

The original documents are located in Box 122, folder “5/14/75 - Mayaguez Seizure (2)” of the John Marsh Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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[5/13/75]

SECRET SENSITIVETALKING POINTS FOR CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION

I am calling to inform you on a classified basis, of certain developments with regard to the seizure of an American merchant vessel by Cambodian naval vessels off the coast of Cambodia yesterday. The United States has demanded the immediate release of the ship and its crew. There has been no Cambodian response to this demand.

As a precautionary measure, the President has ordered the U. S. military forces to take certain actions:

-- to prevent the American seamen from being transferred from the vessel or the nearby island to the Cambodian mainland, placing their lives in jeopardy and restricting our ability to rescue them.

-- to prevent reinforcement from the Mainland of the Cambodian forces detaining the American vessel and crew.

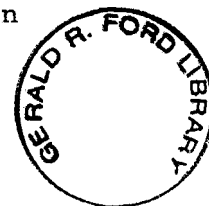
With these objectives in mind, the President has directed that U. S. aircraft should attempt to stop the movement of Cambodian boats between the ship or the island and the Cambodian mainland, and to prevent movement of the ship itself. Our military commanders have been directed to use the minimum force required to achieve these objectives.

FYI - You may draw on, but not go beyond, the attached fact sheet in answering questions on this subject.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority Open in Bucher (w.H. Guidelines)

By KBH NLF Date 1/29/98



Status of the U. S. Merchant Ship Seized by Cambodians

The S. S. Mayaguez, seized by Cambodian Communist forces, May 12, is now about 20 miles outside the port of Kompong Som, just north of Koh Tang Island. The ship is dead in the water, and there is reason to believe that most or all of its crew has been transferred to the island. The ship is being kept under surveillance by U. S. reconnaissance aircraft.

As a precautionary measure, several U. S. Navy combat vessels have been ordered to proceed to the general area of Koh Tang Island.

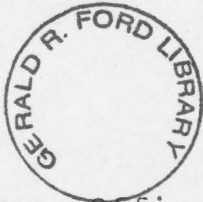
The U. S. has requested that Phnom Penh authorities have the ship released immediately. We have, so far, received no reply.

An NSC meeting was convened this morning.



CONGRESSIONAL CONTACTS OF May 13, 1975

MEMBER	TIME	LOCATION	COMMENTS
Price, Mel	5:50 pm	Home in DC (Bennett)	"Fine thanks you."
McFall, John	11:00 pm	Home in DC (Bennett)	"President should keep going. He's doing the right thing. Fine, than you."
Cederberg, Al	5:55 pm	Office (Bennett)	"Can't allow it to happe we must do what it take. to get the ship back - otherwise we may as wel put the Navy in Mothbal Thank you."
O'Neill, Tip	6:14 pm	Office (Leppert)	"Where's the ship. Where is the crew/ Do we have ships there? Those bastards, we can't let them get away with this They'll harrass us for ever."
Morgan, Doc	6:08 pm	Wayne Hays party on Hill (Leppert)	"No, that's exactly what I think he should have done."
Michel, Bob	5:59 pm	Office (Leppert)	"That's fine, do we know where the crew is? That is the least we can do. I'm for doing more. We can't let these birds horse us around."
Broomfield, Bill	5:55pm	Office (Loen)	"Good, good. I'm all for it. Thanks for the report."
Rhodes, John	5:50 pm	Rep. Bob Wilson's Office (Loen)	"Are the marines being sent in? Thanks for the report."
Mahon, George	6:05 pm	Office (Loen)	"Good. I think he shoul do that. I appreciate this report very much."



Speaker Albert 5:47pm. Mike Reid (Capitol) (Friedland)

"What diplomatic channels are you going through?"

Statements by Chairman Olin Teague:

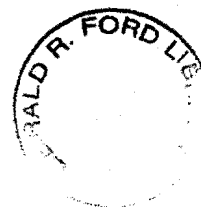
May 13, 1975

"A nation with power that does not have sufficient intelligence to use it does not have power. President Ford has said that he is taking immediate steps to obtain release of the U.S. merchant ship seized by the Cambodians. I hope he succeeds; however, if diplomatic efforts fail to return the ship and its crew within the next few days, I believe our military should take immediate steps to retaliate because we need to show the world that the United States is not a paper tiger to be humiliated at the whim of an irrational foreign government."

May 14, 1975

When the Cambodians captured the U.S. merchant ship I said that we should try to get the ship and the men back through diplomatic means if possible, and if not, we should retaliate militarily. Now that our planes have been fired upon and the President has responded by sinking the Cambodian vessels, I must say that I support the President's actions 100%. The President has full authority to proceed as he has and I am pleased that he has taken the initiative and used his legal authority. We must not allow the piracy of our ships by any nation. The President has used his power intelligently and effectively."

...These statements were dictated by the Chairman's secretary, after which, the Chairman personally said that he is convinced that the President is "playing with his helmet on."



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 14, 1975



MEMORANDUM FOR:

MAX L. FRIEDERSDORF

FROM:

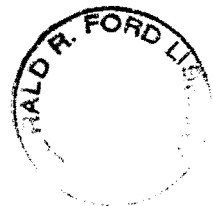
WILLIAM T. KENDALL *WTK*

SUBJECT:

Notification of action regarding S. S. Mayaquez

<u>SENATOR</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>PLACE</u>	<u>STAFF</u>	<u>COMMENT</u>
Mansfield	5:55	Office	WK	O.K., thanks for calling.
Case	6:00	Office	WK	Pleased to have information. Asked if crew members were on ship or island. Appreciated call.
Byrd (W. Va.)	6:10	Home	WK for POD	Good initial steps. Thinks President should give them deadline and then go in and get them.
Scott (Pa.)	6:15	Home	WK	That's good. Keep me informed.
Young	6:30	Home	WK	Good. Are we sure crew is on either island or ship?
Stennis	6:35	Press Club	WK	Senator approves of steps. Will back President all the way.
Griffin	6:05	Office	POD	Thank you. What are Chinese doing? Keep me informed.

<u>SENATOR</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>PLACE</u>	<u>STAFF</u>	<u>COMMENT</u>
Thurmond	6:08	Office	POD	They are testing us. President must be firm. Public will back him 100%.
Sparkman	6:30	Home	POD	Thank you. Sure is a sticky situation. I hear the boat is now moving.
McClellan	7:20	Home	POD	I support the President's actions. We must be tough with these people and resort to bombing if necessary.
Eastland	8:20	Office	WK for POD	The American people would support action. The quicker the better. "Blow the Hell out of them."



[5/14/75]

SECRET/SENSITIVE

DISCUSSION PAPER

As a follow-up to our telephone call to you last night concerning the seizure of an American vessel in the Gulf of Thailand, I want to provide you in advance and on a private basis the following information which will be announced by the Department of Defense shortly after noon today.

Beginning at 8:30 p.m. EDT yesterday, there were indications that the Cambodians appeared to be attempting to move U. S. captive crewmen from the ship to the mainland. After giving warning and taking precautions to avoid injury to Americans, U.S. aircraft began efforts to block this movement. Three Cambodian patrol craft were destroyed and four others were damaged and immobilized. One boat succeeded in reaching Kompong Som, possibly with some U.S. captives aboard.

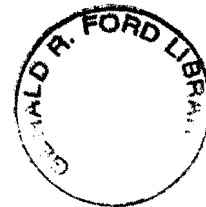
The MAYAGUEZ is still anchored off Koh Tang Island. The first U.S. Navy surface vessel, the destroyer escort HOLT, arrived in the area this morning. In the meantime, a Swedish refrigerator cargo ship, the MS HIRADO, was reportedly attacked by a patrol boat off Panjang Island, which is also claimed by Cambodia. Radio contact has been lost and the fate of this ship is unknown.

The NSC held a second meeting yesterday at 10:30 p.m. EDT and will meet again today. We will keep you informed.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority Open in Friedersdorf files (unmarked)

By KB4 NLF Date 1/29/98



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B LQTCZZCEBSA WX

URGENT

U.S. CAMBODIA A035 LEAD

BY KENNETH J. FREED

ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP) - SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER HUGH SCOTT SAID TODAY HE EXPECTS DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING THE SEIZED MERCHANT SHIP MAYAGUEZ WITHIN THE NEXT 24 HOURS AND ADDED THEY MAY INCLUDE USE OF 'MINIMUM NECESSARY MEASURES' TO RESCUE ITS 39-MAN CREW.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS, SCOTT DEFINED THOSE MEASURES AS THE 'MINIMUM FORCE NECESSARY; SHOULD FORCE BE NECESSARY.' HE DID NOT ELABORATE.

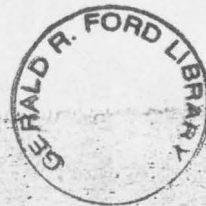
'THE PRIMARY CONCERN IS THE RECOVERY OF THE CREW, SCOTT SAID, ADDING THAT 'WE MAY REACH A SITUATION WHICH MAY REQUIRE THE USE OF MINIMUM NECESSARY MEASURES TO BRING THAT ABOUT.'

'I WOULD EXPECT THAT WITHIN THE NEXT 24 HOURS THERE WOULD BE SOME DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING THE VESSEL,' HE SAID.

SCOTT'S STATEMENTS CAME AS THE FORD ADMINISTRATION HAD LITTLE EXPECTATION OF A DIPLOMATIC END TO THE CAMBODIAN SHIP CRISIS, HOPING INSTEAD FOR A COMMUNIST CAVE-IN TO THE IMPLIED THREAT OF U.S. MILITARY ACTION.

PRESIDENT: 2ND GRAF A035

Pd1015aed MAY 14



REQUEST/RECEIPT FOR LDX TRANSMISSION

MCC STATION SERIAL NUMBER 138

TIME PROCESSED AT NMCC
14 MAY 75 13 55

NMCC ~~135~~

ADDRESSEE: PLSE ENTER STATION, TOR,
OPERATORS SIGNATURE AND RETURN TO NMCC:
FROM: _____
TOR: 1975 MAY 14 PM 2:07
NAME: _____

TO BE FILLED IN BY REQUESTER

FROM: Col Finkelstein OFFICE/DESK: OCTCS
PHONE NR: 71309

TO:

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-
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-
-

Mr Philip Buchen
Council to the President
Mr Morris Leigh
Rm 6475
632-9598

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DIA (PENT) _____
DIA (ARL HALL) _____
DNA _____
NPIC (NAVY YARD) _____

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS _____

CLASSIFICATION _____ PAGES 2



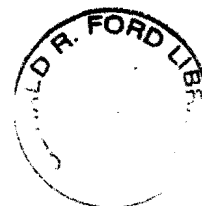
Dear Mr. Speaker:

On 12 May 1974, I was advised that the SS Mayaquez, a merchant vessel of United States registry with a US citizen crew, was fired upon, stopped, boarded, and seized by the Armed Forces of Cambodia in international waters in the vicinity of Poulo Wai Island. The seized vessel was then forced to proceed to Koh Tang Island where it remains at anchor. This hostile act was in clear violation of international law.

In view of this illegal and dangerous act, I order United States military forces to conduct the necessary reconnaissance and to be ready to respond if diplomatic efforts to acquire the return of the vessel failed. A Panamanian ship, the _____ had been detained by the Cambodians on _____ but had been released on _____.

Appropriate demands for the return of the Mayaquez were made, both publicly and privately. No response has been received except that United States reconnaissance aircraft seeking to locate the Mayaquez were fired upon, and two such aircraft were hit by small arms fire.

In accordance with my desire that the Congress be fully informed on this matter and taking note of Section 4(a)(1) of the War Powers Resolution, I wish to report to you that in order to stabilize the situation and to preclude removal of the American crew of the Mayaquez to the mainland, I directed that the United States Armed Forces isolate the island and interdict any movement between the island and the mainland. Notwithstanding visual warnings and warning shots, at 8:30 PM EDT on May 13,



a Cambodian patrol boat attempted to leave the island, was taken under fire by US aircraft and was sunk. Subsequently, a few other small craft which also ignored the warnings were destroyed or immobilized. A total of three Cambodian patrol craft have been destroyed and four others were damaged and immobilized. One boat succeeded in reaching Kompong Som, possibly with some U.S. captives aboard, after efforts to turn it around without injury to the passengers failed.

Although I hope that the ship and its crew will be returned without further use of the Armed Forces of the United States, it may be necessary to take further action to achieve that objective. The destroyer escort HOLT with a small complement of marines arrived in the area at 12 noon EDT today; marines augmentation forces will be put aboard later this afternoon; the carrier CORAL SEA and a task force including marines and helicopters will arrive in the area early tomorrow morning. It is not possible to advise you at this time as to when US involvement in this situation will terminate.

This operation was ordered and conducted pursuant to the President's Executive Power and his Constitutional authority as Commander-in-Chief of the United States Armed Forces.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAY 14, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

TEXT OF A MESSAGE TO THE CAMBODIAN AUTHORITIES
FROM THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

We have heard radio broadcast that you are prepared to release the S. S. Mayaguez. We welcome this development, if true.

As you know, we have seized the ship. As soon as you issue a statement that you are prepared to release the crew members you hold unconditionally and immediately, we will promptly cease military operations.

###



MAY 14, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

In further pursuit of our efforts to obtain the release of the SS MAYAGUEZ and its crew, the President has directed the following military measures, starting this evening Washington time:

- U.S. Marines to board the SS MAYAGUEZ.
- U.S. Marines to land on Koh Tang Island, in order to rescue any crew members as may be on the Island.
- Aircraft from the carrier "Coral Sea" to undertake associated military operations in the area in order to protect and support the operations to regain the vessel and members of the crew.

#



~~TOP SECRET~~

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 14, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: JACK MARSH

FROM: PHILIP BUCHEN *P.W.B.*

SUBJECT: The Mayaguez Situation in
Connection with the War Powers
Resolution

Following are the critical times as reported to me by
Marty Hoffman:

Monday, May 12 at 9:16 p.m. edt

A Navy P-3 aircraft used for reconnaissance was shot
at by rifle fire from the deck of the Mayaguez.

Tuesday, May 13 at 6:15 a.m. edt

Combat aircraft began action to interdict vessels
leaving the Island of Koh Tang.

Tuesday, May 13 at 8:30 p.m. edt

The first of the Cambodian vessels was sunk.

Under the War Powers Resolution, the President is required
to make his submission within 48 hours of the time when
U. S. Armed Forces are introduced either:

- (1) into hostilities or into situations where
imminent involvement in hostilities is
clearly indicated by the circumstances, or
- (2) into the air space of a foreign nation while
equipped for combat.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority MR 89-15, #4 (Buchen)

~~TOP SECRET~~

By KBH NLF Date 4/29/90



In this case, it could be argued that the reconnaissance plane was introduced into a situation of imminent hostility when it got close enough to the ship at 9:16 p.m., Monday, to be the target for rifle power. Even if this event did not start the running of the 48 hour period, it would certainly have started about 6:15 a.m. on Tuesday when aircraft equipped for combat was undoubtedly entering the air space of the Cambodian Island and over the Cambodian territorial waters.

Marty Hoffman concurs in having the report filed before the close of business today based on what information is available at the time of the drafting. He is preparing a draft to submit to us about noon today. The report should, of course, include the events of last night in and around the Island of Koh Tang, but it also must include "the estimated scope and duration of the hostilities or involvement."

This requirement immediately raises the issue as to whether the decision contemplated by the President to involve B-52's from Guam in bombing of Cambodian mainland should be disclosed when the "estimated scope" is reported on. Marty tells me that the flight line at the air-field in Guam has been closed to the public but is easily viewable from a nearby hotel. This situation will likely bring press speculation sometime soon, if it has not already come out, that use of B-52's is being contemplated, even if the decision hasn't been finally made.

Marty also tells me that there has been a radio intercept to the effect that a Swedish ship has been fired upon or seized by the Cambodians.



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

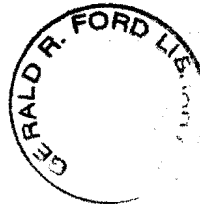
May 14, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: MAX L. FRIEDERSDORF

SUBJECT: Congressional Consultations on the Mayaguez
Situation

Attached are logs of calls to the Senate and House of
Representatives made in advance of the Department of
Defense release of information on the Mayaguez situation



CONGRESSIONAL CONTACTS OF May 13, 1975

MEMBER	TIME	LOCATION	COMMENTS
Price, Mel	5:50 pm	Home in DC (Bennett)	"Fine thanks you."
McFall, John	11:00 pm	Home in DC (Bennett)	"President should keep going. He's doing the right thing. Fine, thank you."
Cederberg, Al	5:55 pm	Office (Bennett)	"Can't allow it to happen we must do what it takes to get the ship back - otherwise we may as well put the Navy in Mothball. Thank you."
O'Neill, Tip	6:14 pm	Office (Leppert)	"Where's the ship. Where is the crew/ Do we have ships there? Those bastards, we can't let them get away with this. They'll harrass us forever."
Morgan, Doc	6:08 pm	Wayne Hays party on Hill (Leppert)	"No, that's exactly what I think he should have done."
Michel, Bob	5:59 pm	Office (Leppert)	"That's fine, do we know where the crew is? That is the least we can do I'm for doing more. We can't let these birds horse us around."
Broomfield, Bill	5:55pm	Office (Loen)	"Good, good. I'm all for it. Thanks for the report."
Rhodes, John	5:50 pm	Rep. Bob Wilson's Office (Loen)	"Are the marines being sent in? Thanks for the report."
Mahon, George	6:05 pm	Office (Loen)	"Good. I think he should do that. I appreciate this report very much."

LDR. FORD LI

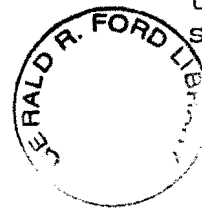
<u>Senator</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Staff</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Stennis	11:55	Office	BK	We are doing the right thing protecting our men. Situation getting sticky.
Case	12:00	For. Rel. Committee	BK	Fine, boy. Thank you.
Sparkman	11:45	For. Rel. Committee	PO'D	Thanks. I wonder what those Pacifist Swedes are going to do about their vessel.
Thurmond	11:50	Office	PO'D	Thank you. How and why did the one boat get through to the mainland.
McClellan	11:50	Office	PO'D	What's the story on the boat that got through.
Eastland	11:50	Office	PO'D	Thank you. Looks like things are getting serious.
Mansfield	11:10	Dem. Policy Mtg.	RW	OK. How many boats destroyed again? Thank you.
Scott	11:15	Rules Comm.	RW	They won't even let the Swedes alone. This process is continuing. I wish you would keep me advised.
Griffin	11:42	Rules Comm.	RW	Have you talked to Sen. Scott already?
Byrd	11:45	Senate Rules	RW	Said "Good" on being told that 3 Cambodian boats were destroyed.
Young	11:55		RW	Was concerned about the boat that got back to mainland. Thank you.



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

57/14

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>WHERE</u>	<u>WHO</u>	<u>COMMENT</u>
The Speaker	11:15 am	Capitol	Speaker (Frieders- dorf)	No Comment
Tip O'Neill	11:20 am	Capitol	O'Neill (Frieders- dorf)	"This is getting more serious."
John McFall	11:25 am	Capitol	McFall (Frieders- dorf)	"Good, good. Thanks."
John Rhodes	11:30 am	Capitol	Rhodes (Frieders- dorf)	"Are there other craft on the way? What orders is the HOLT under?"
Bob Michel	11:32	Capitol	Michel (Frieders- dorf)	No Comment
George Mahon	11:41 am	Capitol	Mahon (Frieders- dorf)	"I'm sorry. Thanks for calling."
"Doc" Morgan	11:18 am	Capitol	Morgan (Leppert)	No Comment
Bill Broomfield	11:25 am	Capitol	Broomfield (Leppert)	"All for what the President is doing and support his strong actions."
Mel Price	11:35 am	Capitol	Price (Leppert)	No Comment
Al Cederberg	11:40 am	Capitol	Cederberg (Leppert)	"Keep us informed. What is the U.S. HOLT to do?"
Bob Wilson	11:59 am	Capitol	Wilson (Leppert)	"Do we know if any crew of the U.S. ship were aboard the three boats sunk?"



[ca. 5/14/75]

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Vern Loen called and talked personally to Reps. Rhodes, Bob Wilson, Mahon and Broomfield.

All reactions were good, all supported actions as indicated in talking paper read to them.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAY 15, 1975

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT
ON THE
SS MAYAGUEZ

THE BRIEFING ROOM

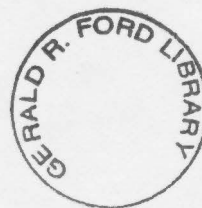
12:27 A.M. EDT

At my direction, the United States forces tonight boarded the American merchant ship SS MAYAGUEZ and landed at the Island of Koh Tang for the purpose of rescuing the crew and the ship, which had been illegally seized by Cambodian forces. They also conducted supporting strikes against nearby military installations.

I have now received information that the vessel has been recovered intact and the entire crew has been rescued. The forces that have successfully accomplished this mission are still under hostile fire, but are preparing to disengage.

I wish to express my deep appreciation and that of the entire Nation to the units and the men who participate in these operations for their valor and for their sacrifice.

END (AT 12:29 A.M. EDT)



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

*file
Mayaguez*

May 15, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR:

MAX FRIEDERSDORF

THRU:

VERN LOEN *VL*

FROM:

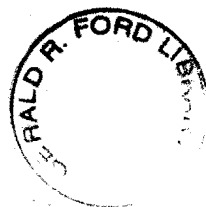
CHARLES LEPPERT, JR. *CLJ*

SUBJECT:

S. S. Mayaguez Incident - Report to Congress
War Powers Resolution

The report to the Congress on the S. S. Mayaguez incident were delivered on May 15, 1975 to the following Members of the U. S. House of Representatives.

<u>Member</u>		<u>Recipient</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>
Speaker Albert	(VL)	left under door	2:04 a. m.	Capitol Office
" "	(CL)	Mike Reed	2:20 a. m.	Reed's home
Rep. O'Neill	(CL)	Rep. O'Neill	11:09 a. m.	Capitol office
Rep. McFall	(CL)	Rita Herald	11:12 a. m.	Capitol office
Rep. Rhodes	(CL)	Lee Prouty	11:15 a. m.	Capitol office
Rep. Michel	(CL)	Ralph Vinovich	9:58 a. m.	Office
Rep. Mahon	(DB)	Pers. secy	11:43 a. m.	Office
Rep. Price	(DB)	Pers. secy	11:40 a. m.	Office
Rep. Morgan	(CL)	Connie Yesh	10:59 a. m.	Office
Rep. Wilson(Bob)	(DB)	Pers. secy	11:42 a. m.	Office
Rep. Broomfield	(CL)	Rep. Broomfield	10:55 a. m.	Rayburn HOB
Rep. Cederberg	(DB)	Pers. secy	11:44 a. m.	Office



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

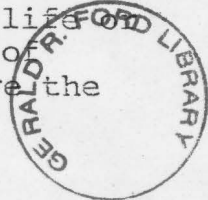
May 15, 1975

Dear Mr. President:

On 12 May 1975, I was advised that the SS Mayaguez, a merchant vessel of United States registry enroute from Hong Kong to Thailand with a U. S. citizen crew, was fired upon, stopped, boarded, and seized by Cambodian naval patrol boats of the Armed Forces of Cambodia in international waters in the vicinity of Poulo Wai Island. The seized vessel was then forced to proceed to Koh Tang Island where it was required to anchor. This hostile act was in clear violation of international law.

In view of this illegal and dangerous act, I ordered, as you have been previously advised, United States military forces to conduct the necessary reconnaissance and to be ready to respond if diplomatic efforts to secure the return of the vessel and its personnel were not successful. Two United States reconnaissance aircraft in the course of locating the Mayaguez sustained minimal damage from small firearms. Appropriate demands for the return of the Mayaguez and its crew were made, both publicly and privately, without success.

In accordance with my desire that the Congress be informed on this matter and taking note of Section 4(a)(1) of the War Powers Resolution, I wish to report to you that at about 6:20 A.M., 13 May, pursuant to my instructions to prevent the movement of the Mayaguez into a mainland port, U. S. aircraft fired warning shots across the bow of the ship and gave visual signals to small craft approaching the ship. Subsequently, in order to stabilize the situation and in an attempt to preclude removal of the American crew of the Mayaguez to the mainland, where their rescue would be more difficult, I directed the United States Armed Forces to isolate the island and interdict any movement between the ship or the island and the mainland, and to prevent movement of the ship itself, while still taking all possible care to prevent loss of life or injury to the U. S. captives. During the evening of 13 May, a Cambodian patrol boat attempting to leave the



island disregarded aircraft warnings and was sunk. Thereafter, two other Cambodian patrol craft were destroyed and four others were damaged and immobilized. One boat, suspected of having some U. S. captives aboard, succeeded in reaching Kompong Som after efforts to turn it around without injury to the passengers failed.

Our continued objective in this operation was the rescue of the captured American crew along with the retaking of the ship Mayaguez. For that purpose, I ordered late this afternoon an assault by United States Marines on the island of Koh Tang to search out and rescue such Americans as might still be held there, and I ordered retaking of the Mayaguez by other marines boarding from the destroyer escort HOLT. In addition to continued fighter and gunship coverage of the Koh Tang area, these marine activities were supported by tactical aircraft from the CORAL SEA, striking the military airfield at Ream and other military targets in the area of Kompong Som in order to prevent reinforcement or support from the mainland of the Cambodian forces detaining the American vessel and crew.

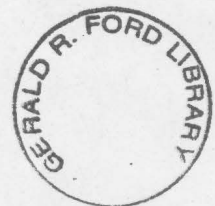
At approximately 9:00 P.M. EDT on 14 May, the Mayaguez was retaken by United States forces. At approximately 11:30 P.M., the entire crew of the Mayaguez was taken aboard the WILSON. U. S. forces have begun the process of disengagement and withdrawal.

This operation was ordered and conducted pursuant to the President's constitutional Executive power and his authority as Commander-in-Chief of the United States Armed Forces.

Sincerely,



The Honorable James O. Eastland
President Pro Tempore of the Senate
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 15, 1975

Dear Mr. Speaker:

On 12 May 1975, I was advised that the SS Mayaguez, a merchant vessel of United States registry enroute from Hong Kong to Thailand with a U. S. citizen crew, was fired upon, stopped, boarded, and seized by Cambodian naval patrol boats of the Armed Forces of Cambodia in international waters in the vicinity of Poulo Wai Island. The seized vessel was then forced to proceed to Koh Tang Island where it was required to anchor. This hostile act was in clear violation of international law.

In view of this illegal and dangerous act, I ordered, as you have been previously advised, United States military forces to conduct the necessary reconnaissance and to be ready to respond if diplomatic efforts to secure the return of the vessel and its personnel were not successful. Two United States reconnaissance aircraft in the course of locating the Mayaguez sustained minimal damage from small firearms. Appropriate demands for the return of the Mayaguez and its crew were made, both publicly and privately, without success.

In accordance with my desire that the Congress be informed on this matter and taking note of Section 4(a)(1) of the War Powers Resolution, I wish to report to you that at about 6:20 A.M., 13 May, pursuant to my instructions to prevent the movement of the Mayaguez into a mainland port, U. S. aircraft fired warning shots across the bow of the ship and gave visual signals to small craft approaching the ship. Subsequently, in order to stabilize the situation and in an attempt to preclude removal of the American crew of the Mayaguez to the mainland, where their rescue would be more difficult, I directed the United States Armed Forces to isolate the island and interdict any movement between the ship or the island and the mainland, and to prevent movement of the ship itself, while still taking all possible care to prevent loss of life or injury to the U. S. captives. During the evening of 13 May, a Cambodian patrol boat attempting to leave the



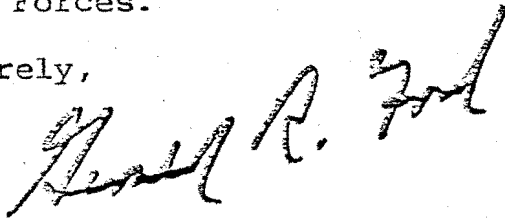
island disregarded aircraft warnings and was sunk. Thereafter, two other Cambodian patrol craft were destroyed and four others were damaged and immobilized. One boat, suspected of having some U. S. captives aboard, succeeded in reaching Kompong Som after efforts to turn it around without injury to the passengers failed.

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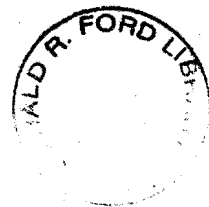
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This operation was ordered and conducted pursuant to the President's constitutional Executive power and his authority as Commander-in-Chief of the United States Armed Forces.

Sincerely,



The Honorable
The Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515



May 16, 1975

Chronology of Events of the Mayaguez Incident

MONDAY, MAY 12, 1975

The following events took place in the early morning hours between 3:18 a.m. and 7:40 a.m.

- (1) Mr. John Neal of the Delta Exploration Col. in Jakarta, Indonesia received a Mayday call from the Mayaguez. Message stated "Have been fired upon and boarded by Cambodian armed forces at 9 degrees 48 minutes north/102 degrees 53 minutes east. Ship is being towed to unknown Cambodian port."
- (2) Mr. Neal gave up trying to reach the ship and informed the U.S. Embassy of the incident.
- (3) U. S. Embassy in Jakarta informed Washington of the incident.
- (4) General Scowcroft briefed the President.

7:35 a.m. The President to the Oval Office.

7:40 a.m. General Scowcroft to the Oval Office.

8:00 a.m. General Scowcroft out.

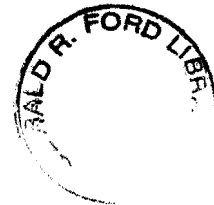
9:23 a.m. Secretary Kissinger to the Oval Office.

9:30 a.m. General Scowcroft to the Oval Office.

10:35 a.m. Secretary Kissinger and General Scowcroft out.

12:05 p.m. The President to the Cabinet Room for NSC Meeting. At this NSC meeting, the President asked for more information on forces available, location of the ship and diplomatic initiatives.

1:50 p.m. Press briefing and statement.



MONDAY, MAY 12, 1975 (cont.)

7:08 p. m. The President to the Residence.

9:16 p. m. Using reconnaissance aircraft made a positive identification of the ship and observed it being escorted by Cambodian gunboats. The aircraft was fired at and hit, sustaining minor damage.

10:29 p. m. PHONE CALL: Incoming call from General Scowcroft.

10:32 p. m. PHONE CALL terminated.

TUESDAY, MAY 13, 1975

2:21 a. m. PHONE CALL: Incoming from General Scowcroft.

2:23 a. m. PHONE CALL terminated.

6:52 a. m. PHONE CALL: Incoming from Secretary Schlesinger.

6:54 a. m. Press briefing and statement.

7:00 a. m. PHONE CALL terminated from Secretary Schlesinger.

7:03 a. m. PHONE CALL: Incoming from Secretary Schlesinger.

7:06 a. m. PHONE CALL terminated.

7:42 a. m. The President to the Oval Office.

7:45 a. m. General Scowcroft to the Oval Office.

8:08 a. m. General Scowcroft out.

9:53 a. m. Press briefing and statement.



TUESDAY, MAY 13, 1975 (cont.)

10:22 a. m. The President to the Cabinet Room for NSC Meeting. Out of that the President orders that the boats between the island and the mainland as well as between the ship and the mainland be intercepted with minimal force.

11:17 a. m. The President returns to the Oval Office.

12:15 p. m. Press briefing and statement.

12:46 p. m. PHONE CALL: Outgoing to Secretary Kissinger in Kansas City, Missouri.

12:58 p. m. PHONE CALL terminated.

1:26 p. m. PHONE CALL: Incoming from Secretary Schlesinger.

1:34 p. m. PHONE CALL terminated.

1:53 p. m. General Scowcroft to the Oval Office.

2:00 p. m. General Scowcroft out.

6:11 p. m. PHONE CALL with Secretary Schlesinger.

6:14 p. m. PHONE CALL terminated.

7:08 p. m. The President to the Residence.

8:10 p. m. PHONE CALL: Incoming from General Scowcroft.

8:12 p. m. PHONE CALL terminated.

Approx. 8:30 p. m. Sinking of Cambodian patrol craft.

9:41 p. m. PHONE CALL: Incoming from General Scowcroft.

9:51 p. m. PHONE CALL terminated.

9:59 p. m. The President returned to the Oval Office.



TUESDAY, MAY 13, 1975 (cont.)

10:30 p.m. NSC Meeting. Out of this the President orders the military forces that might be used to be placed on a one hour alert.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 1975

12:25 a.m. The President to the Oval Office.

12:35 a.m. The President in the Residence.

7:40 a.m. The President to the Oval Office.

7:44 a.m. General Scowcroft to the Oval Office.

8:05 a.m. The above out.

9:35 a.m. Secretary Kissinger to the Oval Office.

9:40 a.m. General Scowcroft to the Oval Office.

10:15 a.m. The above out.

10:33 a.m. Secretary Kissinger to the Oval Office

10:37 a.m. Secretary Kissinger out.

11:50 a.m. Press briefing and statement.

12:13 p.m. Secretary Kissinger to the Oval Office.

12:19 p.m. Secretary Kissinger out.

3:52 p.m. The President to the Cabinet Room for NSC Meeting.

4:45 p.m. Orders are issued, emanating from an NSC meeting, to begin the military operations for the recovery of the SS Mayaguez and crew.



WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 1975 (cont.)

5:14 p. m. to U. S. assault forces take off from stations.
5:20 p. m.

5:42 p. m. The President to the Oval Office.

5:45 p. m. JCS orders to the Pacific Command.

6:03 p. m. Instruction issued by CINCPAC Headquarters
for supporting strikes on selected targets near
Kom Pong Som.

6:09 p. m. Secretary Kissinger to the Oval Office.

6:11 p. m. Secretary Kissinger out.

6:40 p. m. The President to the Cabinet Room for Bipartisan
Leadership Meeting.

6:58 p. m. to Marine assault force arrives at USS Holt and is
7:22 p. m. taken on board.

7:07 p. m. to Phnom Penh domestic radio service carries a
7:26 p. m. broadcast in Cambodian that states that the Cambodian
Government will order the Mayaguez to withdraw
from Cambodian territorial waters. No mention
of release of crew.

7:09 p. m. Assault force arrives at Koh Tang Island and
receives fire.

7:20 p. m. First Helo approaches Koh Tang Island.

7:47 p. m. The President to the Oval Office.

7:47 p. m. General Scowcroft and Senator Stennis to the
Oval Office.

7:49 p. m. The above out.

7:49 p. m. The President to the residence.



WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 1975 (cont.)

8:06 p. m. The Cambodian broadcast, monitored by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service and translated into English, was carried on the FBIS wire.

8:15 p. m. The FBIS wire report is delivered to Secretary Kissinger, who immediately informs the President.

8:20 p. m. USS Holt came alongside SS Mayaguez.

8:23 p. m. The President to the Red Room.

8:29 p. m. PHONE CALL: Incoming from Secretary Kissinger.

8:30 p. m. to 9:05 p. m. Marines from the USS Holt board and take control of the SS Mayaguez. They find evidence that the vessel had been occupied until just before their arrival.

8:30 p. m. Press briefing and statement.

8:37 p. m. PHONE CALL with Secretary Kissinger terminates.

8:41 p. m. The President to the State Dining Room.

8:45 p. m. Support aircraft begin passes over targets at military installations near Kom Pong Som.

8:50 p. m. PHONE CALL: Incoming from Secretary Kissinger.

8:52 p. m. PHONE CALL terminated.

8:55 p. m. PHONE CALL with Senator Mansfield.

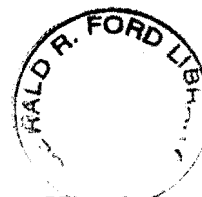
8:57 p. m. PHONE CALL terminated.

8:57 p. m. PHONE CALL: Incoming from Secretary Kissinger.

9:01 p. m. PHONE CALL terminated.

9:15 p. m. Statement by Ron Nessen and Message to Cambodian Authorities regarding SS Mayaguez.

9:30 p. m. After thorough search of the ship, Marines raised American flag over Mayaguez.



WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 1975 (cont.)

10:10 p. m. The President to the Red Room.

10:23 p. m. A boat was reported near Koh Tang Island flying a white flag.

10:45 p. m. USS Wilson observed small boat approaching.

10:57 p. m. Aircraft from USS Coral Sea struck Ream Airfield.

11:00 p. m. The President to the Oval Office.

11:03 p. m. Secretary Kissinger to the Oval Office.

11:05 p. m. General Scowcroft and Mr. McFarland to the Oval Office.

11:06 p. m. Mr. Rumsfeld to the Oval Office.

11:07 p. m. The USS Wilson takes aboard the occupants of that boat. The occupants were determined to be the entire crew of the SS Mayaguez.

11:08 p. m. PHONE CALL: Incoming from Secretary Schlesinger.

11:10 p. m. PHONE CALL terminated.

11:11 p. m. PHONE CALL: Incoming from the Vice President.

11:13 p. m. PHONE CALL terminated.

11:13 p. m. USS Wilson reports entire Mayaguez crew on small boat.

11:15 p. m. PHONE CALL: Incoming from Secretary Schlesinger.

11:16 p. m. The order was given to cease all offensive operation and begin to withdraw. The Commander of the forces on the island requests additional ground forces to provide security for a successful withdrawal.



WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 1975 (cont.)

11:18 p. m. PHONE CALL with Secretary Schlesinger terminated.

11:27 p. m. General Scowcroft out.

11:29 p. m. All out.

11:30 p. m. The President to the Residence to change clothes
for statement to the Press.

11:44 p. m. The President to the Oval Office.

11:44 p. m. PHONE CALL: Outgoing to Secretary Schlesinger.

11:56 p. m. PHONE CALL terminated.

11:46 p. m. Messrs. Rumsfeld and Nessen to the Oval Office.

11:49 p. m. Secretary Kissinger and General Scowcroft to the
Oval Office.

11:50 p. m. Mr. Marsh to the Oval Office.

11:50 p. m. Second strike from Coral Sea hit POL tanks in Kom
Pong Som area near port facilities.

11:51 p. m. Mr. Hartmann to the Oval Office.

THURSDAY, MAY 15, 1975

12:14 a. m. PHONE CALL: Outgoing to Congressman Rhodes, talked.

12:14 a. m. General Scowcroft out.

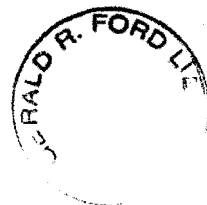
12:15 a. m. Mr. Marsh out.

12:18 a. m. General Scowcroft to the Oval Office.

12:20 a. m. Mr. Marsh to the Oval Office.

12:20 a. m. PHONE CALL: Outgoing to Senator Scott, talked.

12:23 a. m. PHONE CALL: Outgoing to Senator Case, no answer,
did not talk.



THURSDAY, MAY 15, 1975 (cont.)

12:25 a. m. The Mayaguez crew is returned to its vessel.

12:27 a. m. Statement by President on SS Mayaguez.

12:30 a. m. President in the West Wing Press Room for
statement.

12:31 a. m. The President to the Oval Office.

12:33 a. m. The President to the Residence.

12:35 a. m. PHONE CALL: Incoming from Secretary Schlesinger,
talked.

12:45 a. m. News Conference by Ron Nessen on Mayaguez.

3:30 a. m. Secretary of Defense Schlesinger issue s statement
and briefed the press.

4:40 a. m. SS Mayaguez underway under her own power.

7:13 a. m. Helo rescued 25 Marines and L Aircrew from beach.

7:45 a. m. The President to the Oval Office

7:45 a. m. General Scowcroft to the Oval Office.

8:11 a. m. General Scowcroft out.

9:10 a. m. Last Helo off Koh Tang to the Coral Sea.

9:50 a. m. Secretary Kissinger to the Oval Office.

10:20 a. m. The above out.

11:58 a. m. Press briefing and statement.

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7511043

[5/30/75]

MEMORANDUM FOR LIEUTENANT GENERAL BRENT SCOWCROFT
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: Chronology on the Mayaguez
Incident

The offices of Senator Nelson and Congressman Zablocki have requested that the State Department provide them a chronology of the Mayaguez incident. Attached is a chronology of State Department actions. We understand that it will be used to prepare an integrated report with contributions by other agencies to furnish to the Congress.

George S. Springsteen
Executive Secretary

Attachment:

Chronology

Drafted:EA/LC:JBroh-Kahn:dtm
x23133:5/30/75

Clearances: EA - Mr. Zurhellen
L - Mr. Leigh
H - Mr. Goldberg
D - Mr. Duenling
S - Mr. Egan
P - Mr. Martinez
S/S - Mr. Ealum



CHRONOLOGYState Department Participation in the Mayaguez AffairMonday, May 12

- 0515 Department informed of seizure of ship.
- 0600- Senior officers of the Department were alerted
0800 and the matter was discussed at the Secretary's staff meeting.
- 1300 Following a National Security Council meeting, attended by the Deputy Secretary, the Department requested that the Chief of the People's Republic of China Liaison Office call on the Deputy Secretary.
- 1431 The Secretary departed for St. Louis.
- 1630 The PRCLO Chief refused to accept a message from the Acting Secretary to pass to the Cambodian authorities demanding the return of the Mayaguez and its crew.
- 1800 Senior legal officers in the Department, White House and Defense Department discussed possible need for report by President under War Powers Resolution.
- 2000 The Department sent a message to our Liaison Office in Peking reporting the refusal of the PRCLO to accept a message here and instructing our Liaison Office to deliver a message to the Cambodian Embassy and Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The message requested that they pass a message to the authorities in Phnom Penh demanding the return of the Mayaguez and its crew.

Tuesday, May 13

- 0100 The USLO in Peking reported that the messages had been delivered.
- 0930 During the Kennedy Subcommittee hearing on



Vietnamese refugees, when Senator Kennedy expressed the hope that appropriate committees of Congress would be informed about diplomatic efforts on the Mayaguez, a Department official responded that he was sure that this could be done.

1200 Instructions were given in the Department to prepare messages to the US Mission at the UN to instruct it to deliver letters to the UN Secretary General and Security Council. (See below under May 14 1230 and 2215.)

1300 The Department informed the Minister of the Japanese Embassy, Washington, that the US was moving one battalion of marines from Okinawa to an undisclosed destination.

Wednesday, May 14

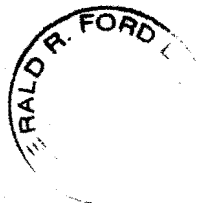
0330 The Embassy in Tokyo requested the Department to confirm, if asked, the statement that the Japanese government planned to make that our actions connected with the Mayaguez operation did not violate understandings with the Japanese.

0715 The Liaison Office in Peking reported that the PRC had stated that it was not in a position to pass our message to the Cambodian authorities and was therefore returning it.

0845 The Embassy in Bangkok reported the text of a Thai aide memoire objecting to any US action which would involve Thailand in the Mayaguez incident.

1015 The Embassy in Bangkok reported that the Charge notified the Thai Prime Minister of the arrival of marines in Thailand. He was told that they must leave immediately.

1230 The Department telephoned the US Mission at the UN, instructing it to deliver a letter to the Secretary General requesting his assistance to obtain the release of the Mayaguez through



diplomatic channels and reserving the right of self-defense in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter.

1300 The Department sent a message instructing the Mission at the UN along the above lines.

1300 The letter was delivered to the Secretary General.

1400 The Mission to the UN informed the Department that the Secretary General promised to contact the Cambodian authorities.

1500- Department officials briefed members of the
1700 House International Relations Committee, Senate Foreign Relations Committee and House Armed Services Committee.

1800 Following an NSC meeting, instructions were given in the Department that, as soon as the Defense Department reported that military action had begun to obtain the release of the Mayaguez and its crew, the Department should take the following actions:

1. Send a message to all diplomatic posts to inform other governments of the US decision to take military action to secure the release of the Mayaguez and its crew;

2. Have senior officials inform key embassies in Washington of this action.

1930 After being informed by the Defense Department of the beginning of the operation, senior officials in the Department began calling key embassies.

2000 The US Mission at the UN reported the Secretary General's written reply to the letter from the US Mission. Earlier, at 1900, the Secretary General's spokesman at the UN told the press that he was making all possible efforts to achieve a solution to the problem by peaceful means. For this purpose, he had communicated



with the US and Cambodian governments, offered them his good offices, and appealed to them to refrain from further acts of force to facilitate a peaceful settlement.

- 2004 The Department was notified of a Phnom Penh broadcast announcing the decision to release the Mayaguez and senior officials were immediately informed.
- 2215 The Department instructed the US Mission to deliver a message to the President of the UN Security Council on US actions to secure the release of the Mayaguez and its crew under Article 51 of the UN Charter.
- 2250 The Liaison Office in Peking reported that the message to the Cambodian embassy had been returned.
- 2330 The US Mission to the UN reported that the Security Council had authorized distribution of the letter from the US Mission.

Thursday, May 15

- 0030 The Department instructed all posts to inform host governments of the circumstances surrounding the President's decisions with regard to the seizure of the Mayaguez.
- 0300 A message was sent to our Embassy in Bangkok informing it that we were using Thai bases for the Mayaguez operation and instructing the Embassy to tell the Thai that we would remove the marines from Thailand when the operation was completed.



January 14, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: BILL SEIDMAN

FROM: JACK MARSH

SUBJECT: Mayaguez Log

The President would very much like to have the log described in the attached. He would like for you to follow-up, and if you could obtain the log and present it to him, he would be very grateful.

Many thanks.

JOM/dl

RALD R. FORD LIT

RJR

JAN 12 1976

R. J. Reynolds Industries, Inc.
Winston-Salem, N. C. 27102

J. Paul Sticht
President

December 22, 1975

Honorable William Seidman
Assistant to The President
for Economic Affairs
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Bill:

Rather than try to reach you on the telephone this busy season I thought this note would take care of the two questions that I had to raise.

At the time we gave the President the Mayaguez wheel, some mention was made about his receiving copies of Captain Miller's entries in the Mayaguez log, as well as charts, etc. We have been able to get copies made (Captain Miller made them himself) and I was wondering what the President's wishes might be about them -- would he still be interested in receiving copies, and what procedure should we take if he does?

The second question has to do with contributions to the President's reelection campaign. Now that Dave Packard has been replaced, what group in Washington, if any, is the most appropriate to receive voluntary contributions, or should we look to a North Carolina organization?

I will be guided by your suggestions in these matters.

All the best for the holidays.

Sincerely,



JPS-lv

