agreement in principle to have a Philippine base commander and to fly the Philippine flag, noting that there is also the requirement to have clearly defined operational arrangements. He suggested that talks proceed on a military to military basis to settle the details. Marcos said the GOP agrees with the proposal submitted by the U.S. on February 13<sup>6</sup> regarding sovereignty. He then read subparagraphs A, B, C, D, and H from the draft note submitted on that date (Ref B). The Vice President suggested that the Philippine and U.S. commanders meet and work out the details of melding the two principles of Philippine sovereignty and unhampered U.S. command and control. He indicated that when the details are worked out at the military level, they can be submitted to the diplomatic level.

—B. Compensation. The Vice President referred to the “difficult issue of compensation.” He noted that there have been serious problems on amounts. He went on to review the record of congressional opposition to multi-year commitments, noting that the agreement with Turkey had been abandoned because of this problem. The Vice President indi-

---

<sup>6</sup> Telegram 2396 from Manila, February 13, reported on Newsom’s meeting with Marcos in which he presented the package of proposed notes, implementing arrangements, and maps. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780065-0541)

cated U.S. willingness to commit itself to a “best faith effort.” Marcos suggested that compensation be set aside for discussion at a later date.

—C. Criminal Jurisdiction. Marcos read the GOP position on criminal jurisdiction as formulated in its aide memoire of March 28 (Ref C). Stating that this is one of the thorniest unresolved issues, Marcos said that the GOP proposal follows the so-called Japanese formula. Solicitor General Mendoza then read the agreed minute to Article XVII, para 3(2) (II) of the Japanese SOFA. Abramowitz pointed out that there is an additional side minute which provides that any evidence to the contrary must be submitted to and approved by both members of a joint committee. Marcos said he had not been aware of this side minute. The Vice President said that the issue of criminal jurisdiction is a difficult and emotional one for both sides, referring to the “Girard” case some years ago in Japan. The Vice President suggested that the legal experts sit down and work on the problem.

—D. Assistance for Olongapo and Angeles. Marcos referred to the need for providing help for the areas around the bases, specifically Angeles and Olongapo cities. Marcos said that the GOP Secretaries of Agriculture, Industry and Labor are developing proposals which may be submitted in a week. Marcos confirmed that the help is needed for the areas outside the bases, not within. However, he did note that he has a recommendation from his Department of Labor that some jobs within the bases be restructured. It was agreed that a drafting group composed of Enrile, Romualdez, Mendoza, Holbrooke, Abramowitz and Armacost would meet later in the day to develop a joint statement on negotiations—a statement subsequently released on our side early May 4 (Ref A) and on the Philippine side about 12 hours later.

#### 4. Economic Issues.

—A. Contrary to earlier indications Marcos did not take up economic issues first, nor did he link the economic issues with the base question. He opened the discussion on economic issues by referring to an aide memoire and stating that the issues are well known. He listed them—Philippine mahogany and coconut oil, the bilateral textile agreement, and the countervailing duty on garments. He doubted that time would permit a discussion of the air agreement.

—B. The Vice President told Marcos that our offer on coconut oil for zero duty has been reinstated but that the most we can go on mahogany plywood under the Trade Act is from 20 percent to 8 percent. He stressed that we need GOP counter-offers to sustain our generous offer involving over 300 million dollars of Philippine exports, to which President said GOP can offer 81 items. (This is offer tabled April 27 and found wanting by USDEL MTN.)

—C. The Vice President assured Marcos of our understanding of Philippine situation regarding countervailing duty investigation on

garments, to which Romulo could not resist reading his aide memoire (see Manila 4739).<sup>7</sup> He reiterated that U.S. will be prepared to negotiate new textile agreement the third week in May.

—D. Offer to send DOE energy team to Philippines was accepted immediately by Marcos who expressed hope that Secretary of Energy Velasco could meet with Secretary Schlesinger (which was subsequently arranged by Vice President). GOP officials present appreciated use of LANDSAT facilities and promised to send memo to the Vice President on their utility.

—E. Marcos emphasized that GOP had complied with American desires on the termination of the Laurel-Langley agreement,<sup>8</sup> and read lengthy litany of GOP action on land, leases, retail trade, anti-dummy ruling, and service contracts. These GOP acts met American desires, and he wanted VP and USG to know about it. Comment. Although Marcos made no direct linkage between GOP action and USG action or inaction, there was strong implication that only one side (GOP) had met desires of other side (U.S.).

—F. On ASEAN, the Vice President expressed hope that US/ASEAN meeting in August be on Ministerial level.<sup>9</sup> Romulo said that question will be discussed in ASEAN Foreign Ministerial in June<sup>10</sup> and Thailand had serious reservations because of its neighbors (Vietnam and Cambodia). Romulo added that the VP can persuade Uppadit to come along, but stressed that Washington meeting must show results.

—G. Comment. Marcos handled the economic issues in a matter-of-fact, sometimes disinterested manner, and accepted readily the Vice President's responses without seeking further concessions.

**Stull**

---

<sup>7</sup> Telegram 4739 from Manila, March 27, transmitted the text of the March 26 Philippine aide-mémoire regarding the investigation. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780132-0535)

<sup>8</sup> See footnote 13, Document 293.

<sup>9</sup> The second U.S.-ASEAN Dialogue was scheduled to take place August 3-4 in Washington. See Document 131.

<sup>10</sup> The 11th ASEAN Ministerial meeting was scheduled to take place June 14-16 in Pattaya, Thailand. A summary of the meeting is in telegram 17756 from Bangkok, June 21. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780258-0605)



### 319. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>

Manila, May 3, 1978

#### PARTICIPANTS

The Vice President  
Father James B. Reuter, S.J., Director, Episcopal Commission on Mass Media  
Lee T. Stull, Charge d'Affaires, a.i.  
James A. Johnson, Executive Assistant to the Vice President  
A. Denis Clift, Assistant to the Vice President for National Security Affairs  
Albert Eisele, Assistant to the Vice President and Press Secretary

#### SUBJECT

Vice Presidential Visit: Meeting with Father Reuter

#### REFS

(A) Manila 6576;<sup>2</sup> (B) Manila 5516<sup>3</sup>

SUMMARY: Father Reuter, an American Jesuit who has lived in the Philippines since 1938, told the Vice President that torture of detainees is widespread and that the April 7 legislative election results were rigged. He expressed concern that the opposition is becoming more radicalized while most of the Church hierarchy remains essentially conservative. Fr. Reuter has been religious adviser to the families of President Marcos and Defense Secretary Enrile, but he is currently facing charges of subversion in connection with a Church newsletter he edited until 1976. He is generally considered a moderate among the Church's social activists. END SUMMARY.

American Jesuit Father James Reuter met privately for half an hour May 3 with Vice President Mondale. Reuter promptly raised case of evident torture to death by military intelligence previously detailed Ref A. He gave his opinion that torture is an institutionalized method of oppression, that torture victims sometimes are eliminated to prevent testimony, and that it is inconceivable that such practices are unknown

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Overseas Assignments—Trip Files, 1977–1980, Box 21, VP's Visit to the Pacific, 4/29/78–5/11/78: Philippines (5/2/78–5/4/78)—Meeting with Church and Opposition Leaders [2]. Confidential. Drafted by Stull on May 4; approved by Toussaint on May 8. The meeting took place at the Philippine Plaza Hotel.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 6576 from Manila, April 25, reported the common belief that findings by a joint Philippine Government-Jesuit panel on the death of a young church worker were "whitewashed." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780176–0146)

<sup>3</sup> Telegram 5516 from Manila, April 10, discussed exploratory approaches concerning political asylum for a Philippine dissident. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780153–1235)

to higher authority. Reuter also left data alleging that of fifty-odd detainees currently at Bicutan, 73% have been tortured.

Reuter asserted that the April 7 election was thoroughly rigged and described ballot stuffing and other methods of widespread fraud and voter intimidation. Reuter also sought an advisory opinion on a possible asylum request from an opposition candidate in that election currently in hiding (Ref B). He also described the post-election protest march and arrest of several hundred, including Jesuit Father Romeo Intengan, who is still in detention.

Reuter expressed considerable apprehension concerning the trend of events in the Philippines, which he foresees as more of current deterioration with consequent growing radicalization of opposition elements.

Noting he is Secretary of Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, Reuter said of a total of about 73 bishops, 23 are progressive, 11–13 hard core conservative and the others more disposed to the conservative side. As a result, according to Reuter, the progressives have yet to win a majority. Their best recent showing was 34 votes on an issue put forward by Bishop Labayen, head of the Social Action Committee. (COMMENT: In January 1977, however, the Bishops' Conference overwhelmingly approved a pastoral letter which, *inter alia*, deplored intimidations by PANAMIN, the government's agency for national minority groups; expressed strong concern about recent summary deportations of foreign missionaries; and called for respect for the human rights of all groups in settling the Mindanao insurgency problem. See 77 Manila 1662).<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Telegram 1662 from Manila, February 2, 1977, reported on the Catholic Bishops Conference. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770036–1267)

## 320. Memorandum of Conversations<sup>1</sup>

Manila, May 3, 1978, 2:15 and 4:15 p.m.

### PARTICIPANTS

#### *U.S. Side:*

Vice President Mondale  
Lee T. Stull, Charge d'Affaires  
A. Denis Clift  
James A. Johnson  
Donald R. Toussaint, Deputy  
Chief of Mission  
Bruce Dayton  
Albert Eisele

#### *Philippine Side:*

Sister Irene Davalus, O.S.B.  
Bishop Julio Xavier Labayan  
President Diosado Macapagal  
Gerardo Roxas, former Senator  
and Liberal Party leader  
Salvador P. Lopez, former Foreign  
Secretary and President of  
University of the Philippines

DATE: May 3, 1978

TIME: 2:15 p.m.

PLACE: Philippine Plaza Hotel,  
Manila

#### *U.S. Side:*

Vice President Mondale  
Lee T. Stull, Charge d'Affaires  
A. Denis Clift  
James A. Johnson  
Donald R. Toussaint, Deputy  
Chief of Mission  
Bruce Dayton  
Albert Eisele

#### *Philippine Side:*

Jaime L. Cardinal Sin  
Bishop Cirilo Almario

DATE: May 3, 1978

TIME: 4:15 p.m.

PLACE: Malate Church, Manila

### INTRODUCTION AND SETTING

While in Manila on an official visit, the Vice President held two private meetings for the purpose of discussing the human rights situation in the Philippines: One was with a group of five religious and political leaders; the second was with Jaime Cardinal Sin.

Both meetings were private (i.e., no press or other outsiders). The meeting with Cardinal Sin was announced in advance and, at his request, took place at the Malate Church. The plan for the meeting with the group, but not the names of participants, was also announced in advance; after the meeting, the participation of individuals was acknowledged in response to questions—in all but one case (Bishop Labayan, who specifically asked that there be no acknowledgement of his participation).

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Overseas Assignments—Trip Files, 1977–1980, Box 21, VP's Visit to the Pacific, 4/29/78–5/11/78: Philippines (5/2/78–5/4/78)—Meeting with Church and Opposition Leaders [2]. Confidential. Drafted by Toussaint.

All the individuals who met with the Vice President represented the moderate middle of the spectrum of human rights activists. They are skeptical and critical of the present situation, but not revolutionary. The Catholic Church, as the only mass-based organization not controlled by the government, tends to act as a human rights ombudsman. Sister Irene Dabalus and Bishop Julio Labayan are leaders in the two major Church organizations in the Philippines: the Association of Major Religious Superiors (AMRSP), and the Catholic Bishops' Conference (CBCP). Each has activist arms in the human rights field: notably the Task Force on Detainees, and the National Secretariat for Social Action. Churchwide, however, perhaps a majority of priests and nuns is conservative and disapproves of such activism.

The political leaders—former President Diosado Macapagal, former Senator and Liberal Party leader Gerardo Roxas, and former Foreign Secretary and President of the University of the Philippines Salvador P. Lopez—in normal times would probably be leaders of the “loyal opposition,” but increasingly they regard Marcos' imposition of martial law as having destroyed his government's legitimacy. They have helped keep the opposition movement alive and have worked to build a legal and moral case against martial law, partly by defending detainee rights and organizing small human rights-oriented groups. The opposition movement lacks cohesion but did coalesce to some degree during the election campaign.

Jaime L. Cardinal Sin, 49, is the youngest member of the College of Cardinals, having been named a Cardinal in April 1976. A native of the Visayan Islands in the Central Philippines, he spent most of his early career there. Sin is a political moderate who personally disapproves of martial law. He avoids direct confrontation with the government wherever possible, but he has spoken out on political issues on occasion.

He is currently chairman of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, the Church hierarchy's policy-making body. President Marcos frequently seeks his advice on Church-State relations. He is regarded as strong-minded and solid, with a keen awareness of the problems of the poor and a disarming penchant for earthy humor.

### *Summary*

There were notable similarities in the views expressed by Cardinal Sin and the five religious/political leaders. Both are deeply concerned over serious and growing deprivation of human rights under the Marcos regime; both urge a prompt end to martial law; both see an important and continuing role for the United States in the human rights field.

There were also striking differences.

—The group sees no hope of liberalization while Marcos remains in power and believes Marcos is motivated purely by his desire to

retain power. Sin has respect for Marcos' intelligence and leadership qualities, sees development benefits from his rule and has some hope Marcos can be brought to liberalize his rule.

—The group is deeply concerned that Marcos is leaving no alternative except “a move to the left” for moderate reformers and democrats, youth and the disaffected. Sin is more concerned by “the left” as it is now, seeing it as the principal threat to Philippine society.

—The group believes U.S. aid to the Philippines (economic and military) helps to legitimize and prop up Marcos; they insist, at a minimum, the U.S. make no trade offs between U.S. security interests and human rights in the Philippines. Sin expressed concern the U.S. might abandon the Philippines and urges the continuation of U.S. assistance.

—The group left little doubt they see themselves as the opposition out to get rid of Marcos. Cardinal Sin was careful to make clear in words and demeanor he looks upon himself as a critic but not opponent of Marcos. End Summary.

#### *I. Meeting with Group of Religious/Political Leaders*

The first meeting opened with a frank comment by Roxas that the Vice President's trip was ill timed. It would help to legitimize the Marcos regime shortly after the sham and shameful April elections, among the most fraudulent in Philippine history. He noted two facts which are the measure of the fraud:

—Manila has traditionally gone to “the opposition” in Philippine politics; a clean KBL sweep is simply not a credible outcome.

—Similarly, it is simply beyond belief that a man of Aquino's stature and reputation would pull fewer votes than the lowest KBL candidate.

*Roxas* said the Marcos government is responsible for many, far more serious violations of human rights than fraudulent elections, including torture. He cited the case of Teotido Tantiado as the most recent example. Teotido Tantiado was a young aide to one of the Jesuit priests arrested on April 9 for participating in a demonstration protesting the conduct of the April 7 elections. Tantiado's death in mid-April, despite a government investigation and announcement to the contrary, is believed by many to be the result of torture by security personnel. Clearly, the government has sought to cover up the fact that Tantiado was very roughly handled, perhaps tortured and that his death was the result of that treatment.

*Father Labayan* interjected that the list of missing persons—people who just disappear and are never heard from again—is definitely on the rise. He said the regime often seeks to justify arrests made on ground of “subversion.” The definition of subversion under martial

law, however, is so wide and all encompassing that many clergy simply cannot accept it as a crime.

When Roxas commented that Bishop Labayan was typical of the increasing number of clergy opposed to martial law, *Labayan* agreed and added that the clergy has considerable apprehension about being identified with a political group or party. The Church stands for human rights and a "God-given mission." If the Church becomes lumped with a political group, its force is diluted and its human rights mission becomes suspect. (Bishop Labayan was the one member of the group who insisted that there be no publicity on or acknowledgement of his meeting with the Vice President.)

*Ambassador Lopez* then made the most forceful intervention of the meeting. Noting martial law had been going for five and a half years, he said that it had long ago outlasted the justifications made for it—the insurrection in Mindanao, the chaos and civil disorder elsewhere in the country, the threat from the New People's Army, etc. It is impossible not to conclude that Marcos intends to continue martial law for an unlimited period into the future. Lopez noted there has been trouble in Mindanao since time immemorial. The Marcos justification of martial law as "a necessary tool for social reform" also makes it sound eternal since there will always be a need for social reform. What the Philippines faces is plain and simple dictatorial, one-man rule—an abuse of martial law beyond anything previously experienced in this country. Lopez said the Filipinos resent this situation in large part because of the values they learned during 50 years of American rule. "We have been good or at least ardent students of American democracy and we now see the chance that, through the work of one single person, the experience and efforts of 50 years will go down the drain." Noting this was a painful thing for a nationalist to say, Lopez said he hoped the U.S. would and could do something about this situation—a situation so serious that all avenues must be explored, including help from outside. He said the job of change and reform must be done by the Filipino people—but "we need your help."

*Roxas* joined in to say that the U.S. should, at least, avoid making it difficult for those in the Philippines who seek reform. U.S. actions, including economic and military aid, can have the effect of propping up the Marcos regime—and the U.S. must avoid using its foreign policy tools in a way which perpetuates unhealthy or undesirable regimes.

*Roxas* then said one of his greatest concerns about the present situation is that there is no place for the moderate opposition and moderate reform elements to turn—no place to fit in; as a result, such elements are being forced to move to the left. He sees this happening in many elements of society, particularly the young. "This is becoming a very real and very serious danger." *Bishop Labayan* nodded his complete

agreement and said there are many in the clergy who are gravely concerned “about the radicalization of the opposition” in the Philippines. Their concern is so great that they even talk about the Philippines becoming another Vietnam.

*Sister Irene* took the floor to air four concerns which she said were hardly radical or unrealistic:

- there must be an end to mass arrests, prolonged detention and torture of political prisoners. The answer her group urges is amnesty.

- there must be a restoration of the rights of labor; i.e., the right to collective bargaining and the right to strike. Otherwise, the status of Philippine labor will continue to move downward—and it will become the worst in Southeast Asia.

- steps must be taken to preserve the rights of tribal Filipinos to their lands and their cultural heritage.

- the charges against opposition candidates in the recent election must be dropped completely. It is an absurd situation to charge such candidates with “subversion” since most of them had been encouraged to run by the government.

*Macapagal* then made some lengthy comments. He said the emphasis of the Carter/Mondale administration upon human rights has infused some hope among opposition elements in the Philippines. He thought the policy, as pursued in the Philippines, has demonstrated that President Marcos is amenable to outside pressure on human rights or humanitarian questions. Since it has been shown such pressures produce results, the real question boils down to this: can Marcos successfully intimidate the U.S.—as he has successfully intimidated the Philippine people? Macapagal said Marcos began to try such intimidation immediately after the Vietnam war and has continued it ever since, using the bases as his primary leverage. Marcos looks upon the bases as his major tool or weapon in persuading the U.S. to accept, even collaborate with, his dictatorial rule. He was successful in getting the Ford administration to agree to negotiations for rental or compensation for the bases. He is hopeful of pursuing the same effort with the new U.S. administration; his aim is to get money which can be used to strengthen his own forces and his own position.

*Macapagal* said there is no urgency at all to conclude negotiations about the bases. The present agreement is valid until 1991. Any agreement to pay rent or provide compensation at this point will simply involve the U.S. in “aiding and abetting the oppressor of the Philippine people.” He asked whether the U.S. stake in the bases is so great and so intense that it takes precedence over the other values for which the U.S. has long fought. He said the greatest contribution the U.S. could make to human rights in the Philippines at the present time would be

to delay the base negotiations until there is a restoration of democratic rights and the institutions to protect them. *Ambassador Lopez* enthusiastically supported this thought—adding there “should never be any trade off between bases and security interests of the U.S. and the human/political rights of the Philippine people.”

*The Vice President*, after expressing his sincere appreciation for the group’s interest in meeting with him, explained the essence of the new approach being taken by the Carter administration is to bring traditional American values into the conduct of foreign policy. He cited due process, supremacy of law, and independence of judiciary as examples of the type of values or institutions which have served so well the growth of American society. He noted that one reason President Carter and he had been elected was the fulfillment of certain human or political rights by an important minority in the United States.

He then explained briefly some of the steps taken to bring human rights into foreign policy (e.g., an Assistant Secretary of State in the human rights field,<sup>2</sup> a procedure for reviewing loans in relation to the human rights record,<sup>3</sup> etc.). He stressed that the effort is a pioneering one, no one is sure which elements of the effort will prove successful and which ones may have to be altered. It is, however, a fundamental and long-term change in American foreign policy.

He said the timing of his trip had been considered very carefully. It had been decided to reschedule it after the completion of the Panama Canal debate<sup>4</sup>—a debate which, in itself, was in many ways a human rights problem since the previous canal regime was the last vestige of American colonialism. It had been decided to proceed with the trip to Southeast Asia—in part because of the belief the visit itself would generate thinking and action in the field of human rights.

## *II. Meeting with Cardinal Sin*

*The Vice President* began by noting he was on a difficult mission. He said there are many practices and institutions in the Philippines which come from the United States. He was interested in knowing how the use of such institutions could be improved—how the record in the human rights field, for example, might be bettered. Perhaps we

---

<sup>2</sup> The Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, with Patricia Derian as Assistant Secretary, was established in October 1977. Documentation on the evolution of the Carter administration’s human rights policy is in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. II, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs.

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to the Interagency Group on Human Rights and Foreign Assistance.

<sup>4</sup> After much debate, the Senate approved the Panama Canal Treaties in March and April. The treaties were signed in September.



saw the difficulties being faced in this field as a reflection upon us, since the Philippines is our only former colony.

*Cardinal Sin* said it should be remembered that martial law still exists in the Philippines. There are definitely two sides to this situation. The negative side consists of detention without trial, allegations of torture and lengthy imprisonment. The positive side consists of a greatly improved road network and an impressive and growing physical infrastructure. Cardinal Sin commented that he seeks to let the government leaders, including President Marcos, know the truth; this means telling them frankly about the negative side of martial law. He commented that there is tremendous friendship for the United States in the Philippines—including the countryside—because the U.S. had saved the country from Japanese occupation.

Asked how he saw the future and whether he could foresee the end of martial law, *the Cardinal* expressed the hope that, with the election of the new parliament, there will be some new thinking about ways of moving away from martial law. Asked about the recent elections, the Cardinal said real opposition had shown itself only in the Metro Manila area; the rest of the country had been free of such opposition. He said there had been some fraud and cheating in the election—but it was not for him or the Church to say how much. He had urged everyone to participate in the elections and to faithfully report any instances of fraud or misrepresentation. As a result, he said, his house had been converted into a Comelec (Commission of Elections) office—what some in the Church call a “house of Sin.” “Files and files” of complaints about misdeeds during the election have been collecting in his house. He had become the channel for citizens’ complaints—in effect, performing the function of senators and representatives. The Cardinal asked his Secretary General (of the Catholic Bishops Conference) to comment on electoral fraud. *Bishop Alnimo* replied that it was difficult to speak generally and he could verify significant fraud only in his own diocese of Las Pinas.

*The Cardinal* said the businessmen are not talking very much about the recent elections or the political situation; they are too concerned for their own prosperity. The professional people and intellectuals are similarly not talking very much; instead they tend to rationalize. Those doing most of the talking are those who are the unhappiest—the poor and disadvantaged people. He had made all these points to Marcos—pointing out the poor and disadvantaged constitute the majority in the Philippines. He said much of this seemed to come as news to Marcos; this in turn suggests the people around him do not know or are unwilling to tell him the truth.

*The Vice President* said it was difficult to tell whether Marcos is irretrievably committed to authoritarian rule or whether he might, on

his own, decide to lift martial law and move toward a more normal political situation. *Cardinal Sin* commented that President Marcos is an extremely intelligent and competent individual—and he should be able to see the importance of moving away from martial law. This is a crucial time for the Philippines since the country is not surrounded by communists and the threat from abroad is, at most, a potential threat for the future. He thought the visit of the Vice President at this time was a good idea—that it would serve to give courage and enthusiasm to those seeking long-overdue changes. The Secretary General commented that an ending of economic assistance by the U.S. would serve only to hurt poor people in the Philippines. Similarly, the ending of military aid would subject the country to increasing communist pressures.

*The Vice President* noted this view differed from that of the group he had met earlier. He said the USG had come to the judgement that, even where the human rights record is deficient or very bad, it is necessary to help meet certain basic human needs of the rural and urban poor. He said the USG had also reached the conclusion, after careful review and assessment, that there is a need for the USG to demonstrate its staying power in the Pacific.

*Cardinal Sin* nodded his total agreement, adding that unless the U.S. continued to help the Philippines, there would be more severe suffering among the poor. The Cardinal said there had been “rumors” recently that the U.S. was thinking of abandoning the Philippines. He was glad to hear no confirmation of these rumors in anything the Vice President said. *The Vice President* said it was important for Marcos to realize the need for remaining in touch with the people. He is so competent and appealing in many ways that it seems very likely he would continue to command popular support even if martial law were ended.

Cardinal Sin said he, too, in his talks with President Marcos has consistently urged the ending of martial law. Marcos replies that it is not time yet—that there are still security problems in the south and elsewhere in the islands. Marcos also likes to remind the Cardinal that before martial law there was chaos, disorder and terror. Cardinal Sin said he senses that President Marcos knows there are deep concerns about the present situation among the Filipino people. This knowledge arouses some hope that the President will take steps toward reform and change.

The Secretary General then raised the question of forced sterilization, maintaining that the USG through AID is supporting coercive sterilization and also abortion methods. When Chargé Stull interjected that this is not the case, an attending Bishop replied that the inducements and sanctions for such methods in the family planning program

were such as to constitute compulsion. Cardinal Sin said that the Church does not oppose family planning *per se*, but rather the methods cited. The Vice President said the U.S. is not imposing family planning on anybody, but the Cardinal noted that there is at least American encouragement. He asked if AID was in a position to suspend all family planning programming. The Chargé acknowledged that AID support for family planning is necessarily institutional and effected through and in collaboration with GOP programs and institutions. (On May 5 the Chargé offered, and the Cardinal accepted, a dialogue between Church and USAID staff<sup>5</sup> concerning USG support for family planning in the Philippines and the concerns of the Church in this regard.)

---

<sup>5</sup> No record of this meeting has been found.

---

### 321. Letter From Philippine President Marcos to President Carter<sup>1</sup>

Manila, May 3, 1978

Dear Mr. President:

I am gratified that you sent Vice-President Mondale on a state visit to the Philippines as your representative to meet with me on problems of mutual concern to our two countries. As you noted,<sup>2</sup> we indeed moved the celebration of both Bataan Day and Corregidor Day so that the two occasions may be observed by us during Mr. Mondale's visit. In this way, in accord with what I have referred to as the "universality of principles" in our relations, we had hoped to symbolize the desire of the Filipino people to achieve growth and progress alongside the United States on the basis of mutual trust, mutual respect and mutual benefit.

I am writing this to you out of long-held sentiments of warmth, admiration and respect for the United States. These are feelings rooted in an American-inspired education and nourished by training in a juridical system derived largely from your country. They are feelings

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 39, Philippines: 1978. No classification marking. Carter initialed at the top of the first page.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 317.

sealed by the sacrifices personally shared with Americans who fought for the liberation of the Philippines in World War II.

Among Filipinos of my generation, positive reactions to the United States are commonplace. But what of subsequent generations? What of the millions of Filipinos for whom World War II and the beginning of independence are not even childhood remembrances? As the years pass can the same sympathy between our countries continue?

To sustain a legacy of that kind, it is not enough to dwell on the sentimentalities of the past. Here, as in the United States, people ask for evidence of the relevance of any relationship to contemporary needs and aspirations. As a consequence, the meaning of the U.S.-Philippine relationship is being subjected to tests, the most important of which at this time involves the status of the military bases. Everytime an incident occurs between American military personnel and a Filipino, the value of the bases is brought into question anew. To be sure, these bases can continue to serve our security interests. They will do so, however, only as long as they are accepted here and in the United States as mutually beneficial.

To be sure the principle of Philippine sovereignty over the base areas has already long since been recognized by both nations. However, in present circumstances, that is not enough. The arrangements which govern use of the bases must also reflect the principle. I will say in all candor that the protracted negotiations have yet to come to grips with this reality.

With regard to the political situation in the Philippines, I would note that when martial law was declared in 1972, it was recognized on all sides that the nation was in the throes of a political paralysis and on the verge of a complete collapse. The economy was at a stand-still. Crime and corruption were rampant. The country was fragmented into a number of private armed encampments.

Under martial law, the highest priorities have been given to providing security for the Filipino against violence to his person and to expanding the livelihood of his family. Personal security and adequate sustenance are regarded widely here as the most basic of human rights. While much remains still to be done, much has already been done in the past half-decade to give meaning to these rights.

At the same time, we have not been unaware of the need to proceed with the development of political institutions to replace those which gave way in 1972. To that end, we have experimented with a revival of the ancient *Barangay* system of local government and we have held various national plebiscites. In early April there took place a nationwide election for the *Batasang Pambansa* or interim assembly. Contrary to some superficial analyses, that election was a significant step in a return to full popular participation in government. When the *Batasang*

Pambansa convenes shortly, it will contain elected representatives who generally support my administration and those who do not.

The political forms which emerge in this country in the years ahead are bound to reflect influences from the United States and other nations. However, we are determined that henceforth these influences shall no longer be merely skin transplants. We are determined that they shall be blended into our institutions together with what is indigenous to our traditions. We shall not be deflected from that resolve under any circumstances.

I have written you at length because it seems to me that the relationship between our two countries has entered a period of trial. Whatever the immediate difficulties, much that is constructive for the peoples of both nations can emerge from this interlude. If that is to be the case, however, it is essential that in our reactions to each other's internal affairs we reflect a perceptive understanding of the prevailing situation and, in addition, that issues between the countries be faced and resolved without delay. I assure you, Mr. President, of my full cooperation in this respect even as I am confident that I can count on yours.

Mr. Mondale and I have met in a congenial, extensive and cordial discussion of the subjects mentioned in your letter. I am satisfied that our meeting covered ample ground, and that he will accordingly report to you our perspectives and perceptions on the base negotiations, on economic matters of mutual interest to us, and on the advancement of human rights.<sup>3</sup>

I am taking this opportunity to communicate to you directly my concern over another problem. This concerns the fact that the media and the bureaucracy in the United States may be unable at the present time to convey, particularly to decision makers in your country, the true situation in the Philippines. We are consequently anxious about the likelihood that our perceptions will be misapprehended not only in respect of human rights but also of the more delicate problem over the relationship of our two countries.

I sincerely hope, Mr. President, that Vice-President Mondale's visit and our discussions would bring to our country's relations with yours new dimensions and expectations.

Sincerely,

**Ferdinand E. Marcos**

---

<sup>3</sup> See Document 129.

### 322. Telegram From the Embassy in the Philippines to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

Manila, May 5, 1978, 1038Z

7402. Pass ICA. Subject: Vice President's Visit: Preliminary Assessment.

1. Begin Summary. It is our preliminary view that Vice President's visit had positive impact on US-RP relationship. Greatest impact was psychological: tensions and irritations of the recent past have been eased, basic structure of strong bilateral ties was revalidated, and Phil public was reminded in dramatic manner of historic and exceptional ties between US and Philippines.

—The joint statement on military bases is of value to both countries.<sup>2</sup> As anticipated, there was little or no movement on economic issues. On human rights, Marcos was given private insight into strength of US feelings and concerns. Only future will show extent to which his actions are affected but there are no signs yet that human rights aspect of visit offended Marcos or other GOP leaders.

—As for Marcos internal position, it has probably been strengthened by visit. End Summary.

2. The Vice President arrived in Manila at a time of unusual tension in US-RP relations which had been in evidence since the first of the year and which peaked in the period of recent legislative elections. This tension derived largely from US activities and statements with regard to human rights in the Philippines including the visit of Assistant Secretary Derian in early January,<sup>3</sup> and the release of the Department's annual report to Congress in late January.<sup>4</sup> Our focus on the Aquino case was a matter of particular concern to Marcos who reacted with great sensitivity to these American initiatives. As the election campaign in Manila began to go badly for Marcos, he compulsively struck out at the US, probably blaming the Americans in his heart for having

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Mondale Papers, Foreign Trip Files, Box 129, [Vice President's Trip to Asia, 4/29-5/10/78]: Philippines—Diplomatic Trip Cables 4/28-6/2/78 [2]. Secret; Immediate; Limdis. Sent for information Immediate to Jakarta also for Holbrooke. Sent for information to Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Tokyo, and CINCPAC.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 2, Document 318.

<sup>3</sup> Derian visited the Philippines January 10-12. Telegram 721 from Manila, January 13, describes Derian's meeting with Marcos on human rights issues. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780020-0228)

<sup>4</sup> The annual human rights reports were submitted to Congress on January 31. The Philippines report was sent to the Embassy in telegram 23818 to Manila, January 28. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780048-0689, D780043-0540)

induced the elections and the Aquino candidacy. In this emotional context Marcos' attitudes and actions may even have raised doubts about the viability of US-RP relations.

3. We believe that the impact of the Vice President's visit on the bilateral relationship has been positive, serving to revalidate—particularly in a psychological sense—the basic structure of ties between the two countries. The visit was the first by a ranking member of the Carter administration, a gesture of no small importance to Marcos and the Philippines. And the GOP's reception of the visitor was highly cordial. The good rapport struck between the two principals was a significant element in lending a positive cast to the visit. In short, we sense that the visit has mitigated the prevailing tension in the relationship. The bilateral framework has been refurbished and we can proceed with some added confidence to address the difficult substantive issues between us.

4. The principal substantive achievement was the joint statement on the military bases. We have gained in this document an explicit statement by Marcos that the bases are of value to the Philippines as well as to the US; explicit assurance of effective command and control and unhampered military operations; a recognition of the 1991 termination of the agreement subject to periodic reassessments. The atmosphere is good and the way is open to proceed with detailed discussions to determine how to manifest these agreed principles. But it remains to be seen how quickly and cooperatively the GOP will move in this direction.

5. The impact of the talks on bilateral economic issues was minimal: neutral at the least, mildly positive at most. Marcos treated these issues rather perfunctorily and unemotionally and did not seek to link them, as advertised to the military bases. There were some small pluses—e.g., agreement to send a US energy team to the Philippines—but the various trade and other issue remain for resolution in the near future.

6. On the most sensitive front of all, human rights, Marcos was given—through a long and entirely private session with Vice President—insights into the strength of US feelings and concerns. Through his private meetings with Church and opposition leaders,<sup>5</sup> as well as parts of his public statements, the Vice President signaled to the Philippine public the administration's interest in this area. Marcos listened, rebutted and gave little or no ground—and we will know only from the future to what extent his actions are affected by the insights he was given. We have no signs yet that Marcos or other GOP leaders were offended by the human rights aspects of the visit. There

---

<sup>5</sup> See Document 320.

was quite limited local media coverage of the Vice President private meetings with religious figures and political oppositionists. There was substantial coverage of Marcos' defensive assertions on human rights matters.

7. As for Marcos himself, his internal position has probably been strengthened by the visit. The close US-RP links have been publicly reconfirmed, a desirable outcome for the majority of Filipinos. Marcos obtained the clearest USG public assertion to date on Philippine sovereignty over the bases, also of value to him domestically. While no substantive progress was made on trade issues, the hatful of new economic loan/grant agreements (already programmed) signed during the visit are evidence of his continuing ability to draw in US developmental resources. We doubt that the human rights elements of the visit probably had any appreciable effect on Marcos' standing at home. There may be some Filipinos who give good marks to the President for the hard-line public stance he took in defending the flag and standing up to the US.

**Stull**

---

### **323. Letter From President Carter to Philippine President Marcos<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, June 2, 1978

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your letter of May 3, 1978,<sup>2</sup> with the thoughtful and perceptive views on the relationship between our two countries. I particularly wish to express my appreciation for the warm and gracious reception you and Mrs. Marcos accorded Vice President and Mrs. Mondale during their recent visit to Manila, and for the friendship and candor with which you talked to him.

As a result of his visit, Mr. Mondale left Manila with a clear picture not only of your views on our relationship, but also of Philippine perceptions of the evolution of the Asian situation. The major speech on United States policy in Asia that Mr. Mondale delivered at the East-

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 39, Philippines: 1978. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 321.



West Center in Honolulu on May 10<sup>3</sup> reflects the insights he received during his stay in Manila.

From your letter and my discussions with Mr. Mondale, I believe that we have gone far toward an understanding between our two countries. Mutually satisfactory amendment of the Military Bases Agreement is, of course, an important element of our relationship. The principles enumerated in the joint U.S.-Philippine statement, which you and Mr. Mondale issued, can provide the impetus needed to resume talks, initially at the military level, and proceed as quickly as possible to reach full agreement.

As you know, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has approved the full \$18,100,000 FY 1979 Military Assistance Program (MAP) for the Philippines which we had requested. My Administration will continue to support the full amount of this request in the House-Senate conference which will follow.

I am told that the talks between Secretary of Energy Velasco and Secretary Schlesinger and others went well.<sup>4</sup> As part of our long-term effort to help your country expand its energy resources, we will send an expert team to the Philippines this summer to work with your government in identifying additional cooperative efforts in the energy field. We also intend to send an AID mission shortly to consider new programs for Olongapo and Angeles City, as the Vice President discussed with you.

Finally, let me say that I appreciate the frankness with which you discussed the broad issue of human rights with Mr. Mondale, and your willingness to communicate with members of our Congress on this matter. Such candid dialogue is particularly important on this issue. We are committed to seeking an advance in the cause of justice and human rights. The people of our countries fought side by side to defend that cause. I believe that we now have a better understanding of one another's positions and of the circumstances upon which policy judgments are based. I hope that, under your leadership, events will give us the opportunity to turn the corner of this difficult issue.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter

---

<sup>3</sup> For the text of the speech, see Department of State *Bulletin*, July 1978, pp. 22–25.

<sup>4</sup> Schlesinger and Velasco met on May 12. Telegram 132443 to Manila, May 24, reported on the meeting. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780220–0905)

**324. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, November 17, 1978, 10:15–10:40 a.m.

**SUBJECT**

Summary of the President's Meeting with Senator Daniel Inouye

**PARTICIPANTS**

President Carter  
Senator Daniel Inouye  
Secretary of State Cy Vance  
Secretary of Defense Harold Brown  
Zbigniew Brzezinski, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs  
Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia  
Nicholas Platt, Staff Member, NSC (Notetaker)

*President:* I have never heard such rave reviews of a Congressional trip abroad as followed your trip to Manila.<sup>2</sup> I'm very pleased with the results, and particularly glad that we had a chance to discuss the Philippines before you took your trip.<sup>3</sup> I'm interested in hearing from you whether the visit was as successful as reported.

*Inouye:* I'm awed by the gathering in this room. The only occasion I would normally see all of you together is a joint session of Congress.

Mr. President, there is no question but that the United States is going to stay in the Philippines. To move out and replace what we have there would be intolerable to Congress, even though the Congress does not fully understand the value of our Philippine relationship. The Filipinos are desperate for our stamp of approval. The subtle messages that President Marcos feels he has been receiving from the United States have been negative. For example, Mrs. Marcos asked me if our President would ever receive on an official basis a person of Assistant Secretary rank from another country. How would your President feel, I was asked, if that Assistant Secretary, upon being received, handed to the President of the Philippines a letter critical of his policy, then proceeded to castigate him to his face, and finally requested permission to see his political prisoners? The fact is that this has happened, Mr. President. Assistant Secretary Pat Derian went to the Philippines, was received by President Marcos, presented him with a letter from Senator

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Far East, Platt Chron File, Box 65, 11/16–30/78. Secret. The conversation took place in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

<sup>2</sup> Inouye visited the Philippines October 23–28.

<sup>3</sup> Inouye met with the President on October 19, 9–9:28 a.m. (Carter Library, Presidential Materials, President's Daily Diary)

Reigle, lectured him on human rights policy, and then asked to see Aquino.<sup>4</sup> Subsequently, the United States Government informed the Philippine Government that the Veterans Administration Hospital would be phased out.

I am convinced that we have no major problem with the Philippines but rather an accumulation of small issues that can be cleared up in a year. It is the small pebble in one's shoe that is the greatest irritant. The Filipinos compare how we deal with them with the preferential treatment we give the Japanese, Iran, and the Israelis. They are aware that their human rights record is not very good, but as Marcos said to me, "We are not as bad as Iran." Israel has 500 people in jail with no charges pending against them.

The one thing the Filipinos crave is approval. Before Ambassador Murphy went to present his credentials to Marcos he asked my advice as to what he should wear. I told him not to wear a business suit, but to dress up as formally as if he were presenting credentials at the Court of St. James. I realize that this is uncomfortable and makes one look like a penguin. But the Ambassador followed the advice, delighted the Filipinos, and represented you well.

Specifically, after conferring with government representatives over the years, I would like to say that this Ambassador (Murphy) is the most professional that I have met. He is low-profile, tough, the best I've known.

When in Manila I told Marcos that we cannot have a multi-year commitment on compensation for our military bases. But I told him that we could make a commitment for one year and then undertake to provide the rest in subsequent years.

*President:* To make a best effort.

*Inouye:* Yes. No President can come out and say what one can get through Congress in subsequent years. An election is coming. New people may take office who have different views. I told Marcos that agreement, if it was to be favorably concluded, must be finished by the end of this year so that funding can be included within the FY–1980 budget request. Next year is an election year. The chances for success are more complicated. Marcos then told me that he would start moving.

*Holbrooke:* As soon as the Senator left, the military-to-military talks started moving forward quickly.

---

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 3, Document 322.

*Inouye:* There has been favorable action on the veterans hospital. I promised Marcos that I would bring to your attention both the coconut oil tariff question and radar coverage problem.

*President:* I want to send a letter to Marcos thanking him for his efforts.<sup>5</sup> I really want to move quickly and to reduce tensions between us.

*Inouye:* I did something somewhat undiplomatic, but I told Ambassador Murphy in advance what I was going to do. The Filipino Ambassador here is a nice gentle fellow, but that is all. I told Marcos that he needed a strong Ambassador in the United States if the base agreement were to be successfully concluded. A strong joint effort involving Defense, State, and the Philippine Government will be required.

*President:* That's good. We would not have gotten the Panama Canal Treaty without Gabriel Lewis.<sup>6</sup>

When I saw Mrs. Marcos, she was concerned about her reception by Congress when she was visiting Washington.<sup>7</sup>

*Inouye:* She asked for it. She should have known better.

*Brzezinski:* I saw her in Rome and she invited me for drinks. She seemed to be on a more even keel, and was very gracious to me.

*Inouye:* President Marcos seemed in very good health. Mrs. Marcos has put on a few pounds, but seems more confident than I have ever seen her. Incidentally, she put on an extravagant dinner for me, the features of which were 1970 Dom Perignon champagne and a 1961 Chateau Lafitte Rothschild. You would have been criticized had you given it.

*Brown:* No wonder the Filipinos are asking us for higher aid levels.

*President:* Thank you for a completely constructive visit. I agree that our problems with the Philippines are a combination of minor irritants and that we should move to solve them. Pat is in some ways an unguided missile, but she is learning.<sup>8</sup>

*Inouye:* That incident concerned President Marcos very much. She told him that she was the only Assistant Secretary of State to be sworn in by the President.

---

<sup>5</sup> Carter's letter, dated November 22, was transmitted in telegram 300318 to Manila, November 27. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780489-0709)

<sup>6</sup> Panamanian Ambassador to the United States.

<sup>7</sup> Not further identified.

<sup>8</sup> Reference is to Patricia Derian.

**325. Memorandum From the Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (Aaron) to President Carter<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, undated

## SUBJECT

Philippine Base Agreement (C)

President Marcos telephoned Senator Inouye December 29 to say that he would conclude a base agreement if the United States agreed to increase security supporting assistance (SSA) by \$50 million over a five-year period. This would bring the total five-year package to \$500 million, the sum offered but refused in 1976. Marcos has stated publicly that he would like to conclude the negotiations by January 2. (C)

Senators Inouye and Glenn have strongly urged Secretary Vance to conclude the deal quickly on this basis. They point out that conclusion of the agreement would appeal to critics on Capitol Hill who feel we have turned our backs on Taiwan, and will be much more concerned with our Philippine bases as a result. Secretary Vance agrees with the Senators and has recommended that we move. Defense and AID also concur. (C)

NSC and OMB believe that you should proceed. They will work together to provide you early next week with a projection of the out-year budget implications. As you recall, the base agreement package, even at the original \$450 million level, will require a FY-80 budget amendment and/or readjustment within previously approved totals. (C)

If you agree, Secretary Vance will send the attached telegram of instructions to Ambassador Murphy in time for Murphy's next meeting with Marcos, which is scheduled for Saturday night Washington time.<sup>2</sup> (C)

I believe we should take advantage of the leverage the normalization process has given us to conclude an important agreement which has eluded us for the past ten years. The impact will be significant not

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Far East, Platt Chron File, Box 65, 12/78. Confidential. Sent for action. Printed from an unsigned copy. Platt sent the memorandum to Aaron under a December 30 covering memorandum. (Ibid.)

<sup>2</sup> The telegram is not attached. The instructions were sent in telegrams 328060 and 328069, December 30. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780540–0191 and D780540–0340) Murphy reported on the December 31 meeting with Marcos and his advisers in telegram 23123 from Manila, December 31. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790001–0181)

only on Congress, but also on our friends and adversaries in East Asia. (C)

*RECOMMENDATION:*

That you approve the attached telegram of instructions to Ambassador Murphy.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Inderfurth wrote on the covering memorandum that Carter had approved the \$50 million in SAA on Vance's December 29 Evening Report and that Aaron no longer needed to send the memorandum to Carter. See footnote 1 above.

---

### **326. Letter From President Carter to Philippine President Marcos<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, January 4, 1979

Dear Mr. President:

I was pleased to learn that our negotiators have reached agreement on an amendment to the 1947 Military Bases Agreement.<sup>2</sup>

In light of this development, I wish to state that the Executive Branch of the United States Government will, during the next five fiscal years, make its best effort to obtain appropriations for the Philippines of the following amounts of security assistance:

Military Assistance:	\$50 million
Foreign Military Sales Credits:	\$250 million
Security Supporting Assistance:	\$200 million

In addition, the United States will give prompt and sympathetic consideration to requests for specific items of military equipment to be provided under these programs, and to requests for the sale of other military equipment which your government may wish to purchase

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 39, Philippines, 1979–1980. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> The new agreement, signed on January 7 by Romulo and Murphy, provided that the Philippines would hold sovereignty over the bases, that the Philippine flag would fly over the bases, and that the agreement would be reviewed at 5-year intervals to ensure the continued mutual interests of both parties. (30.1 UST 863 (1978–1979); TIAS 9224) Murphy's report on the signing ceremony, which Marcos, the Philippine Cabinet, and top military personnel attended, is in telegram 398 from Manila, January 7. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D79009–0351)

through U.S. Government or commercial channels, consistent with the worldwide policies of this government with respect to the transfer of conventional arms.

In closing, let me state once again that I appreciate your personal efforts in bringing these negotiations to a successful conclusion. I believe that the amendment to which our two governments have now agreed will strengthen the security not only of the Philippines and the United States but also of the entire Western Pacific region.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

**327. Letter From Secretary of Defense Brown to Secretary of State Vance<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, January 22, 1979

Dear Cy:

Congratulations to you and your staff on the successful conclusion of the Philippine Base negotiations. This agreement marks a significant milestone in the regional role of the United States in East Asia and the Western Pacific. It underscores our intent to retain a balanced and flexible military force in the area.

Closer to home, the agreement marks a high point in the relationship between our two staffs. Too often in the past, the State/Defense relationship has been characterized as an antagonistic one in which the two Departments find it difficult to discover common ground. The Philippine negotiations have belied this glib assertion. The negotiations were marked by extensive cooperation by our two staffs in developing positions quickly, smoothly and, perhaps most important, amiably. I am sure you share my belief that this example of cooperation and collective effort will serve as a model for our staffs to emulate in the future.

I would like to single out the efforts of several members of your staff for special note. Dave Newsom, as Ambassador to the Philippines,

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330–82–0205, 20, [untitled]. No classification marking. Slocombe sent a copy of the letter to Brown under an undated covering memorandum, stating that it “would be useful” to send the letter to Vance. (Ibid.)

played a key role in bringing Marcos into the negotiation picture personally and keeping him there, avoiding the sterile panel approach of 1976. As Undersecretary of State, he played a major part in keeping us all focused on our goal. Dick Holbrooke, with his trip to Manila in September 1977,<sup>2</sup> set the stage for the successful negotiation. Bob Oakley gave large amounts of his time to making sure the often dull but always important pieces of our position became a workable entity. Finally, Dick Murphy followed Dave Newsom into the Ambassadorship and by skillful stewardship of the military talks and effective negotiation with President Marcos capped the process on January 7.<sup>3</sup>

In closing, as the Turkish negotiations begin,<sup>4</sup> let me assure you that we in Defense are determined that the State/DoD cooperation which marked the Philippine talks will serve as a model for the Turkish talks as well.

Sincerely,

**Harold**

---

<sup>2</sup> See Documents 300 and 301.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 2, Document 326.

<sup>4</sup> Reference is to negotiations for an agreement on U.S. bases in Turkey. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XXI, Cyprus; Turkey; Greece, Document 124.

---

### 328. Letter From President Carter to Philippine President Marcos<sup>1</sup>

Washington, February 16, 1979

Dear Mr. President:

I extend my best wishes to you and to the Philippine people on this important occasion marking the first step toward implementation of the January 7 amendment to the Military Bases Agreement. That amendment emphasized my Government's recognition of full Philippine sovereignty over the bases and your Government's willingness,

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 39, Philippines, 1979–1980. No classification marking. The date of the letter is taken from the text printed in Department of State *Bulletin*, April 1979, p. 22.



in view of mutual benefits, to grant certain facilities for use by American armed forces. The Philippines and the United States pursue the common objectives of advancing world peace, regional stability and national independence. We have stood together as comrades in arms in meeting the major challenges to peace of this century. It is my hope that the relations between our two nations will continue to be inspired by the spirit of harmony, understanding and mutual respect which characterized our recent negotiations and that our countries' historic ties will grow stronger with each passing year.

Jimmy Carter<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Printed from a copy that bears Carter's typed signature.

---

### 329. Statement by Secretary of Defense Brown<sup>1</sup>

Washington, undated

Mr. President, Mrs. Marcos, Cabinet Members, and Distinguished Guests

I am delighted that General David Jones, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, is representing me at this ceremony initiating the implementation of the January 7 agreement between our two Governments amending the 1947 Military Bases Agreement.

When the Military Bases Agreement first entered into effect on March 26, 1947, the situation in Asia and the world was vastly different; so, too, was the base agreement. Since 1947, it has been amended over forty times. Often the changes have been minor. Occasionally they have been major. Never have they been as far-reaching or as far-sighted as the amendment currently being implemented. The amendment we are today implementing expresses in a tangible way America's recognition that Philippine sovereignty extends over the bases. It reflects our common understanding that continued US use of the Philippine bases

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 330–82–0205, 20, [untitled]. No classification marking. Sent from Slocombe to Brown with a request from Murphy that Brown send a statement to be read at the flag raising ceremony at Clark Air Base on February 16. (Ibid.)

contributes to the mutual benefit of both countries. It includes—for the first time—a provision for review of the agreement on a regular basis to ensure that it will continue to reflect the regional situation and our respective national requirements. And it provides for the return to the Philippines of extensive lands and waters previously controlled by the United States.

The relationship between the United States and the Philippines is marked by vitality, stability and flexibility. It was tempered in the fires of World War II and has been tested many times since then. It has met every test successfully and in every case has emerged stronger than before. The amendment being implemented today is symbolic of the strength of our relationship. It proves our two countries' ability to maintain a mutual security relationship which meets the needs of today and can evolve to meet those of tomorrow.

I am confident that the implementation of the amendment will proceed with the same spirit of cooperation, friendship and understanding which characterized its negotiation.

**Harold Brown**

---

### **330. Letter From President Carter to Representative Lester Wolff<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, March 21, 1979

To Chairman Lester Wolff

As you are aware, an integral part of the amendment of our Military Bases Agreement with the Philippines in January was my commitment to seek Congressional approval of \$500 million in Security Supporting Assistance, Foreign Military Sales credits and grant Military Assistance during the next five years. Of that total, \$50 million is to be in MAP, \$25 million in Fiscal Year 1980 and the remainder in Fiscal 1981.

I made that commitment without hesitation, following careful consultation with many members of Congress, because I consider the amounts relatively modest in relation to the value which we derive from continued, unhampered operation use of those facilities. As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, you know and

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 64, Philippines, 1/77-12/79. No classification marking.

appreciate the importance of those facilities in the Philippines—an importance which is not limited to the Western Pacific but which extends, as events of recent days have demonstrated, to much wider areas of the Indian Ocean and the entire Middle East.

Recent events in Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean and the Middle East have raised doubts about the willingness of the United States to sustain support for its friends and to honor its obligations. I am determined to dispel such unwarranted doubts. This applies to the Philippines, with whom we not only have a newly revised agreement on use of military facilities but also a longstanding Mutual Defense Treaty and an unusually close relationship.

I know the Congress continues to be concerned about the Philippine human rights situation. I share that concern. During the base negotiations we maintained a continuing dialogue on human rights with the Philippine leadership including President Marcos and his Defense Minister. We have stressed the necessity of improvement in areas of the most serious concern such as mistreatment of detainees. Our position is well understood, and we see some modest improvement. We do not believe a cut in grant MAP would serve overall U.S. interests in the present circumstances.

Accordingly, I would appreciate your support for the authorization and eventual appropriation of the full amounts of security assistance for the Philippines, including \$25 million in grant Military Assistance—perhaps the most important component—which I have requested in the FY 1980 budget.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

**331. Letter From President Carter to Philippine President Marcos<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 17, 1980

Dear Mr. President:

I wish to welcome you once more to the United States. I regret that it is not possible for me to greet you in person. I am pleased, however, that my good friend Dean Rusk will receive you on my behalf.<sup>2</sup> It is my hope that you and he will find time to discuss our relations and the international situation. I have given him my own thoughts for such a conversation. He will be accompanied by Assistant Secretary Holbrooke whom you know well from his several visits to the Philippines.

Dean Rusk will also take this occasion to express to you my admiration for your government's strong, positive stance on regional and global problems that concern us all. The many countries that have joined together in the massive effort to save Indochinese lives are also joined in gratitude for Philippine generosity in providing the processing site at Bataan.<sup>3</sup> Americans, in addition, feel a special gratitude for the support you have given our efforts to secure the release of our hostages in Iran.<sup>4</sup>

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan<sup>5</sup> has once again demonstrated the importance of our mutual defense relationship to the maintenance of peace and security. As you know, Subic has played a vital role in allowing us to project American naval power into the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea—an indispensable element in our response to Soviet aggression in Southwest Asia. The arrangements we agreed to in our recent base negotiations are clearly working very well, and to our mutual advantage. In this connection, I have directed that an all-out effort be made to obtain from Congress the security assistance appropriations in the full amounts requested by me pursuant to my letter to you of January 4, 1979.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 39, Philippines: 1979–1980. No classification marking.

<sup>2</sup> Rusk met with Marcos in Honolulu. See Document 332.

<sup>3</sup> The Philippines agreed to open a Refugee Processing Center for Indochinese refugees at the July 20–21, 1979, Geneva conference. See Document 138.

<sup>4</sup> Iranian students took 52 Americans hostage on November 4, 1979. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vols. X and XI.

<sup>5</sup> The Soviet invasion began on December 24, 1979.

<sup>6</sup> See Document 326.

Your government's forthright position in favor of boycotting the summer Olympic Games<sup>7</sup> has contributed significantly to the prospects of successfully demonstrating to Moscow the heavy political cost of its aggression. The recent American Olympic Committee decision has been most heartening. I am confident that we will achieve our goal as long as like-minded countries move forward together in support of the boycott and of alternative world-class competition.

Mr. President, in these times of challenge, nations and peoples are being called upon to stand up for their values and their interests. We are proud that our time-tested friendship with the Philippines has once again shown its enduring value to both our nations. I wish that I could be with you during your visit to Hawaii. In my absence—which I hope you will understand—my friend Dean Rusk will be able to convey to me any personal messages that you may wish to send.

Finally, I want you to know how much my son Jeff and his wife enjoyed their recent visit to the Philippines and the gracious hospitality shown them by you and Mrs. Marcos.

Sincerely,

**Jimmy Carter**

---

<sup>7</sup> The U.S.-sponsored boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympic Games was in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

**332. Memorandum of Conversation<sup>1</sup>**

Honolulu, April 19, 1980

**SUBJECT**

Secretary Rusk's Meeting with President Marcos

**PARTICIPANTS**

*Philippines*  
President Marcos  
Manuel Collantes, Under Secretary  
of State

*U.S.*  
Secretary Rusk  
Assistant Secretary Holbrooke  
Ambassador Murphy  
Mr. Frazier Meade, Director of  
Philippine Affairs

*Introduction*

To begin the discussion, Secretary Rusk told President Marcos that since he had retired as Secretary he had been reluctant to take up any foreign missions. But when President Carter asked him to welcome President Marcos he could not say no because of his high regard for President Marcos and for the Philippines. The President had asked him to deliver a letter of greeting to President Marcos,<sup>2</sup> which he then presented. When Marcos expressed the hope that the President was well, Secretary Rusk replied that the President was well but very concerned, in particular about the problems in Iran. Nevertheless, the President had asked that his warmest greetings be conveyed to President Marcos.

President Marcos read the letter carefully. Looking up after reading the letter, Marcos noted, with reference to the last paragraph of the letter (thanking Marcos for his hospitality to Jeff Carter) that he had enjoyed having the President's son in Manila.

The Secretary said that the U.S. had been very appreciative of the Philippines' prompt reaction to the hostage situation in Iran and to the Russian invasion of Afghanistan. The U.S. was also appreciative of the Philippines' offer to provide a site for the Refugee Processing Center. It had given a tremendous lift to everyone concerned with the problem. Marcos replied that it was their hope that the RPC would be a help but the Philippines also hoped the RPC would be replicated in other

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, President's Files, Plains File, President's Personal Foreign Affairs File, Box 3, Philippines, 6/78-4/80. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Frazier Meade (EA/PHL). The meeting took place in the Presidential Suite at the Ilikai Hotel in Honolulu.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 331.

countries, especially Indonesia. Work on the RPC in the Philippines was continuing.

### ASEAN

Secretary Rusk asked whether Marcos was encouraged by developments in ASEAN. Marcos said he was. At one time, for example, Malaysia and Indonesia seemed interested in establishing their own exclusive relationship with Hanoi that might have broken up ASEAN. The Portuguese Timor problem<sup>3</sup> had also strained ASEAN. In response to the Secretary's question, Marcos confirmed that ASEAN felt threatened by developments in Indo-China.<sup>4</sup> If incursions by the Soviet Union or its surrogates continue, he said, there was really nothing that ASEAN could do to stop them. ASEAN was consequently intensely interested in what Vietnam in particular indicated it wished to do in the area. When the Secretary said the President had asked him to discuss mutual security issues, Marcos said he would be pleased to convey the U.S. position to his ASEAN colleagues. He was concerned, for example, that American preoccupation with Middle East problems threatened abandonment of ASEAN. The Secretary replied that the American people had taken 600,000 casualties since 1945 in the interest of collective security. We were quick to mobilize and forever hopeful that we would not have to be involved in future conflict. We believed in peace, and we had paid and would pay a heavy price for it. In that respect, the Secretary noted that the Mutual Defense Treaty with the Philippines is deeply rooted in the interests of the U.S. and its people. The Military Bases Agreement was especially important because it located American forces in the Philippines. It represented, from the American point of view, a deep historical commitment to the Philippines. There could be no question about our attitude.

Marcos said he did not question U.S. sincerity but its capacity. Should the U.S. get involved in the Middle East or elsewhere, Asia would take second priority. He was concerned, too, about China. If China were armed for aggressive wars, it would become ASEAN's problem.

Secretary Rusk quoted Napoleon, "Let China sleep, for when it awakes the world will tremble." Everyone, he continued, had an interest in what happened in China over the next two or three decades. There were important signs that China was on the road to modernization. It

---

<sup>3</sup> Reference is to East Timor's 1975 declaration of independence and Indonesia's subsequent invasion and occupation. See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. E–12, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973–1976.

<sup>4</sup> Vietnam's invasion and occupation of Kampuchea began on December 25, 1978. See Documents 36–39.

would be encouraging if China were to move in the next 25 years toward normal and constructive membership in the community of nations. But our interest in China's progress did not mean we wished to ally ourselves with the Chinese, nor did we wish to arm China.

The President, he said, was interested in Marcos' views of Chinese development. Marcos said it was his impression that China would try to buy all kinds of arms. He feared China more than Japan before the year 2000. For now, the Chinese had adopted "smiling diplomacy," and that might continue for 20 years. On the other hand, if China were to feel greatly threatened by either the Soviet Union on her northern borders or by Vietnam's invasion of Kampuchea, China's smiling diplomacy might change sooner than we expected.

#### *FMS*

The Secretary said the President was disappointed by the action of the House Foreign Affairs Committee in cutting \$5 million in FMS from the Security Assistance request for FY 81. Marcos said that he was afraid Congressmen Wolff and Hall did not understand the significance of so-called small cuts. The unfortunate aspect of such an action is the effect it has on other countries' perception of the U.S. commitment to mutual security in Asia. Secretary Rusk said that the action so far represented only the first move on a long Congressional trail. The Security Assistance request would also have to be considered in the Senate and then, assuming differences between the House and the Senate, there would be a House-Senate conference to resolve those differences. We were hopeful the Senate would be supportive. In that connection, Senator Inouye had asked him to deliver a letter to President Marcos<sup>5</sup>—which he handed to Marcos. The Senator was very disappointed at not being able to come. Marcos noted that he and some Congressmen had been in touch with each other in connection with the FMS problem. Chairman Zablocki had told him, for example, that he couldn't help now but would do so later. The Secretary said he would try to get Senator Nunn and others to help, and Assistant Secretary Holbrooke said that Senators Glenn, Javits and Percy had all asked him to assure Marcos that they were going to help. The Administration, Holbrooke continued, was really going to push. Marcos acknowledged that he was aware of the Administration's commitment to help. He had been kept informed of the efforts the Administration had made so far.

---

<sup>5</sup> Not found.



*Swing Strategy*

Secretary Rusk said he wanted to make a personal point, one that he had not discussed with President Carter. He personally doubted that a lengthy engagement either with the Soviet Union (on conventional warfare terms) or in the Middle East would occur that would distract us from our other commitments. It was important in that connection for us all to speak out against continued expansion of Soviet aggression. He had found it significant and encouraging that (a) the UN General Assembly had called for Soviet withdrawal<sup>6</sup> (104–18) and that (b) the Muslim countries had unanimously condemned the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Such global reactions touch the Russian nerve. For example, the Philippine decision to boycott the Olympics was important in developing propaganda pressure on the Russians; they are sensitive to propaganda values.

Mr. Holbrooke said he wanted to add a point. During the Vietnam war, he noted, the U.S. had developed the “Swing Strategy.” It was only a contingency plan but, when the plan was publicized recently in Japan, it had alarmed the Japanese and we had subsequently reviewed the validity of the plan. We had just made a decision which significantly reduced the number of ships in the Pacific Fleet “earmarked” for service in Europe in the event of an attack there. The significance of that decision was that the U.S. is going to maintain its commitments in Asia. It redressed an historical anachronism left over from the Vietnam war. Since the war, the U.S. had rebuilt its South East Asian policy around ASEAN.

Marcos remarked that Asia did not so much feel abandoned as it felt that the U.S. had grown allergic to fighting land wars. He had discussed this perception with Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua and asked him what sort of understanding the Chinese had with the U.S. in the event of an attack by the Soviet Union. Huang Hua said there was no understanding.

Noting that what he was about to say was personal, Secretary Rusk pointed out that there were some 7,000 nuclear weapons in NATO. If the Soviet Union were to attack in Europe, no American President could permit the Soviets to capture those weapons and the Soviet Union knew that. Consequently, he saw little likelihood of a major diversion of U.S. forces to Europe. The world had changed since the days when we had automatically given first priority to Europe. Marcos should not lose sleep over the meaning of our Mutual Defense Treaty.

---

<sup>6</sup> The sixth Emergency Special Session of the UN General Assembly convened January 10–14 to address the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. UN General Assembly Resolution ES-6/2, “The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security,” was adopted on January 14.

*Alliances in Asia*

President Marcos said ASEAN leaders were not losing sleep over the issue of European primacy but were concerned with the extent to which the U.S. would help them or Kampuchea or even Pakistan against Soviet threats. President Zia had written to him saying that the \$400 million offered by the U.S. would merely provoke the Soviet Union and would be of no help if the Soviet Union were to attack. In reply, the Secretary said helping Pakistan militarily was always complicated by the question of whether such aid might be used against India. It was further complicated, Holbrooke said, by (1) Pakistani moves to develop nuclear weapons, a move that had triggered the Symington amendment<sup>7</sup> and (2) the execution of Bhutto.<sup>8</sup> The President had nevertheless courageously offered to help Pakistan after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and Congress had in fact been receptive to waiving the Symington Amendment in January. But after President Zia rejected that assistance, it became difficult to ask Congress for help in the remainder of this year. The Chinese were also pressing us to help Pakistan.

Referring to Chinese pressures for the U.S. to help Pakistan, the Secretary noted that the Chinese Vice Premier had recently reminded us that China is the Middle Kingdom, and that all the rest of us are barbarians. We were unlikely to be willing to be a pawn in Chinese games. Marcos said the ASEAN countries hope not. They hope that China can be kept to the Mainland. Most Asian leaders were less afraid of Japan than of China. Holbrooke said the real threat was the Soviet Union. Marcos agreed but said it was his feeling that Vietnam would reach a critical point in a decade. If it did not revert to a policy of development, it would face internal struggle.

Holbrooke said that ASEAN unity in the face of Asian instability was fundamental. Marcos said that it was more than simply a question of unity. ASEAN nations needed to develop a much more sophisticated policy to deal with Vietnam, the USSR, etc. He wrote Pham Van Dong constantly because he felt Vietnam was violating Ho Chi Minh's own testament.

---

<sup>7</sup> The Symington Amendment (1976) banned both military and economic assistance to countries that used or transferred nuclear enrichment equipment, materials, or technology that did not comply with the regulations established by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

<sup>8</sup> Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, former President and Prime Minister of Pakistan, was executed on April 4, 1979, after being sentenced to death by the Supreme Court of Pakistan for having authorized the murder of a political opponent.

*Martial Law*

Secretary Rusk remarked that the ASEAN countries were concerned about security. The lives of Americans were pledged to the security of the Philippines. That means, he said, that the Philippines had a constituency in the American people. The Philippines should interest itself in that constituency. (Comment: The Secretary's remarks were intended to suggest to President Marcos that he should make some effort to (a) address the criticism that was developing in the U.S. of the Philippines; and (b) present a credible outline for political normalization. Marcos later told the Secretary privately he would try to deal with these matters in his speech to the American Newspaper Publishers Association.)<sup>9</sup>

Marcos said the U.S. need not worry about Philippine ability to handle internal security problems. The Philippine people had reacted strongly to the threat of a Muslim secession. They had volunteered to fight against the secessionists just as they had volunteered to fight against the Spanish. The Filipinos were not going to allow any foreign invaders to take over their soil.

Notwithstanding criticism of Martial Law, Marcos continued, the Filipinos know it's only temporary. Without the upsurge in MNLF activities in 1978, Martial Law would have been lifted in 1978 or 1979. Now the Philippines had developed intelligence that both the Maoist and Soviet branches of the Communist Party had established contact with the MNLF. Their latest intelligence was that a liaison officer of the Soviet Embassy was in fact working with the MNLF and providing funds.

The President noted further that he was in touch with church elements. They were convinced that there was no moderate faction that could take over if he, Marcos, left the Presidency. The church was changing its tune. Cardinal Sin had told his priests not to engage in politics but instead to work to build up the moral standards so badly needed in the younger generation. In talking with the Jesuits, Marcos said he had asked what their alternative was to Martial Law. Would the Jesuits think of giving the leadership to Manglapus?<sup>10</sup> The Jesuits replied that such a solution was impossible; Manglapus was weak and doesn't know what he wants. "What about Aquino?" he rhetorically continued. The Jesuits had answered that Marcos couldn't take such a chance because Aquino was impulsive and would give the country second priority attention. Even Cardinal Sin said he did not want to

---

<sup>9</sup> See "Marcos Speech to Publishers," *Washington Post*, April 22, 1980, p. A9.

<sup>10</sup> Raul Manglapus, a former Philippine Senator, had been in exile since the imposition of martial law in 1972.

have anything to do with Aquino. So, Marcos said, I think there is no problem.

With respect to the MNLF, the Philippine Government was in the process of contacting MNLF field commanders. The Muslims knew Marcos, he grew up partly in Mindanao, and the Muslims trusted him. And with respect to the NPA, the Philippine Government had captured almost all of its commanders. Although a new echelon of leadership had taken over, it was not numerous and the Philippines Government had penetrated its ranks. Consequently, the fighting with the NPA had died down. In response to Holbrooke's question as to NPA ties with China, Marcos said that both Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai had promised him that there would be no contact. And in fact NPA activities had died down. The NPA understood that the New Society helped the poor.

The legitimate opposition was contacting the NPA. But it knew the Government was aware of this activity and had drawn back. Now the opposition was attempting to establish a United Front. Father Intengan had established a Socialist Party.<sup>11</sup> That move, however, was a mistake because it had drawn resistance both from the right and from the communists.

The military were dependable. They supported Martial Law but they also supported civilian government. That was due in part to General MacArthur.<sup>12</sup> That tradition lived on. The military must never involve themselves in politics. Marcos added that he was organizing a reserve force of one million men, providing a battalion in each province. They had already proved their mettle in fighting outlaws.

### *Economic Change*

Secretary Rusk referred to the revolution that had occurred since his own boyhood in Georgia, thanks to changes brought about by better education, public health and productivity. He asked how President Marcos saw the development of the poorer Filipinos. The President noted that the Press always criticized the Philippines when in fact changes in the Philippine economy since the introduction of Martial Law had been very favorable. The President recited statistics on increased rice production, increased rural credit, and increased rural development.

---

<sup>11</sup> Father Romeo Intengan and Norberto Gonzalez founded the Philippine Democratic Socialist Party in 1973.

<sup>12</sup> General Douglas MacArthur was relieved by President Truman as Commander of UN Forces in Korea in April 1951 for making public statements on policy matters.

*Civil Aviation*

Secretary Rusk said that civil aviation was a jungle war and that he had been scarred more by civil aviation wars than by almost any other issue. He didn't know of any other field where friends were so tempted to face each other down. But civil aviation is subject to precise legislation. He was, he said, no expert in the field. He asked only that President Marcos give the current U.S.-Philippine civil air problem his personal attention because it could get worse. He said he could assure Marcos that President Carter would give it his own personal attention.

---

**333. Telegram From the Embassy in the Philippines to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Manila, June 20, 1980, 0922Z

11988. Subject: Aquino. Ref: State 158981.<sup>2</sup>

1. (C–Entire Text.)

2. Summary: Embassy considers opposition document transmitted reftel overstates both unity of opposition and its readiness to launch systematic and violent destabilization campaign in Philippines. We acknowledge, however, there may be more momentum behind opposition plans and somewhat greater inclination to move in violent direction than previously. Document appears to reflect heavy input by Movement for Free Philippines whose stateside leadership seems readier to fight to the last oppositionist than those currently active in this country. Consider we should make clear to Aquino and all others in opposition our condemnation of violence. We need also weigh what, if anything, we should say to Marcos about the document. End Summary.

3. It is evident, from our contacts with various segments of the opposition that the January local elections deepened opposition frustration as to ever being able to remove Marcos by legal means.<sup>3</sup> Degree of frustration varies according to geographic region. Mindanao Alliance

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 64, Philippines: 1/80-1/81. Confidential; Niact Immediate; Nodis. Printed from a copy that was received in the White House Situation Room.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 158981 to Manila, June 17, is in National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P880031–1815.

<sup>3</sup> The elections took place on January 30.

people, for example, came out of the election with relatively few races won, but with conviction that they had established a base on which to build in future elections, if only they could find some money somewhere. Likewise, Laurel<sup>4</sup> forces in central Luzon have become more active precisely because they demonstrated they could win in face of KBL hanky panky. At the same time, the elections seemed to strengthen the conviction of certain opposition elements that whether Marcos ended martial law or not, he would manage to retain essential power. Hence, the line that Marcos would have to step down or be removed, by whatever means.

4. GOP, on the other hand, is heartened by fact that, with exceptions of Cabanatuan, Davao City, and San Fernando, Pampanga, furor raised over election irregularities has largely died down, and public proved too apathetic even to participate in any sizable numbers in freedom rallies organized by opposition June 12, except in Cebu, where substantial amounts of money were spent to feed and transport marchers.

5. There is increasing reference to the growing acceptability of violence. None of this points to the imminence of any violent campaign, but references by Salonga<sup>5</sup> and others to the fact that "some moderates" were finding more attractive the concept of violence, including cooperation with the NPA and MNLF, have become more frequent in recent months. Cardinal Sin is evidently concerned about this as well, stressing to us (Manila 11568)<sup>6</sup> his interest in guiding the opposition in a non-violent direction and in retaining Marcos through an orderly transition period. Marcos told the Ambassador he had evidence of some of Aquino's associates making contact with the NPA, though he did not know how serious they were about collaboration (Manila 11239 or 12239).<sup>7</sup> In sum, there is credible evidence that more oppositionists are thinking about the possibility of violence, and at least some of them may have taken some initial steps to explore the possibilities.

6. We also think it likely that these same groups have been penetrated by the regime. For example, ranking member of Christian Social Revolutionary Force, who had just returned from Mindanao, told Pol-

---

<sup>4</sup> Salvador Laurel, a leader of the United Nationalist Democratic Organization, opposed the Marcos regime.

<sup>5</sup> Jovito Reyes Salonga, a Philippine politician and Marcos opponent.

<sup>6</sup> In telegram 11568 from Manila, June 16, the Embassy described Murphy's June 13 meeting with Sin. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800293-0490)

<sup>7</sup> In telegram 12239 from Manila, January 19, the Embassy summarized a meeting between Israeli Ambassador to the Philippines Moshe Raviv and Murphy, during which Raviv offered the use of two supertankers for U.S. charter in exchange for U.S. assistance in docking Israeli ships and securing dead storage at Subic Bay. Murphy and Raviv also discussed the actions of the MNLF. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files, D800035-1263)

Couns June 19 that SocDems were nervous and rather demoralized by arrest of suspects in Light A Fire Movement and particularly of those arrested in connection December 31 alleged military plot.<sup>8</sup> He added that, while some of the prominent moderate opposition figures may be concluding that violence may be the only effective recourse, many of those who would be called upon to carry out the violence have concluded that it makes little sense to do so, so long as they lack the organization, resources, and public support to carry their actions through to a successful conclusion. (Note: This represented a distinct change in mood from that displayed by the CSRF member in earlier meetings with us.) By same token, he said Light A Fire Movement was gutted by arrests for all practical purposes, and new recruits were not forthcoming.

7. We note an increasing tempo of contacts among the opposition, including those such as Manglapus in the U.S. with an eye to forming an umbrella organization. There is some overlapping of information provided by different sources. The “junta” being referred to by Aquino, for example, is probably the same organization [*less than 1 line not declassified*] though claims of leadership vary. Laurel’s own ambition to head opposition appears increasingly clear, following his prominent role in June 12 freedom rallies [*1½ lines not declassified*]. (Laurel’s [*1½ lines not declassified*] activities underscores his ambition, which, of course, has never been far below surface.)

8. [*name not declassified*] discussion of SocDem plans for violence reflects, slightly varied in detail, reports we have had from Manglapus and others. It is evident that opposition figures are in close contact with one another and aware of various plans being proposed. On other hand, [*less than 1 line not declassified*] named as one of key junta figures, has stated unequivocally to Ambassador that he personally opposes violence and that those who were beginning to view violence as the only recourse were still a long way from translating their convictions into overt acts.

9. Probably the major factor behind whatever new impetus there exists in opposition activity has been Aquino’s release and trip to the U.S.,<sup>9</sup> where he is beyond Marcos’ control. This has probably given renewed hope to some fading old oppositionists and budding new ones alike, who have lacked a rallying point until now. For others, who are still unsure of Aquino’s future plans and distrustful of his

---

<sup>8</sup> See “Manila Reports Uncovering Plot to Kill Marcos and Other Aides,” *New York Times*, January 1, 1980, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> In May, Aquino was released from detention in the Philippines in order to seek medical treatment in the United States for a heart condition. (“Detained Philippine Politician Allowed to Fly to U.S.,” *New York Times*, May 9, 1980, p. A1)



motives in dealing with Marcos, their sudden burst of energy is part of their effort to persuade Aquino to remain actively involved. Aquino's trip, together with the May Day opposition labor rally and the GOP's tolerance of the Independence Day rallies, has surely encouraged the opposition leaders in their plans. (It should be noted, however, that the authorities adeptly kept school closed until after June 12, thereby depriving rally organizers of major student participation.) Another factor spurring them on may be the increasingly prominent role of Mrs. Marcos in public life, and the growing rumors that she has already been secretly appointed Deputy Prime Minister, which may dash remaining hopes that Marcos would opt for an orderly transition of power to traditional political figures. Persistent rumors about Marcos' failing health, though they have subsided greatly since his Honolulu visit,<sup>10</sup> add to the impetus, despite the equally persistent lack of proof that they are true.

10. All of foregoing notwithstanding, we still lack evidence either that country is on the verge of a campaign of violence or that the opposition is indeed as united as the "junta" would make it out to be. None of our contacts has suggested that the trends of which they speak are on the point of being realized. We also see no signs other than the holiday rallies that the divisiveness of opposition leaders has been ended. (Some of them in fact are unabashedly jockeying for positions of greater authority, now that Aquino may be away from the scene for some years.) In fact, Marcos' liberality in allowing the rallies to proceed evinces a certain confidence that the situation is not getting out of hand. Crackdowns, such as the roundup of student leaders, the publicizing of the Colonel Reyes new year's "coup" plot and the like, are in the Marcos tradition of serving notice that there are limits to what he will allow.

11. For these reasons, we assess the document [*less than 1 line not declassified*] with some caution. It could be an attempt on the part of one group of opposition leaders to gain [*name not declassified*] blessing, which would then be used to further their own stature with other opposition groups, perhaps thereby gaining agreement to the very plan which they claim already to have activated. There seems to be heavy [*less than 1 line not declassified*] input into the document. [*name not declassified*] who evidently lends credence to the plan and who shows signs of moving towards endorsement of "controlled violence," may be being manipulated by the document's authors. It is not inconceivable that opposition is using references to violence, [*less than 1 line not declassified*] as means of provoking him to forego any "unholy deal,"

---

<sup>10</sup> See Document 332.



to opt for active political role, and to resume leadership of opposition movement in order to nip in the bud advocates of violence. Another possibility relates to fact that both Aquino and opposition here would dearly love to persuade the U.S. to press Marcos harder to lift martial law, to restore habeas corpus, or somehow compel him to negotiate with opposition on more equal terms. Raising the spectre of violence may be viewed as one surefire means of doing so.

12. We frankly find it difficult to believe that all of the “junta” could agree on anything so detailed and far-reaching as this particular plan, even if they did all know about it. We are also struck by the rather bizarre wording and ideas of parts of the document. We have detected no broad acceptance among leading opposition figures here of document’s aims to “restructure the present feudal society along the Christian Socialist Democratic model” or to “re-orient national policies along nationalist anti-monopolist (imperialist) programs.” We also note fact that strategy paper contains no attack of U.S. bases, unless we assume that to be subsumed under subpara 2.3. [1 line not declassified] Nor do we think many oppositionists would subscribe to the clear willingness to incur or cause 1,000 or 3,000 casualties as a calculated prelude to bringing the military to desert the regime and help force Marcos to negotiate an “orderly” (sic) transition.

13. Statistical predictions re military response to violence, discussed in para 5.2, reflect fine hand of some coffee house planner. To be sure, the first phase of the violent struggle would be the easiest to launch. A box of grenades and some hired thugs are all it would take. (Would note, however, that acts of post-election violence in Mindanao and Nueva Ecija have not triggered any wider terrorist actions.)

14. Whatever the origin and bona fides of the document, however, having been apprised of this plan, consider we have an obligation again to go on the record categorically [1 line not declassified] here against the violence it advocates. Given the loose lipped characteristic of opposition members, the regime has probably already largely penetrated opposition’s latest plans and is possibly aware even of the fact that we have been made privy to document. Therefore we should consider also advising Marcos re our receipt of document and our reaction to it. Silence on our part could easily be misinterpreted by GOP.

15. State 152264<sup>11</sup> giving follow up on Aquino’s position reflected in his June 18 conversation with EA/PHL Country Director received after this was drafted. We find ourselves in general agreement with

---

<sup>11</sup> In telegram 162264 to Manila, June 20, the Department provided a status report on Aquino. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P880031–1810)

Aquino's cautious view of opposition prospects and his realism about regime's likely response.

Murphy

---

**334. Defense Intelligence Notice Issued by the Defense Intelligence Agency<sup>1</sup>**

August 30, 1980, 0500Z

Subj: DIA Defense Intelligence Notice (DIN) (U)

Philippines: Dissident activity. (U)

1. (C/NoFORN) Major moderate opposition leaders issued a manifesto on 29 August denouncing President Marcos and demanding an end to his martial law regime. Meanwhile, violent dissidents launched a terror campaign in Manila last week, bombing business or government offices associated with Marcos or his cronies. Opposition activities will become more vocal and violent as the 21 September anniversary of the imposition of martial law nears. Although this opposition activity will be troublesome it does not portend the fall from power of the Marcos regime at least for the present time.

2. (C/NoFORN) Marcos' usually divided opponents closed ranks for the first time in 8 years of martial rule in striking their manifesto, which detailed a litany of martial law abuses. The document, signed by 71 members of 8 groups, lists 5 major goals of the coalition: the resignation of Marcos; the end of martial rule and the holding of free elections; social justice and economic independence; justice for minorities, especially Muslims; and freedom from foreign domination (US base presence). The manifesto, titled "National Covenant for Freedom," did not offer details as to how the goals are to be achieved, but leaders promised that a definite program dealing specifically with social reform would be issued in the near future. For the present, oppositionists have vowed to launch a nationwide campaign for their covenant.

3. (C/NoFORN) The President's opponents see an opportunity to capitalize on what they think is an increasingly difficult economic situation and growing political discontent. The manifesto is viewed as the beginning of a broad-based effort to confront Marcos. By becoming

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Box 81, Refugees (Philippines). Top Secret; *[handling restriction not declassified]*

more vocal, oppositionists hope to evoke enough public pressure to force him out. Despite the enthusiastic kickoff of their campaign, the dissidents overestimate their own potential and underestimate the resilience of the Marcos government. The President retains the loyalty of his key military commanders through careful selection and promotion. In addition, the public may think that these old-line politicians simply wish to replace Marcos to promote their own interests.

4. (C/NoForN) The foremost opponent of Marcos, Benigno Aquino, is undergoing medical treatment in the US, and he recently warned of possible violence as the martial law anniversary approaches. In likely reaction to this warning, bombings occurred in Manila over the past week. Nine widely separated locations were hit by coordinated explosions on the afternoon of 22 August. Targets included banks, government offices, and shopping areas allegedly owned by Marcos or his associates. A second series of small explosions took place on the 25th in unoccupied areas of two theaters. Although two injuries resulted, the blasts were intended to attract attention rather than cause injury. Ten additional bomb threats were received, including one at the US Embassy.

5. (C/NoForN) There has been some speculation that the bombings were instigated by the government in a tactic similar to that used to justify the 1972 imposition of martial law. However, these incidents appear otherwise, since press reporting has been sparse and the document issued by those claiming credit has all the earmarks of an activist dissident group. A new group, the April 6th Liberation Movement, and one of its urban guerrilla units, the April 6th Sandigan, have claimed responsibility. The Sandigan label identifies the bombers as part of the armed force of the Social Democrats, who advocate open violence to overthrow Marcos; end martial law; and install their own government. Members of another group associated with the Social Democrats are now on trial for assassination planning, sedition, and arson in Manila.

6. [*portion marking not declassified*] The violence appears timed to coincide with the trial and the forthcoming martial law anniversary. Increased building security measures and additional security forces have been fielded. The army has also alerted special units trained in handling civil disturbances. Military leaders are content for now to leave this problem in the hands of local security elements. Additional bombings, perhaps aimed at more significant targets, may be provoked by what is likely to be increasingly strident rhetoric by the oppositionists as the 21 September date nears. However, a widespread wave of urban terrorism does seem in the offing.

**335. Telegram From the Embassy in the Philippines to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>**

Manila, January 2, 1981, 0838Z

52. Department pass CINCPAC also for POLAD. Subject: Holbrooke Meeting With Defense Minister Enrile. Ref: Manila 0045.<sup>2</sup>

1. (C—Entire text.)

2. Summary: Defense Minister Enrile joined Assistant Secretary Holbrooke and Ambassador at residence for breakfast meeting Dec 31. Discussions were wide-ranging and frank on implications of terminating martial law and future of politics in the Philippines. Enrile recalled several occasions when Marcos had tried to name him in the line of succession in the event that President was unable continue and explained why he had resisted getting involved. Enrile presented image of a man completely loyal to his President. He claimed to be uninterested in remaining in politics after Marcos. End Summary.

3. Holbrooke outlined to Enrile accomplishments of and improvements in U.S.-Philippine relations over the past four years. Enrile replied that the relationship was indeed closer and agreed with Holbrooke's assumption that relations with the new administration should be close. Enrile reacted with surprise to Holbrooke's statement that the President had indicated in conversation the previous day that Enrile opposed the end of martial law. He then smiled and stated that he had opposed ending martial law only were it to be abandoned hastily. He asserted that for a long time he had favored its gradual disappearance. He touched on some problems attendant to its ending, just as the Marcoses had done (reftel), stemming from the fact that the people were used to the security that martial law provided them. Pursuing a theme of his recent public speeches, Enrile emphasized detrimental effects on national character should martial law be prolonged.

4. In answer to our questions, he said he did not believe the military would oppose the windup of martial law but his subsequent comments on this subject indicated his concern over the issue of the military in politics. Enrile observed that there could be problems. He said that in his current position he had come to know the military well and was aware of their predilection for quick solutions. He emphasized it was

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 64, Philippines, 1/80-1/81. Confidential; Immediate; Nodis. Printed from a copy that was received in the White House Situation Room.

<sup>2</sup> In telegram 45 from Manila, January 2, the Embassy summarized Holbrooke's meeting with the Marcoses. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D820298-0545)

important for the military not to have the “taste” of political authority for too long but maintained that the younger officers, who logically might be expected to form the nucleus for opposition to martial law’s termination, themselves argued for its conclusion. Enrile added that there were no prominent military figures with sufficient power or prestige to try to seize power—largely as the result of the President’s deliberate rotation of command and balancing of the forces.

5. Asked what he viewed as the most significant achievement of martial law, Enrile stated that he thought people would henceforth value more highly their exercise of freedom and democracy as they reflected on the martial law period. They would realize that abuse of these rights would lead to reimposition of martial law or utilization of Presidential emergency powers. He did not try to estimate, however, how long he thought this moderating or tempering realization would act on the occasionally volatile Filipino political temperament. Enrile said he believed from his talks with various groups that there would be some “testing” of the limits of political activity once martial law is dropped. He saw the students as a greater potential danger in this regard than labor, whose leaders he has already cautioned not to overstep what he implied were understood limits. He was optimistic that the students would be more restrained than they were in the last year just prior to martial law.

6. His general comments on opposition leadership produced no new insights but he did single out several younger politicians who might play more prominent roles in the future. He cited in this regard Mayor Pimentel of Cagayan de Oro and Governor Homobono Adaza of Misamis Oriental Province as well as Reuben Canoy (Mindanao Alliance) and former Minister of Information “Kit” Tatad. Enrile said that Aquino would have to come back to the Philippines fairly soon or face loss of his political influence. He revealed that he had advised the President not to grant Aquino amnesty when he first departed for abroad, but to save that step for his return. He also said that Aquino suffered from a lack of direction at this point and predicted that he probably would be willing to join the President, if he could figure out an acceptable formula.

7. Contrary to Marcos’ stress on foreign Communist involvement in the labor movement in the Philippines, Enrile stated that there was no activity by the Chinese and relatively little Soviet subversive activity, and that only in connection with the NPA. Even with the NPA his estimate of the level of Soviet financial support—dols 100,000 annually—he noted hardly amounted to a major Soviet effort. Enrile asserted that there is a special Moscow funding arrangement being handled through a Tokyo bank to support the NPA. He felt it would be difficult to prove the connection but stated the government was watching the

situation closely. He indicated, asking this be closely held, that there was evidence to link [less than 1 line not declassified] with the Moscow payment scheme. For this reason [name not declassified] had been denied permission to travel abroad earlier in the year.

8. Enrile predicted that economic issues would prove more unsettling to the GOP than the ending of martial law. He mentioned the difficulties caused by the slump in world market price of coconut oil but said that he felt the price support levels would continue to be manageable. Sugar, on the other hand, Enrile described as improperly managed since an artificially low price was being offered while the international price was rising.

9. Enrile indicated that he was uncertain how a legitimate opposition could be mobilized since many bright leaders would automatically be attracted to the President's party because of its ability to provide money and influence. (He noted some IBP members were now proposing adoption of the U.S. system of government financial assistance to election campaigns.) He said he has favored the idea of legalizing the Communist Party but retreated from this position when we pointed out that the Communists would have to agree first to abandon their weapons and that they were not likely to consent to do so.

10. Succession: Enrile talked at some length of the President's long-standing concern about the problem of succession and asserted that there is considerable discussion going on about how to create a proper structure. He recalled that as far back as 1971, prior to the imposition of martial law, the President had signed a document designating Enrile as Deputy Commander in Chief, effectively giving Enrile authority to take over should anything happen to Marcos while martial law was being instituted. Enrile subsequently returned the paper to the President telling him that he did not wish to be involved further in the issue of succession. In 1973, the President again approached Enrile to discuss the question of succession. Enrile declared that he told the President he did not want to assume any responsibility for succession arrangements because of the political intrigue which would engulf him if it became known he was to play a role. He stated, however, that if he were still in a position to be of service to the President at such time as the President might be incapacitated, he would carry out whatever succession order Marcos had signed and left with Mrs. Marcos. A year later in Malacanang, Marcos again approached Enrile but Enrile stuck to his earlier position.

11. At present, Enrile said the Cabinet is considering a number of possibilities about the succession structure and examining various models. Enrile mentioned that there could be a Vice President who would be concurrently speaker of the Assembly rather than a Deputy Premier, particularly if the Constitution is revised to give the President

more than ceremonial powers. Enrile seemed to retreat from this idea when Holbrooke questioned its applicability. Nonetheless, Enrile did appear interested in the possibilities of a system along the lines of the French Fifth Republic.

12. Questioned about Mrs. Marcos' opportunities and abilities to succeed the President, Enrile remarked that it might be possible for her to do so, particularly because she now had a widespread network of supporters. He believed the people generally looked at the President and the First Lady "separately" and that she had her own following. He noted the President's own favorite description of Mrs. Marcos as his "secret weapon." However, Enrile would not commit himself as to whether or not Mrs. Marcos could long hold onto power and did not seem to give her much chance for succeeding in her quest. He stated that many would be unwilling to see a woman in the top leadership position in the Philippines. At the same time he acknowledged her ambition saying that he thought she wanted to be like Mrs. Bandaranaike<sup>3</sup> and said that it was her unwillingness to consider the appointment of someone other than herself as Deputy Premier that was restraining the President from filling this position.

13. On his own ambitions and interests, Enrile was as always self-effacing. He indicated that he would probably run again for the Assembly in 1984 but he would do so only in connection with his service to the President. Aside from his aforementioned commitment to carry out any written succession formula of the President, Enrile stated that he did not want to continue in politics in a post-Marcos era. Noting that he was already 57, Enrile remarked that what he would really like to do is read law for about two years at Harvard and then go back to being a lawyer.

14. Comment: These past few months we have noted a reawakening of Enrile's interest in his job as Defense Minister and in Philippine politics generally. This meeting confirmed such a trend. We therefore take with more than a grain of salt his denials of any interest in his own political future, if the President should pass from the scene. He was unusually frank about the long-standing problem of succession and Mrs. Marcos' ambition. Yet all in all we did not detect a clear decision of what he wants for himself in terms of future political power. He has served Marcos loyally for many years and undoubtedly intends to continue to do so. He will probably continue to try to avoid getting caught up in the buzz saw of succession politics.

---

<sup>3</sup> Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Prime Minister of Ceylon and Sri Lanka from 1960 until 1965, and again from 1970 until 1977.

15. Note: Enrile has previously spoken of Soviet assistance to the PKP, the Moscow oriented Philippine Communist Party, but never about Soviet aid to the NPA.

**Murphy**