

**The original documents are located in Box 17, folder “Mayaguez Crisis” of the Loen and Leppert Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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## MEMORANDUM

## THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 13, 1975

Memo to Max Friedersdorf

From Bill Kendall

Subject Notification of action regarding S.S. Mayaguez

<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 advised.
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."



~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4 (b)

White House Guide Lines, Feb. 24, 1983

By

*JP*

NARS, Date

*2/14/84*

TALKING POINTS FOR CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION

Who  
time  
place  
Comments

MF Albert  
CL O'Neill  
DB McFall  
CL Morgan  
VL Mahon  
DB Price  
VL Rhodes  
CL Rich.  
VL Broom.  
DB Cedar.  
DB Wilson

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 island and the ship and~~ 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.



SECRET/SENSITIVE

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4 (b)

White House Guide Lines, Feb. 24, 1983

By

*JP*

NARS, Date

2/14/84

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.





May 13, 1975

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.



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

May 13, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: JOHN MARSH  
THROUGH: MAX FRIEDERSDORF  
FROM: VERN LOEN  
SUBJECT: Congressional calls on Cambodian  
seizure of the merchant ship MAYAGUEZ



MEMBER: Rep. John Rhodes (R-Ariz.)

DATE: 5/13/75

TIME: 5:50 p.m.

PLACE: Office of Rep. Bob Wilson, (R-Calif) (SOS Club)

CONTACT: Vern Loen spoke with Rep. Rhodes

COMMENTS: Rhodes: "Are marines being sent in?"  
Loen: "I have no such information."  
Rhodes and Wilson: "Thanks for the report."



MEMBER: Rep. William Broomfield (R-Mich.)

DATE: 5/13/75

TIME: 5:55 p.m.

PLACE: Reached at his office by Vern Loen

CONTACT: Vern Loen spoke with Rep. Broomfield

COMMENTS: "Good, good. I'm all for it. Thanks for the report."



MEMBER: Rep. George Mahon (D-Texas)

DATE: 5/13/75

TIME: 6:05 p.m.

PLACE: Reached at his office

CONTACT: Vern Loen spoke with Rep. Mahon

COMMENTS: "Good. I think he should do that. I appreciate this report very much."



MEMBER: Rep. Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill

DATE: Tuesday, May 13, 1975

TIME: 6:14 p.m.

PLACE: Majority Leader's office, Washington, D. C.

CONTACT: Charles Leppert spoke personally with the Member.

COMMENTS: "Where is the ship?  
About 20 miles outside the port of Kompong Som.  
"Where's the crew?"  
There is reason to believe that most or all of the  
crew has been transferred to the nearby island.  
"Do we have ships there?"  
I believe there have been news reports on the  
radio that we have ships steaming there."  
"Those bastards, we can't let them get away with  
this. They'll harass us forever."





MEMBER: Rep. Bob Michel

DATE: Tuesday, May 13, 1975

TIME: 5:59 p. m.

PLACE: Congressional District Office, Washington, D. C.

CONTACT: Charles Leppert spoke with Member personally

COMMENTS: "That's good. Do we know where the crew is?"  
Yes, there is reason to believe that most or all  
of the crew has been transferred to the nearby  
island.

That's the least we can do. I'm for doing more.  
We can't let these birds horse us around.



MEMBER: Rep. Thomas E. "Doc" Morgan

DATE: Tuesday, May 13, 1975

TIME: 6:08 p.m.

PLACE: At. Rep. Wayne Hay's party on Capitol Hill

CONTACT: Charles Leppert talked to the Member personally.

COMMENTS: "No. That's exactly what I think he should have done."



MEMBER: Rep. Mel Price

DATE: May 13, 1975

TIME: 5:50 p.m.

PLACE: Washington, D. C. in office

CONTACT: Douglas P. Bennett personally spoke with Mr. Price

COMMENTS: Fine, thank you.



MEMBER: Rep. El Cederberg

DATE: May 13, 1975

TIME: 5:55 p.m.

PLACE: Washington, D. C. in office

CONTACT: Douglas P. Bennett spoke personally with Mr. Cederberg

COMMENTS: 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 mothballs. Thank you.



MEMBER: Rep. John McFall

DATE: May 13, 1975

TIME: 11:00 p. m.

PLACE: Washington, D. C. at home

CONTACT: Douglas P. Bennett spoke personally with Mr. McFall

COMMENTS: The President should keep going. He's doing the right thing. Fine, thank you.



Tuesday, May 13, 1975

RELEASES: Galen L. Stone, to be Ambassador to Laos. (replacing Whitehouse who is going to Thailand as Ambassador)

POSTINGS: Charles S. Gubser as Chairman of U.S. Section of the Permanent Joint Board of Defense, U.S. - Canada  
3 people appointed commissioners of the U.S. Section of the Int'l North Pacific Fisheries Commission (Thortenson, Grotting & Rasmuson)  
Duane K. Craske resignation as U.S. Attorney for district of Guam  
Transmittal of Annual report on Nat'l Advisory Council on Adult education

SCHEDULE: As posted with the addition of

10:22 a.m. NSC meeting lasted until 11:30 (the President left at 11:18)

NY MEETING: The Carey-Beame meeting will last about 45 minutes. Press can catch C-B out on the lawn and then we will try to make J. Lynn OMB available to take questions. The Mayor and Governor should be available around 2:45 or so. At this moment the Administration policy is as Secy. Simon has stated (no more fed. funds) but the President has agreed to hear their appeal and will make a final decision later this week.

ECON/ENERGY MTG.: John Carlson will be in the meeting and will give a read-out later

BUDGET: As required by law, June 1st it is legally required that the budget be recalc. Then page 41 of the budget must be revised and updated, but it is not legally required to publish the famous page 41.

MERCHANT SHIP: Cannot comment on movement of ships or troops. If there is any decision to use military forces, the President will abide by the requirements of the War Powers Act which states "... the President shall in every possible instance consult with the Congress before introducing U.S. armed forces into hostilities or in a situation where imminent involvement in hostilities is already indicated by the circumstances... It is reported that a Panamanian ship was detained in approximately the same waters for about 36 hours, it was not moved, detained May 7-8 and then allowed to sail on. About 10 days ago a S. Korean freighter received fire from a Cambodian ship, but the SKorean ship sailed on, was not detained. There are no reports of crew being injured. It is stated that Cambodian military boarded the ship. Can give no further details on the crew. A positive sighting was made of the ship late in the evening Washington time (last night) and confirmation of where it is now anchored early morning Washington time today. A warning to ships has been issued by the international warning organization for those troubled waters. There are two Cambodian gunboats with the seized freighter. The merchant ship was doing NOTHING but carrying cargo. The President has not set a deadline for progress in the release. No plans at this time for the President to address the American people.

LUNCH LID 2:45 p.m.





LATEST

MAY 13, 1975  
7:00 a.m. EDT

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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NOTICE TO THE PRESS

STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

The merchant ship MAYAGUEZ, at last report was anchored close to the island of Koh Tang, 30 miles off the coast of Cambodia. During the night, Washington time, it was escorted by two Cambodian naval vessels from the point where it was originally boarded (that point was eight miles from the rock island of Poulo Wai) toward its present location. The ship is being kept under observation by U.S. military aircraft. The President was kept informed of developments during the night.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAY 12, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

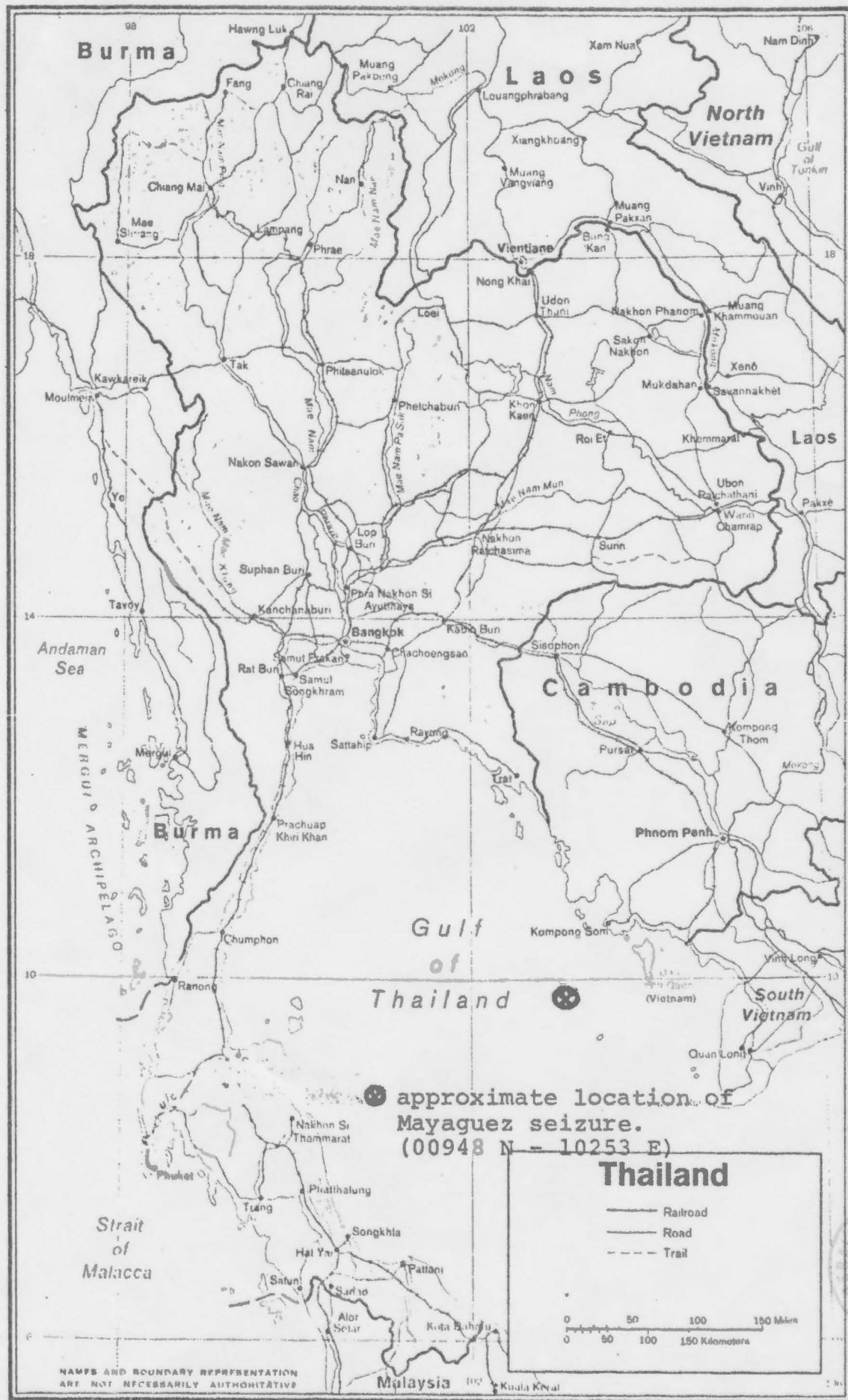
We have been informed that a Cambodian naval vessel has seized an American merchant ship on the high seas and forced it to the port of Kompong Som. The President has met with the NSC. He considers this seizure an act of piracy. He has instructed the State Department to demand the immediate release of the ship. Failure to do so would have the most serious consequences.

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Mel Price

5:50 Washington

Finz, thank you.

John McFall 11:00 Washington.

The President should keep going.  
He's doing the right thing.

Finz, thank you.

El Cidreborg

5:55 Washington

"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 mothballs."

Thank you.



May 15, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR:

SENATE SIDE  
✓HOUSE SIDE

FROM:

NANCY KENNEDY *Wk*

Attached is a copy of the letter delivered by hand around 2:00 a.m. to the Speaker/President Pro Tem, reporting the action taken in Cambodia. Copies were hand delivered by our staff to the leadership, Chairmen and ranking Republicans on the jurisdictional committees.

We are not doing a distribution to the rest of Congress, as it will be in the Congressional Record tomorrow. However, if you receive individual requests, you can send up copies.

This has been cleared thru Buchen.



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





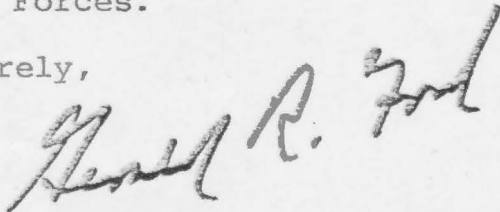
island disregarded aircraft warnings and was sunk. Thereafter, two other Cambodian patrol craft were destroyed and four others were damaged and immobilized. One boat, suspected of having some U. S. captives aboard, succeeded in reaching Kompong Som after efforts to turn it around without injury to the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

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



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAY 14, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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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.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAY 15, 1975

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

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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)



May 13, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The following information was made available at 3p.m. today at the Pentagon:

MEMORANDUM FOR CORRESPONDENTS:

MAY 13, 1975

The following Notice to Mariners (#NR45) was issued by the Defense Mapping Agency Hydrographic Center at 7:15 p.m. EDT, May 12:

"Special Warning: Shipping is advised until further notice to remain more than 35 nautical miles off the coast of Cambodia and more than 20 nautical miles off the coast of Vietnam including off lying islands. Recent incidents have been reported of firing on, stopping and detention of ships within waters claimed by Cambodia, particularly in vicinity of Poulo Wai Island. This warning in no way should be construed as United States recognition of Cambodian or Vietnamese territorial sea claims or as derogation of the right of innocent passage for United States flag vessels, or derogation of the freedom of the high seas."

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MAY 14, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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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.

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MAY 15, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSE

TEXT OF A LETTER TO THE SPEAKER  
AND THE PRESIDENT PRO TEM

May 15, 1975

Dear Mr. Speaker: (President Pro Tem)

On 12 May 1975, I was advised that the S. S. Mayaguez, a merchant vessel of United States registry en route 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.

(MORE)



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,

GERALD R. FORD

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

May 15, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR:

MAX FRIEDERSDORF

THRU:

VERN LOEN *VL*

FROM:

CHARLES LEPPERT, JR. *CLJr.*

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

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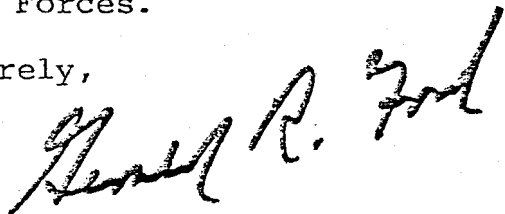
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Sincerely,



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

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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

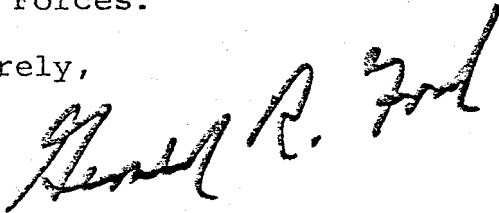
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Our continued objective in this operation was the rescue of the captured American crew along with the retaking of the ship Mayaguez. For that purpose, I ordered late this afternoon an assault by United States Marines on the island of Koh Tang to search 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  
The Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D. C. 20515

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 15, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR:

MAX FRIEDERSDORF

THRU:

VERN LOEN *VL*

FROM:

CHARLES LEPPERT, JR. *CLJr.*

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

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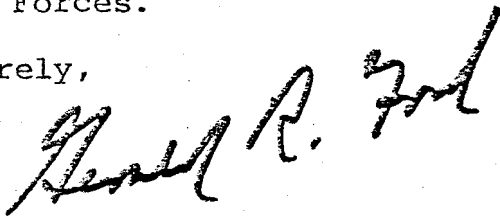
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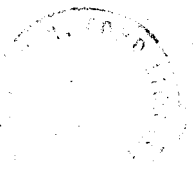
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Sincerely,



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



MAY 15, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary  
-----THE WHITE HOUSETEXT OF A LETTER TO THE SPEAKER  
AND THE PRESIDENT PRO TEM

May 15, 1975

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(MORE)



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Sincerely,

GERALD R. FORD

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

May 16, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: MAX FRIEDERSDORF *MF*  
SUBJECT: Congressional Response to Mayaguez Action

The Congressional response to your successful recovery of the SS Mayaguez and its crew has been overwhelmingly favorable. Bob Wolthuis has pulled together the comments in the Congressional Record for May 15 and also the Congressional mail on the subject. There are four attachments:

- A. Summaries of Statements in the Congressional Record in favor of your action.
- B. Compilation from Congressional Record of Senate and House statements.
- C. Summaries of Congressional mail supporting your position.
- D. Summaries and Statements from Congressional Record that are critical of your action.

As expected, most Congressional expressions have been very laudatory. With a few exceptions it comes from Republicans and Southern Democrats. Liberal Democrats have been generally silent. The criticisms attached at Tab D all come from Democrats.

I suggest that you look carefully at the statements by Congressmen Stratton, Sisk and Zablocki and Senators Brooke, Baker and Muskie. All except Muskie make reference to the War Powers Act. Senator Brooke raises the issue of the White House not adequately consulting with the Congress. I find Congressman Zablocki's statements to be very interesting and helpful.

To date we have had very little Congressional reaction to the casualty reports. Once those are firm we may see some resistance but we will monitor that and keep you informed.



BYRD, ROBERT - "I congratulate the President of the United States on the firmness with which he acted." Expresses pride in the Marines and the American people.

HELMS - Expresses great pride in the way the American people have met the challenge. It's time to lay aside partisanship and extend the hand of gratitude and admiration to the President who faced the crisis with courage and wisdom. "I, for one, am very proud of him today."

CURTIS - "The courageous and decisive action by President Ford will do more for the cause of liberty around the world than all of the diplomatic negotiations and conferences that have been held in the last few years and will be held in the next few years."

CRANSTON - Supports the firm and resolute action taken by President Ford. It was appropriate.

TOWER - President acted expeditiously and with resolve. Had he waited longer we may not have been able to rescue the crew of the vessel. President's action will do much to resolve U.S. credibility and confidence of our allies.

GARN - Dominoe theory is now established as fact and seizure of the Mayaguez brought on by a military imbalance in S.E. Asia. Any further reductions in U.S. military power must be mutually balanced. President gave a clear and decisive signal to the world.

DOMENICI - Inserts in record copy of his telegram to the President to take whatever steps are necessary to retrieve ship and crew. Commends President for action taken.

BYRD, HARRY - May 14, 1975 - A red letter day in the official life of President Gerald Ford. Commends President for saving crew. Had he delayed men would be on Cambodia mainland and very difficult to retrieve.

BROOMFIELD - President made "tough decisions coolly and decisively" and Congress set aside partisanship. World saw an America which commanded admiration and respect. White House adhered scrupulously to War Powers Act.

MICHEL - Commends some on other side of the isle who now applaud President but who until yesterday were pretty timid suggesting delay, more patience and more consultation.

SIKES - President has shown world America does have courage to stand by our principles. Communists understand tough language "America can now hold its head high again."

EDWARDS, JACK - "I am very proud of our country and our President today." He tried diplomacy and when it failed a show of strength was required and President Ford did not flinch. He should be commended for his sound judgement.

YOUNG, C. W. BILL - After too long exercising diplomatic and military restraint President Ford has drawn the line. He has restored our national pride and confidence in the U.S.

FUQUA - President's decisive action will prevent repetition of such acts in future. This is what American policy should be - firm, forceful and fair.

DANIEL, DAN - President's action will "reestablish our country's credibility around the world. His performance was in the true American tradition, and reflects credit upon the American people and upon himself.

STRATTON - Congratulates President for firm, aggressive and successful leadership. Most impressed that "President did consult with the leaders of Congress every step of the way. In addition, there were substantive briefings of other members of Congress."



BROCK - Appreciates courageous step of President in restoring integrity of U.S. in the world. Woke up this morning with a prayer of Thanksgiving for the President of the United States.

RANDOLPH - Inserts two statements issued May 13 and May 14. First statement calls for aggressive diplomatic efforts to obtain release of ship. Second statement says President Ford acted properly and the military operation was necessary. President exercised constitutional authority with effective results.

HANSEN - Country is solidly behind President. If U.S. were not most powerful nation on earth President could not have succeeded.

STONE - Under illusion of detente with China, President asked China for accord and intervention to free Mayaguez and crew. Our country heard thunderous silence in response.

FONG - "Who can truthfully say it does not matter to us in America whether all of Southeast Asia goes Communist." Relieved at President's prompt and vigorous action.

BROOKE - Presumes decision to use force came only after careful evaluation of options available. He is convinced we must restore any lost creditability, but believes it can be better accomplished through sophisticated diplomacy. Also, reflects expressions from some of Congressional leadership that they were informed rather than consulted. Believes better communications needed in the Congress and between Executive and Congress. Has requested information regarding Mayaguez incident from Secretary Kissinger.

BAKER - The President chose wisely and well and acted within the scope of his constitutional and statutory authority within the framework of the War Powers Resolution. The precedent established by President's action will serve the nation well in the difficult times ahead.

GLENN - It is important to remember, amid feeling of relief, those who died. The Marines performed a mission in the best "Semper Fidelis" tradition.



GOLDWATER, BARRY, JR. - President avoided another Pueblo affair and Marines, Air Force and Navy were superb. President's action proves VietNam not indicative of loss of U.S. courage and determination. President's action was balanced, timely and appropriate.

MONTGOMERY - "It is great to be an American." Congratulations to President Ford for necessary and successful military operations.

SISK - Commends President for acting "with deliberation, yet with boldness and firmness..." As an author of War Powers Act deeply pleased that "Mr. Ford complied fully with the act by keeping Congress completely aware of all actions taken..."

GONZALEZ - Events of last few days are dramatic reminder of need for U.S. to be prepared. These events prove we don't have time to gear up and get ready at a leisure pace.

ALEXANDER - Enters telegram into record to President applauding his efforts to protect rights of American vessels to safe transit on high seas.

ZABLOCKI - Seizure was serious violation of international law. President's action showed wisdom, prudence, caution and yet firmness. Commends President. "President has properly filed prompt report appropriately in compliance with section 4(a) (1). While such a 4(a) (1) report would normally activate the section 5 and succeeding "congressional action" procedures of the resolution, the fact that our troops are disengaged from the situation makes that a moot point. However, if such congressional followup action were in order, I, for one, would vote in favor of a resolution supporting the President's action."

BAUMAN - Compared to vacillation surrounding Pueblo, President Ford decisiveness to retrieve Mayaguez is commendable.

FLYNT - Commends and supports the President who "acted with courage and wisdom." President's actions show will and capability of U.S. to resist blatant acts of aggression.

FINDLEY - President acted entirely within his constitutional authority by using military force to protect U.S. lives abroad. Rejoices in success of President in rescuing both ship and crew. Suggests the entire incident be placed before International Court of Justice in the Hague.

FASCELL - President and NSC should be congratulated for a job well done. Some lessons should be reviewed; system of evaluating dangers to our Marines; relations with Thailand; adequacy and timeliness of Presidential - Congressional consultations.

Clifford Hansen

"Your courageous correct action to retrieve the Mayaguez did more to restore confidence in the Administration and to repair the tarnished image of America world wide than any event since you became President. This country is behind you solidly, and the rest of the world must respect the U.S. "

J. Glenn Beall

"You are to be congratulated for the carefully considered but firm steps. . . Your decisive action was not only clearly in the national interest but also serves as a signal to the other countries of the world that the U.S. will do its part to assure that thoughtless criminal acts do not interfere with the freedom of communication and commerce between the people of the world. "

Jake Garn

"I compliment you on the way you handled the entire affair. . . I am proud of you, I congratulate you, and I am encouraged by your action. "

Bob Dole

"The American people are grateful to you for your leadership and calm but deliberate firmness in the successful effort to secure ship. . . helped to erase doubts about America's resolve to act firmly when firmness is required. "

James Buckley

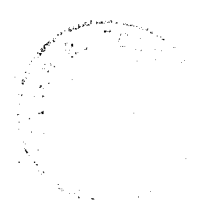
"This is just to express my great admiration for the manner in which you handled the Mayaguez situation. "

Wm Roth

"I applaud the firm, timely action you took to recover the Mayaguez and its crew. Your determination will protect American shipping and seamen from similar incidents. . . When I praised your action before an audience of several hundred in Delaware yesterday, they cheered loudly. "

Edmund Muskie

Commends the President for the effective manner in which he handled the Mayaguez incident. "I would also like to express my appreciation for your restraint in seeking to recover the ship and her crew through diplomatic channels before considering the use of force."



Howard Baker

"Congratulations on a difficult job well done. I think that your actions . . . were at the same time cautious, but firm, and certainly effective. I fully support your decisions and I think the country will profit from the experience. "

William Walsh

Highly commends the President . " . . . demonstrates the type of take charge leadership this country needs. "

Bill Young

Highly commends the President. "Your courageous and bold action has given American morale a much-needed shot in the arm. With one decisive stroke, you have restored the integrity and credibility of the U.S. in the world community. "

Manuel Lujan

"I believe your decisive action is a sign of true leadership and was necessary. I applaud the steps you took to protect the life, rights, and property of American citizens. "

Floyd Spence

"Your actions . . . were a credit to the Office of the President. Public reaction to your handling of this crisis proves once again that the American people will rally behind positive action and decisive leadership. "

George O'Brien

"Congratulations on a job extremely well done. . . . your firm and calm resolve not to permit any further sacrifice of American men and materiel was in the best American tradition. "

Alphonzo Bell

"I commend you most highly for the courageous and patriotic manner in which you resolved the incident. . . believe that anything short of the decisive and expeditious action taken would have had grave consequences for the future foreign relations of this nation, and you have my wholehearted support for your meritorious handling of this critical test of America's international policy. "

Kika de la Garza

"Your actions on the incident have to be listed among the major decisions of any President. Your friends consider them as one of the greatest moments of Jerry Ford -- we are proud. "



Robert Bauman Expresses appreciation for the courageous action.  
"I know that all Americans can take pride in our President's willingness to stand up for our national honor, as well as protecting the rights of our citizens. "

John Rousselot Commends the President for taking the "correct action. . . The response has been overwhelmingly favorable. . . Your actions were necessary and your prompt decisive leadership is appreciated. . . "

Dan Daniel "The action you took will reestablish American credibility around the world. Congratulations, and best wishes. "

Jack Kemp "You have made us proud of America and equally proud of our President. "

G. Wm. Whitehurst "There is no doubt that you have restored an enormous amount of self-confidence to our people and respect for this Republic in the family of nations. . . Those of us who know you had absolute confidence in your ability to resolve the problem. . . "

John Murtha "Congratulations on your decisive handling of the very delicate and difficult situation. . . My compliments on an extremely well orchestrated operation which demonstrates the superior performance of American forces under capable leadership. "

Joe L. Evins "As you know, success has 100 fathers while failure is an orphan. Congratulations Harry Truman Ford. "





## SENATE

NELSON - Does not question popularity of the President's decision. Questions if decision was right and he believes answer is no. These incidents are matters for negotiation not force.

HATHAWAY - Shares with colleagues joy in knowing that Mayaguez and crew have been freed. Enters two articles in the record which he believes raise relevant questions. One is an editorial condemning action as barbarous piracy, the other that the action strongly condemns use of military force.

## HOUSE

HOLTZMAN - "The President's resort to force in this case appears to have been illegal and unconstitutional. At best the whole situation reflects terrible intelligence. At worst it is a reflection of faulty Presidential judgment and overreaction."



















# Senate

THURSDAY, MAY 15, 1975

(Legislative day of Monday, April 21, 1975)

## THE RETRIEVAL OF THE MAYAGUEZ

Mr. ROBERT C. BYRD. Mr. President, in respect of the military operation which took place yesterday and last night involving the retrieval of the U.S.-flag vessel the *Mayaguez*, I congratulate the President of the United States on the firmness with which he acted. I express my great pride in the Marines and in the various services that participated in the operation, and my gratitude that the operation was successful.

I also express my pride in the American people for the unity of support which they demonstrated in regard to this crisis.

## IN PRAISE OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE ARMED FORCES

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, today is one of those moments in history when all Americans should lay aside political considerations, and stand united in praise of those gallant men of our armed services who have demonstrated to the world that the United States has not discarded its sense of honor.

The full details of the retrieval of a merchant ship, flying the U.S. flag, are not yet available. But we do know that America, in the finest traditions of a nation born in courage, honor, and self-respect, has met the challenge of an arrogant and unlawful seizure of property and U.S. citizens. The ship and its crew are on the way home.

Early reports indicate that there may have been casualties among the American Marines sent to retrieve the ship and its crew. If that sad report is true, then this Senator extends his deepest sympathy to their families. But to all of the gallant men involved in this episode, I offer the heartfelt gratitude of what I am confident is the vast majority of Americans who yet realize the value of national honor.

So, Mr. President, let me say again that this is a day to lay aside partisan politics, and extend a hand of gratitude and admiration to the President of the United States, who faced this crisis with courage and wisdom. He will be remembered in history for his conduct in this difficult episode. I, for one, am very proud of him today.

## THE NEED FOR A STRONG DEFENSE

Mr. CURTIS. Mr. President, I thank my distinguished friend. I congratulate him upon his statement. I congratulate him on his forthright position for the defense of the country.

I believe in the light of our disaster in Vietnam and other world factors that we should put as first priority improving and strengthening the defense of the United States of America. I believe that will save lives. I believe it will prevent war.

If the Senator will yield further, I join him in commending the President of the United States for his action in reference to the piracy by Cambodia of seizing a ship and American citizens on the high seas. The courageous and decisive action by President Ford will do more for the cause of liberty around the world than all of the diplomatic negotiations and conferences that have been held in the last few years and will be held in the next few years.

We have a responsibility not to be the world's bully but to be strong enough so we are respected. The nations of the world will respond to the United States when they realize what our position is, that it is sound and unwavering, and that they can depend upon it.

I do not suggest—in fact, I would oppose—any idea that the United States should go to war to correct every wrong around the world. We cannot do it. But we should never lend our influence to an injustice, and we should be strong enough so that when we take a position the freedom-loving people and the strong nations around the world will line up with us.

No one likes to bet on a losing horse. No one likes to buy stock in a company that is headed for bankruptcy. If we want ours, and if we want to preserve the peace of the world, we had better not be totally devoted to destroying our defense and adding to the welfare state, because if we do we will not have any liberty to enjoy.

The time has come for us to have a defense system that will give free men confidence everywhere, knowing that it will never be used to start a war, but will always be used in the cause of peace.

Again I commend my distinguished colleague, and I commend the President of the United States.

Historians will draw contrasts between this recent seizure and the seizure of the *Pueblo*. I shall not propose to do that. It will be done. History will render the verdict of what kind of actions preserve peace, save lives, and strengthen the United States and freedom around the world.

## Mr. CRANSTON.

I join with the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. CURTIS) in supporting the firm and resolute action taken yesterday by President Ford in saving the lives of American citizens in the Cambodian incident and in retrieving the American ship which was seized on the high seas by the Cambodian Government.

President Ford was faced with a very difficult decision. I think the action he took was appropriate, and one which is in the best interests of the United States. I commend the President.



May 15, 1975

A RED-LETTER DAY IN THE OFFICIAL LIFE OF PRESIDENT FORD

Mr. HARRY F. BYRD, JR. Mr. President, in the judgment of the senior Senator from Virginia, Wednesday, May 14, 1975, was a red-letter day in the official life of President Gerald Ford.

The Senator from Virginia earlier commended President Ford for his firm and resolute action in retrieving an American ship which had been taken over on the high seas. I commended him for his action in saving the lives of 40 American crewmen.

If the President had temporized, if those crewmen had been taken to Cambodia, it would have been very difficult or impossible to have saved them if the Cambodian Government was determined that they would not be saved.



A REESTABLISHMENT OF  
INTEGRITY

Mr. BROCK. Mr. President, I appreciate the generosity of the Senator from Idaho.

I would like to associate myself with the remarks of the Senator from Wyoming. I appreciate his candor and his courage in speaking forth. I thoroughly agree with what he has had to say. I must say that I woke up this morning with a prayer of thanksgiving for the President of the United States. I believe he took an enormously courageous step in reestablishing the integrity of this Nation after it has been much battered in recent weeks and years. I, for one, want to say that I not only appreciate his courage and his leadership, but I am deeply grateful that that man was in that office at that particular time to act in the interest of the American people.

We simply must learn the lesson of history. We have a talent for forgetting it. We made a horrible and unforgivable mistake about 6 years ago when another naval ship of the United States was seized. We lacked the ability, the will

or whatever to respond. As a result, we had a major breach of our national security that has damaged this country extensively and will continue to do so in years to come.

This time we acted in a different fashion. National security was not involved in the direct sense of the ship. But national security was very much involved in the sense that this Nation is the only thing that stands between mankind and the return to the dark ages of slavery. It is about time we knew that, because the rest of the world understands it and understands it very clearly, both friend and foe alike.

A sense of relief has swept not only the people of the United States but the people of the free world at the reassertion of American will, integrity, and principle. It is a remarkable and refreshing thing to behold. I believe the President deserves our thanks and our prayers for his continued efforts in this regard.

I know the families of 39 or 40 men feel this way, but I think 220 million Americans feel the same way. I appreciate it.

I do believe there is one lesson to be learned, and that is this: We have allowed the lapse of our national security forces to the point where we could very quickly, in the next few years, come into fundamental jeopardy. We might not have saved those men. It was very close as to whether or not the *Coral Sea* and the attendant naval vessels could get there in time to save not just the ship, because that was not consequential, but 40 American lives, to act in the interest of American nationals wherever they might be.

We have allowed our Navy to become much weakened. We are at the lowest level of funding since 1951. It is about time somebody stopped talking about the increase in defense expenditures when we have had an absolute reduction in those expenditures for the last 5 consecutive years in constant dollars. That is a dangerous course to take. It is dangerous not just in Southeast Asia, but it is dangerous worldwide. If you want to look at a tinderbox, look to the Middle East where the 6th Fleet may be the only reason this country has not been involved in a war in that particular area. We were there when we had to be there, and we had the forces to be sure that other people were not there.

We do not have to look back before 1973 to remember the instance when the Soviet Union threatened to move in and the President decided as how they might have to climb over the 6th Fleet. They decided that was too high a mountain to climb.

Maybe we need to understand in this small instance just how essential the capacity for response to the national security is in an uncertain world. I hope and pray that the Congress will reconsider some of its actions to reduce not just our research and development, which I was discussing with the Senator from Ohio, but the hardware, the muscle, of our ability to maintain the peace. That is the fundamental question—not

how to engage in war but how to maintain the peace. You do it through strength, through integrity, through action on principle rather than expediency. That is what the President of the United States demonstrated with great clarity in the last 24 hours. I, for one, am humbly and deeply grateful that we had a man of his integrity and capability in that office in these hours. For myself, I want to extend my gratitude to him.



PRESIDENT FORD ACTS IN "MAYAGUEZ" RECOVERY WITH EFFECTIVE RESULTS

Mr. RANDOLPH. Mr. President, on Tuesday morning, May 13 I released the following statement, as follows:

The seizure of the *Mayaguez* by the Cambodians is an act of piracy, as correctly described by President Ford. I support his instruction to the State Department to demand the immediate release of the ship which flies the flag of the United States.

Until all the facts surrounding the seizure are known, I do not advocate a particular course of action. However, aggressive diplomatic efforts to secure release of the vessel and her crew must be pursued.

Mr. President, on this morning, I released a second statement, as follows:

Americans approve of the successful recovery of the *Mayaguez* and its crew. I believe President Ford acted properly and that the military operation was necessary.

Our President has exercised his constitutional authority with effective results.





# THE RESTORATION OF CONFIDENCE IN AMERICA

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. President, millions of Americans today are proud of the courageous correct action President Ford has taken to retrieve the *Mayaguez*. This has done more to restore confidence in Washington and to repair the tarnished image of America worldwide than any event of the past year.

This country is solidly behind the President. The effect of that action has been to reestablish in significant degree world respect for the United States.

Mr. President, without the strong defense establishment maintained by the United States, it would have been impossible to even contemplate retrieving the *Mayaguez* by force. If the United States were not the most powerful nation in the world, the President would not have been able to make the decision he did to take positive action, as confidently or as expeditiously as he did. Obviously, no other nation stood ready to come to the rescue of the *Mayaguez*. The world knows that this is a powerful nation that views power as an obligation and not a privilege, and that has been pointed out a number of times on this floor today already. This is a Nation that does not abuse the power it has. The President could, because we have this power, with great confidence, order the action necessary to retrieve this American vessel, without fear of interven-

tion by those who have chosen to ally themselves with the new, reckless and naive Government of Cambodia. The *Mayaguez* incident is further strong evidence against ever allowing the United States of America to become a second-rate military power.

I would like to take his occasion to compliment the distinguished Senator from Ohio for calling attention, specifically, to some of the illusions that I think all too many Americans suffer in these days. Those illusions are believing, without facts to back the beliefs, that all is well, despite the fact that, in terms of real dollars, we have been cutting back on the military budgets of our country, in my opinion, for all too long.

Congress—and only Congress—can insure that America remains No. 1.

The President has the constitutional responsibility as commander in chief to see to the national security. We applaud along with Americans all over this country today—President Ford for his ability to act resolutely, courageously and quickly. In the long run, this kind of affirmative action will enhance world peace and promote respect for the rights of others.

America, by virtue of this action in Cambodia, serves notice on the rest of the world that we have been misjudged badly should our withdrawal from Indochina be thought indicative of a failure to stand for principle throughout the world.

The retaking of the *Mayaguez* and the recovery of its entire crew is the kind of definitive action, as all military history has proved time and again, that saves lives, makes less likely the possibility of war, and encourages respect for the rights of others.

Mr. President, I have been somewhat disturbed and saddened by some reports that came across in the media this morning of criticism of the President for not having consulted sufficiently with the leadership of the Congress. I have heard in recent days and weeks that there are those in this body and in the other body, and I think it includes people on both sides of the aisle, who have position papers prepared that anticipate the President's actions on significant issues that he will have to face so as to be ready with an immediate response no matter which side of an issue he comes down on, criticizing him and trying to undercut the leadership that he has displayed.

I do not know whether that is true or not. I could not state, as far as my personal knowledge is concerned, that it is true. But I say, Mr. President, as I read and follow what takes place, and the criticisms that are made from time to time by people who first attack the President from the right, and then from the left, it seems to me that there is some rather compelling evidence to indicate that that is the case.

If that is the situation, and I must admit that it seems that it could be, I am saddened by it. This would seem to me to illustrate a lack of responsibility, a lack of dedication and a lack of commitment to our country that ought to come first.

I believe, Mr. President, that putting such a high priority on personal political considerations does not serve our Nation well. We could all serve America better. In the long run it would be smarter politics, though I am certainly in no position to advise my colleagues as to the astuteness of a particular political position. But I do not think the typical American is as uncomprehending or as easily misled or deceived as some people seemingly conclude he is by virtue of the statements that they make.

These are tough times. They are times when we all know by virtue of the tragedy that occurred in Indochina, that America, more effectively to discharge the leadership role which it has, needs to have, first, a restoration of confidence in the minds of Americans in the leadership of America. Second, we need, as one people, to reassert the kind of decisive action, the ability to reach a conclusion and to take a course of action, that will command the respect and admiration of the rest of the world.

I am lecturing no one in particular, Mr. President. But I hope that despite the impending 1976 Presidential elections, it could be understood, that the more than 200 million Americans at home, in every hamlet and city of this country, want to have this country's actions and this country's future placed first and above every other consideration.



May 15, 1975

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE

FOREIGN POLICY AND NATIONAL  
DEFENSE

Mr. STONE. Mr. President, under the illusion of détente with China, our President asked for accord and intervention to free the *Mayaguez* and its crew; and what our country heard in response was a thunderous silence.

For us to rely on the good will of Soviet adversaries in the face of repeated incidents worldwide and over recent years indicating with total clarity an attempt to weaken the free world or the West will invariably be seized upon to the height of folly on our part.

IMPROVEMENT AND STRENGTHEN-  
ING OF THE DEFENSE OF THE  
UNITED STATES

Mr. CURTIS. Mr. President, I am happy to join with my colleagues this morning in speaking out for the improvement and strengthening of the defense of the United States.

What would have happened in the last few days if the United States had not had the equipment, the weapons, and the trained manpower to compel Cambodia to return not only a vessel but 41 citizens of America?

I raise my voice in praise of President Gerald Ford. He is a much bigger man around the world today than he has ever been in his life because he has shown leadership, he has been positive, he has been firm, he has served the cause of peace. He put an end to aggression, and he has served notice upon a world that is discouraged about what happened in Vietnam, and many of them about to lose confidence in America, and now they know that America is not through, that America does not fall on its knees and surrender to communism.

President Gerald Ford acted in the interest of the people. He acted in the interest of saving lives. It was successful. Millions of thoughtful and patriotic people throughout the United States will applaud what he has done.

Free people around the world will approve and many enslaved people, likewise, will applaud, because they say: "Here is a nation that stands for something."

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC VITALLY IM-  
PORTANT TO AMERICA'S NATION-  
AL SECURITY AND ECONOMIC  
WELL-BEING

Mr. FONG.

Who now can truthfully say it does not matter to us in America whether all of Southeast Asia goes Communist. We did not have these incidents when Cambodia, Laos, and South Vietnam had regimes friendly to America.

I am relieved that President Ford's prompt and vigorous action brought about the safe release of the crew and recovery of our merchant ship, the *Mayaguez*, and also the release of the

Thai fishermen. I pay highest tribute to our valiant military personnel for their courage and their sacrifice.



## THE "MAYAGUEZ" INCIDENT

Mr. BROOKE. Mr. President, the reports that the *Mayaguez* crew and ship have been rescued is extremely good news. That members of our Armed Forces perished in effecting that rescue brings deep sorrow not only to the families and loved ones of these men but to all Americans. Their death is a stark reminder, as if we needed another, that the resort to force always extracts a high toll.

The evidence is still inconclusive as to the exact nature of the incident. And before intelligent evaluations can be made as to the wisdom of the decision to resort to force, much more information is needed. I state this not by way of criticism of the President's action. I, for one, presume that it came only after a careful evaluation of the options available. I do believe, however, that a thorough inquiry into the decision to use force is in order, both to provide the American people with the relevant facts and to allow us to determine what actions can be taken to forestall similar events occurring in the future.

Such an inquiry, to be truly useful, requires careful attention to facts, rather than fragmentary reports and suppositions. Therefore, I have today submitted a list of questions to the Secretary of State regarding the *Mayaguez* affair. I ask unanimous consent that my letter to the Secretary be placed in the RECORD at this point.

The *Mayaguez* incident raises several larger issues.

First, I am convinced that we must restore any lost credibility. And we must do so in a much more sophisticated manner than simply emphasizing our military capabilities. While the latter may be necessary under extreme circumstances, it cannot be allowed to assume the predominant position it has in the past. Sophisticated diplomacy, a diplomacy indicating our recognition of our lessened preeminence in the international system and our inability to dictate the course of history, will become increasingly important as we seek to maintain the stability necessary for the protection of our vital interests.

Second, the manner in which the *Mayaguez* incident was handled by the Executive indicates that some improvement has taken place in the communication patterns between the Executive and the Congress. Nevertheless, expressions by some of the congressional leadership that they were merely informed rather than consulted indicates that further improvements are still needed. Moreover, the Congress has yet to institute adequate communications channels to enable the leadership to keep the membership sufficiently informed on the general aspects of evolving crisis situations. While one recognizes that a certain degree of confidentiality must be maintained, it is self-evident that a greater degree of communication is necessary within the Congress as well as between the Congress and the Executive.

The *Mayaguez* incident indicates that a respite from the entanglements of world politics will not be forthcoming for

our country. Our position in the world means that we will be called upon to shoulder continued burdens that will tax our strength and endurance. We cannot avoid such burdens. But we can begin to reassess the manner in which we will respond to them and, hopefully, evolve the capacity to limit the number of situations wherein force rather than diplomacy characterizes our response.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter I have addressed to the Secretary of State today.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

MAY 15, 1975.

Hon. HENRY A. KISSINGER,  
The Secretary of State,  
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: I am relieved to learn of the successful rescue of the *Mayaguez* crew and the ship. However, as you know, I deeply regret the deaths of several members of the armed forces. Their deaths are one more stark reminder that the resort to force always has a high price.

While I presume that the decision to use force was made after careful consideration of all available options, I am convinced that a thorough study must be made of the factors that led to that decision and subsequent events. Therefore, I would appreciate receiving an early response to the following questions:

1. Did the *Mayaguez* violate any territorial or sovereign rights of Cambodia?
2. What was the basis for our government's claim of the illegality of the seizure of the *Mayaguez* by the Cambodians? Specifically:
  - a. Was the island off of which it was seized a recognized possession of the Cambodian government?
  - b. How far off the island was the *Mayaguez* when it was seized?
  - c. What are the recognized limits of territorial control of waters off the islands in the area?
  - d. Do the Cambodians claim a 12-mile limit?
  - e. Does the U.S. government recognize only a 3-mile limit?
3. What cargo was the *Mayaguez* carrying at the time of its seizure?
4. What was the port of origin and the destination for this specific voyage of the *Mayaguez*?
5. What was the purpose of the *Mayaguez*'s voyage?
6. Was the *Mayaguez* an armed ship?
7. What had been the scope of our intelligence gathering operations in the area where the seizure took place? Was the *Mayaguez* in any way connected with such operations?
8. Was the *Mayaguez* in prior contact with the U.S. government aircraft or ships prior to the seizure? If so, what was the extent and nature of those contacts and for how long had they been established prior to the seizure?
9. What was the specific and detailed time frame and sequence of such events from the point of seizure, the demand for the return of the ship and crew, the requests for third party help and the time of the first U.S. attack?
10. When did the United States government first receive notice of the seizure, and what attempts were made at that time to communicate with Cambodian officials to register our protest and indicate our intentions to do what was necessary to obtain the release of the crew and its ship?
11. What attempts were made to obtain the intercession of third parties including the

United Nations to effect a diplomatic resolution of the incident? Exactly who was contacted, what was requested of each, and what was the timing of those contacts in relationship to the decision to resort to force and the actual use of force?

12. What, if any, communications were received, directly or indirectly, from the Cambodian government prior to their radio announcement that they would be willing to return the crew and the ship? What, if any, communications did we try to forward to that government prior to that announcement and prior to the use of force?

13. What exactly precipitated the initial attacks on the Cambodian naval vessels? Specifically:

a. Was there a Cambodian attempt to move the crew or the *Mayaguez* after the ship had been anchored off Tang Island?

b. How many of our reconnaissance craft had been fired upon and hit prior to our resort to force?

c. Were the Cambodian patrol craft that were destroyed or disabled moving toward the *Mayaguez* when they were interdicted?

d. Had the crew of the *Mayaguez* been removed from the *Mayaguez* prior to the time we initiated our use of force?

14. What were the targets of our attacks on the mainland? Did our attacks serve any immediate purpose directly related to the rescue of the crew and the ship or were they primarily punitive in nature?

15. What are the details regarding the deaths and injuries of members of our armed forces?

16. Had there been other reported incidents of harassment of other vessels by Cambodia prior to the seizure of the *Mayaguez*? If so, what were the instructions sent to all U.S. flag vessels to divert from the area?

17. How many combat forces and how many ships were actually involved in the rescue operations?

18. How many combat forces were landed on the *Mayaguez* and on Tang Island?

19. Were troops transported from Thailand for the operation contrary to the express requests of the Thai government? What communications were received from the Thai government in reference to the incident and the potential and now actual use of U.S. bases in Thailand as staging areas? What was the U.S. reply to Thai requests?

20. What was the degree of resistance encountered on Tang Island? How much ammunition was expended by our forces?

21. What were the number of U.S. and Cambodian casualties?

22. Exactly how were the crew members of the *Mayaguez* recovered? Were any of them harmed in any way? Were the crew members released by the Cambodians or were they actually rescued?

While my questions are many, I believe immediate answers will greatly facilitate the understanding necessary to make judgments both as to the wisdom of our response to the immediate incident and the manner in which we might prepare ourselves to respond to similar incidents in the future. I look forward to receiving your earliest reply.

Sincerely,

EDWARD W. BROOKE.





# COMMENDATION FOR THE PRESIDENT IN REGAINING SS "MAYAGUEZ"

Mr. BAKER. Mr. President, I commend President Ford for the action taken toward regaining the SS *Mayaguez* and her crew.

I believe that the President's conduct in this matter was a careful mix of caution, diplomatic initiative and appropriate use of armed force pursuant to an entirely lawful and desirable purpose. In the wake of our disengagement from Southeast Asia, I think that firmness particularly was required in the face of an act of aggression directed against an unarmed U.S. merchant vessel in the course of passage on an established trade route. The precedent established by the President's action, I believe, will serve the Nation well in the difficult times ahead.

The President chose wisely and well and, in my judgment, acted within the scope of his constitutional and statutory authority within the framework of the War Powers Resolution. I believe that the Nation and the Congress fully support the President's exemplary conduct.

## REMEMBERING THE CASUALTIES AT KOH TANG ISLAND

Mr. GLENN. Mr. President, all Americans share the feeling of relief and pleasure that the *Mayaguez* crewmen and ship have been rescued.

But amid the euphoria surrounding this welcome event, it is important to remember that a few have died or been wounded so that others could be rescued.

The Marines sent to the ship and Koh Tang Island performed a very difficult mission representing the United States in the best "Semper Paratus" tradition of the corps.

While many families receive the good news that loved ones are safe, others are receiving casualty notices. It is important that we remember both groups as we celebrate the successful conclusion of the *Mayaguez* incident.

# "MAYAGUEZ" UNDERWAY

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, all of us in this body are, of course, relieved at the news that the merchant ship *Mayaguez* is, at this moment, underway on its own power, manned by its own crew.

The fact that America will act with measured force and in timely fashion to insure the safety of her citizens has been asserted once again by the bravery, and the sacrifice, of U.S. military. We are all saddened by the news of casualties among the Marines who went in to the small island of Koh Tang to rescue the crew. Our sympathies extend to their families and friends and to their comrades in arms, and no words of gratitude any of us can summon would measure up to the debt each of us owes to these brave men.

## TOO EARLY FOR GENERALIZATION

Mr. President, close as we are to the disappointing conclusion to our long involvement in Southeast Asia, it is too soon to attempt any major generalizations about the impact of this incident on the way in which other nations view the United States. I am hopeful that it will help erase any doubts that may have arisen about American resolve to use force when force is required and justified to protect American interests.

I believe it has done much to allay any misgivings that may have been entertained in this country or elsewhere about any of the recent congressional actions to limit Presidential ability to respond in an emergency. The President did respond. He did so and at the same time consulted with Congress and made such reports as required under the legislation passed in 1973, the War Powers Act.

I will admit, too, Mr. President, that it is a good and an accustomed feeling to find near unanimity among my colleagues for the first time since the early days of my experience in the Congress, over an American use of military force, however limited it may have been.

Though there seems to be an irreducible minimum of my colleagues who are prepared to criticize any assertive action this country may take in defense of its own interests, and who do so now in regard to this action, the overwhelming majority of American citizens from all walks of life, have shown enthusiasm in their support for these actions.

## FORD MOVED DELIBERATELY

I believe President Ford did what he had to do. He moved deliberately after trying diplomacy first. But the first military engagements, which most of us learned about early yesterday, were motivated by the need to prevent the transfer of the American crew members to the Cambodian mainland. Any delay or over-cautiousness in that decision would have led to far greater complications. With Americans on the mainland, the analogy to the *Pueblo* situation would have been complete and our ability to take effective action to secure their release would have been severely restricted.

Only timely, prudent and firm action by the President in consultation with the National Security Council and the Congress prevented the repetition of that situation which would have been a tragedy for the crewmen and an embarrassment for the Nation.

## AMERICA'S RESPONSE TO THREAT

Mr. President, this was one, rather isolated and in some people's mind perhaps a minor incident. But in my view, it is an example of how America must respond to any threat to her own interest. We cannot allow ourselves to be at the mercy of the whims and vagaries of small nations that may entertain illusions about our will or about their own abilities to confront us.

For, if we yield to small nations, or show indecision when they confront us, or accept the counsel of those who would have us be overcautious in dealing with them, then the message of our unwillingness to act in our own best interest will not be lost on larger nations, friendly or hostile.

We are strong. We are a guarantor still of world peace. We are what we are and we cannot be defensive or apologetic about acting to protect ourselves, our citizens or our interests.

The President, I believe, did what he had to do. And the vast majority of Congress, in giving him their enthusiastic support did what they ought to do.





THE "MAYAGUEZ" INCIDENT—  
PRESIDENTIAL OVERREACTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. HOLTZMAN) is recognized for 10 minutes.

Ms. HOLTZMAN. Mr. Speaker, President Ford's decision to use force to free the merchant ship *Mayaguez* and its crew has resulted in needless bloodshed.

At the present time, the ship and its crew are in American custody, but at the cost of at least one marine dead, and many others wounded. The Pentagon expects the American death toll to rise as further reports come in.

The President's resort to force in this case appears to have been illegal and unconstitutional. At least five provisions of law specifically prohibit the involvement of U.S. military forces in combat "in or over or from off the shores of" Cambodia. Furthermore, under the war powers resolution, the President may engage in hostilities without the prior consent of Congress only in cases of an armed attack which constitutes an extreme national emergency. This was clearly not such a case.

Equally disturbing is that the use of military force in this incident, and the resultant casualties, appear to have been unnecessary. Diplomatic efforts were underway to recover the ship and its crew. Nothing would have been lost by waiting to see whether they would bear fruit. Indeed, according to the latest reports, at the very time the President was ordering marines into the operation, the Cambodian Government was announcing that it would return the crew of the *Mayaguez*. As the marines were invading Tang Island searching for the crew, the crew was already on its way back in a Thai fishing boat. At best the whole situation reflects terrible intelligence. At worst it is a reflection of faulty Presidential judgment and overreaction.

Let there be no mistake about it. We have won no "victory." We have proved nothing to the world, except that this President is willing—as were his predecessors—to make hasty and ill-considered use of American military force against tiny countries, regardless of the law, regardless of the cost in American lives, and regardless of the ability to achieve the same ends peacefully.



## ON CAMBODIAN AREA MILITARY ACTION

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, there is no doubt about the popularity of the President's decision to recapture the *Mayaguez* by force. Reaction around the Congress is near unanimous. I have no doubt the public response is the same. Hardly even a muted voice of doubt has been raised. After all our honor and dignity were at stake.

Nevertheless the real question still remains: Was our Government's action the right one? Did it serve the best interests of the Nation? I think not. Neither congressional nor public popularity is a reliable test of the soundness of important policy decisions. This is especially so in emotional and emergency situations.

What vital national interest was at stake to justify such a precipitate and violent response? Was our ship in contested waters? Was it justifiable to land our Marines in Thailand without that government's consent? Did we need to sacrifice any of the lives of our soldiers, endanger the ship's crew and bomb a Cambodian airport in order to settle this dispute? The answer, I think, is no. We did not even bother to give the negotiating process a fair trial.

Of course it is an offensive challenge to any sovereign nation for its ships to be intercepted on the high seas. Nonetheless it is not a novel event. It happens from time to time in all parts of the world. It occurs with great regularity off the coast of South America where fishing boats are intercepted and hauled into port from as far as 150 miles into international waters.

Ironically, news reports state that our Government received a Cambodian statement offering return of the ship but the military action was already under way.

These incidents are matters for negotiations not force. The test of the strength and maturity of a superpower is better measured by its restraint in minor incidents such as this rather than a demonstration of the power the world already knows we have at our command.

Thus I dissent from the conventional wisdom that tells us we must prove our virility and maintain our credibility by responding with violence wherever and whenever we may be challenged, however minor the insult.



## BARBAROUS PIRACY

Mr. HATHAWAY. Mr. President, I share with my colleagues and many Americans the joy of knowing that the merchant ship *Mayaguez* and her crew are now free.

Soon, we in the Senate and the public at large can expect to be told the whole story behind the ship's seizure; what diplomatic efforts were made to obtain the ship's release from the Cambodian Government, and the role the military played in wresting the ship and its men from the Gulf of Siam.

While waiting for this knowledge, I wish to bring to the attention of my colleagues an article which appeared in this morning's *New York Times* by columnist Anthony Lewis.

The writer makes some points that I consider vital to the issue of our foreign policies, particularly those concerning the nations of Southeast Asia. I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the *RECORD*.

I also ask unanimous consent to have printed in the *RECORD* the text of a telegram to the President from Robert V. Moss, president, United Church of Christ.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the *RECORD*, as follows:

## BARBAROUS PIRACY

(By Anthony Lewis)

The diplomacy of violence: That is still, then, to be our trademark. Once again an American Government shows that the only way it knows how to deal with frustration is by force. And the world is presumably meant to be impressed.

The Khmer Rouge were wrong and foolish to seize the American merchant ship *Mayaguez*, if the facts were as stated in Washington. They violated necessary norms of international behavior. We had reason to be concerned, especially about the fate of the crew.

But using a sledgehammer to crack a nut is self-defeating for nations as for individuals. Violent escalation of the conflict could hardly be expected to achieve the immediate aim of the crew's release; to the contrary, it might heighten the danger. More broadly, the military action showed a lack of that perspective expected of a great power—the perspective, in this case, recent history.

Imagine that in 1775 and for years after an enormously powerful state equipped with futuristic weapons had intervened in our Revolutionary War. From bases in Canada it rained destruction on the thirteen colonies. A million Americans, a third of the population, fled their homes; 300,000 were casualties.

When the war was finally over, how might the victorious Americans have felt about that foreign state? If one of its ships had sailed into what were claimed to be Americans waters, might we have been tempted to board and seize the vessel?

A comparison between America in 1775 and Cambodia in 1975 is not so far-fetched. The peasant society of Cambodia—today is hardly more advanced, technologically, than eighteenth-century America. Cambodia was just as defenseless against B-52's as the thirteen colonies would have been.

American planes dropped 250,000 tons of bombs on Cambodia between 1969 and Aug. 15, 1973, when Congress prohibited all U.S. military action in, over or on the waters adjoining Indochina. Between a third and a half of Cambodia's 7.5 million people became refugees. John Swain of *The London Sunday Times*, one of the correspondents recently evacuated, described the physical damage he saw as follows:

"The entire countryside has been churned up by American B-52 bomb craters, whole towns and villages razed: So far, I have not seen one intact pagoda. . . . The war damages here [Kompong Chhnang], as everywhere else we saw, is total. Not a bridge is standing, hardly a house. I am told most villagers spent the war years living semi-permanently underground in earth bunkers to escape the bombing."

With that background, Americans should be slow to point a finger of moral disapproval at the Khmer Rouge. Nor can we rightly take a lofty position on the need to respect law. Washington has not reacted with force when Ecuador seized U.S. fishing boats more distant from shore than the *Mayaguez* was. And the American bombing of Cambodia was itself of dubious constitutionality.

The United States also bears a heavy responsibility for the political character of Cambodia today. If we had not invaded the country in 1970 and then intervened massively in her civil war, Prince Sihanouk would doubtless have returned to power soon with a left-leaning but more traditional regime. The Khmer Rouge movement would not have developed as it has, in all its hardened zeal. Most of the human suffering of the war would have been avoided.

The Khmer Rouge inherited a ruined nation. We are rightly horrified by accounts of the harsh measures taken. But after what has been done to them, are the Cambodians really to be blamed if they are xenophobic?

Those Americans who had a part in the savagery of our policy toward Cambodia over the years should be particularly slow to utter deploring pieties now. Secretary of State Kissinger, a principal author of the policy, has described events in Cambodia as "barbarous," "inhuman," "very tragic" and "an atrocity of major proportions." A man so steeped in the blood of Cambodians should have the shame to remain silent.

And now the insensitivity is in deeds as well as words. Once again we have to show the world how tough we are: The attitude of the teen-ager proving his manhood did not end with Richard Nixon's Presidency. Demonstrative violence is in fact a central element in Henry Kissinger's diplomatic philosophy. But how long must it be our country's?

How disheartening, too, to see the *Mayaguez* affair evoke from Congress the old jingo talk and calls for Presidential action. Senator Clifford Case, co-author of the 1973 ban on military action in Indochina, lived down to his reputation as a pusillanimous liberal by telling President Ford that he could ignore the law. Have we learned nothing from Vietnam about law and the Presidency? Have we forgotten that America had the world's respect when she stood for patience and magnanimity in human affairs?

## TEXT OF TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD

My conscience requires me to make the following statement for communication to the members of the United Church of Christ and to the public at large:

If the United States is to have one shred of moral integrity left to it, we, the people of this country, must rise up and denounce our government's senseless use of military force against Cambodia. There is no justification for using force of arms to solve a problem that could be handled in a civilized manner through diplomatic channels, and the force of world opinion. It is imperative that each of us demand an immediate end to the attacks being made by our armed forces in Cambodia. Even now we should utilize the United Nations and any other diplomatic channels that are open to Cambodia to redress the actions of the President and his military advisers which have placed this nation in an untenable situation.

ROBERT V. MOSS,  
President, United Church of Christ



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 16, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: MAX FRIEDERSDORF *M.F.*  
SUBJECT: Congressional Response to Mayaguez Action

The Congressional response to your successful recovery of the SS Mayaguez and its crew has been overwhelmingly favorable. Bob Wolthuis has pulled together the comments in the Congressional Record for May 15 and also the Congressional mail on the subject. There are four attachments:

- A. Summaries of Statements in the Congressional Record in favor of your action.
- B. Compilation from Congressional Record of Senate and House statements.
- C. Summaries of Congressional mail supporting your position.
- D. Summaries and Statements from Congressional Record that are critical of your action.

As expected, most Congressional expressions have been very laudatory. With a few exceptions it comes from Republicans and Southern Democrats. Liberal Democrats have been generally silent. The criticisms attached at Tab D all come from Democrats.

I suggest that you look carefully at the statements by Congressmen Stratton, Sisk and Zablocki and Senators Brooke, Baker and Muskie. All except Muskie make reference to the War Powers Act. Senator Brooke raises the issue of the White House not adequately consulting with the Congress. I find Congressman Zablocki's statements to be very interesting and helpful.

To date we have had very little Congressional reaction to the casualty reports. Once those are firm we may see some resistance but we will monitor that and keep you informed.

BYRD, ROBERT - "I congratulate the President of the United States on the firmness with which he acted." Expresses pride in the Marines and the American people.

HELMS - Expresses great pride in the way the American people have met the challenge. It's time to lay aside partisanship and extend the hand of gratitude and admiration to the President who faced the crisis with courage and wisdom. "I, for one, am very proud of him today."

CURTIS - "The courageous and decisive action by President Ford will do more for the cause of liberty around the world than all of the diplomatic negotiations and conferences that have been held in the last few years and will be held in the next few years."

CRANSTON - Supports the firm and resolute action taken by President Ford. It was appropriate.

TOWER - President acted expeditiously and with resolve. Had he waited longer we may not have been able to rescue the crew of the vessel. President's action will do much to resolve U.S. credibility and confidence of our allies.

GARN - Dominoe theory is now established as fact and seizure of the Mayaguez brought on by a military imbalance in S.E. Asia. Any further reductions in U.S. military power must be mutually balanced. President gave a clear and decisive signal to the world.

DOMENICI - Inserts in record copy of his telegram to the President to take whatever steps are necessary to retrieve ship and crew. Commends President for action taken.

BYRD, HARRY - May 14, 1975 - A red letter day in the official life of President Gerald Ford. Commends President for saving crew. Had he delayed men would be on Cambodia mainland and very difficult to retrieve.

BROCK - Appreciates courageous step of President in restoring integrity of U.S. in the world. Woke up this morning with a prayer of Thanksgiving for the President of the United States.

RANDOLPH - Inserts two statements issued May 13 and May 14. First statement calls for aggressive diplomatic efforts to obtain release of ship. Second statement says President Ford acted properly and the military operation was necessary. President exercised constitutional authority with effective results.

HANSEN - Country is solidly behind President. If U.S. were not most powerful nation on earth President could not have succeeded.

STONE - Under illusion of detente with China, President asked China for accord and intervention to free Mayaguez and crew. Our country heard thunderous silence in response.

FONG - "Who can truthfully say it does not matter to us in America whether all of Southeast Asia goes Communist." Relieved at President's prompt and vigorous action.

BROOKE - Presumes decision to use force came only after careful evaluation of options available. He is convinced we must restore any lost creditability, but believes it can be better accomplished through sophisticated diplomacy. Also, reflects expressions from some of Congressional leadership that they were informed rather than consulted. Believes better communications needed in the Congress and between Executive and Congress. Has requested information regarding Mayaguez incident from Secretary Kissinger.

BAKER - The President chose wisely and well and acted within the scope of his constitutional and statutory authority within the framework of the War Powers Resolution. The precedent established by President's action will serve the nation well in the difficult times ahead.

GLENN - It is important to remember, amid feeling of relief, those who died. The Marines performed a mission in the best "Semper Fidelis" tradition.

BROOMFIELD - President made "tough decisions coolly and decisively" and Congress set aside partisanship. World saw an America which commanded admiration and respect. White House adhered scrupulously to War Powers Act.

MICHEL - Commends some on other side of the isle who now applaud President but who until yesterday were pretty timid suggesting delay, more patience and more consultation.

SIKES - President has shown world America does have courage to stand by our principles. Communists understand tough language "America can now hold its head high again."

EDWARDS, JACK - "I am very proud of our country and our President today." He tried diplomacy and when it failed a show of strength was required and President Ford did not flinch. He should be commended for his sound judgement.

YOUNG, C. W. BILL - After too long exercising diplomatic and military restraint President Ford has drawn the line. He has restored our national pride and confidence in the U.S.

FUQUA - President's decisive action will prevent repetition of such acts in future. This is what American policy should be - firm, forceful and fair.

DANIEL, DAN - President's action will "reestablish our country's credibility around the world. His performance was in the true American tradition, and reflects credit upon the American people and upon himself.

STRATTON - Congratulates President for firm, aggressive and successful leadership. Most impressed that "President did consult with the leaders of Congress every step of the way. In addition, there were substantive briefings of other members of Congress."

GOLDWATER, BARRY, JR. - President avoided another Pueblo affair and Marines, Air Force and Navy were superb. President's action proves VietNam not indicative of loss of U.S. courage and determination. President's action was balanced, timely and appropriate.

MONTGOMERY - "It is great to be an American." Congratulations to President Ford for necessary and successful military operations.

SISK - Commends President for acting "with deliberation, yet with boldness and firmness..." As an author of War Powers Act deeply pleased that "Mr. Ford complied fully with the act by keeping Congress completely aware of all actions taken..."

GONZALEZ - Events of last few days are dramatic reminder of need for U.S. to be prepared. These events prove we don't have time to gear up and get ready at a leisure pace.

ALEXANDER - Enters telegram into record to President applauding his efforts to protect rights of American vessels to safe transit on high seas.

ZABLOCKI - Seizure was serious violation of international law. President's action showed wisdom, prudence, caution and yet firmness. Commends President. "President has properly filed prompt report appropriately in compliance with section 4(a) (1). While such a 4(a) (1) report would normally activate the section 5 and succeeding "congressional action" procedures of the resolution, the fact that our troops are disengaged from the situation makes that a moot point. However, if such congressional followup action were in order, I, for one, would vote in favor of a resolution supporting the President's action."

BAUMAN - Compared to vacillation surrounding Pueblo, President Ford decisiveness to retrieve Mayaguez is commendable.



FLYNT - Commends and supports the President who "acted with courage and wisdom." President's actions show will and capability of U.S. to resist blatant acts of aggression.

FINDLEY - President acted entirely within his constitutional authority by using military force to protect U.S. lives abroad. Rejoices in success of President in rescuing both ship and crew. Suggests the entire incident be placed before International Court of Justice in the Hague.

FASCELL - President and NSC should be congratulated for a job well done. Some lessons should be reviewed; system of evaluating dangers to our Marines; relations with Thailand; adequacy and timeliness of Presidential - Congressional consultations.



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 94<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

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No. 78

## House of Representatives

### PRESIDENT'S ACTION SHOULD BE PRAISED

(Mr. FUQUA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FUQUA. Mr. Speaker, the swift and decisive action of the President of these United States in connection with the pirating of the American ship *Mayaguez* will serve to prevent repetition of such aggression and the serious consequences of such acts.

An American merchant ship has the right to sail on the high seas and this Nation has an obligation to protect that right.

This is what American policy should be—firm, forceful, and fair. We were not the aggressors, we sought no territory, we sought only to regain possession of an American ship and the release of American sailors who have a right to expect protection from their fellow Americans.

Had this act been allowed to go unchallenged, there would have been others. Our actions in this instance were both firm and decisive. Our ship had been seized on the high seas, an affront to international law and to all men everywhere—although certain narrow-minded elements fail to recognize the larger implications.

Let us hope that the issue has been joined.

If there be recurrences, let us pursue this same policy. Let us never use force in anger, but let us never fail to use force to preserve world peace.

Perhaps out of this tragedy the world will have learned valuable lessons.

Those who have been called upon to make the supreme sacrifice should not be allowed to have made that sacrifice in vain. Let this be the foundation of our foreign policy. We will walk to the ends of the Earth in search of peace, but we shall also use our defensive might to protect the rights of Americans to sail the high seas.

### THE PRESIDENT'S ACTION IN "MAYAGUEZ" RETRIEVAL IS TO BE COMMENDED

(Mr. DAN DANIEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAN DANIEL. Mr. Speaker, the action by the President earlier today in Southeast Asia will reestablish our country's credibility around the world.

His performance was in the true American tradition, and reflects credit upon the American people and upon himself.

### COMMENDATION TO PRESIDENT FORD FOR FIRM AND SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP IN "MAYAGUEZ" INCIDENT

(Mr. STRATTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STRATTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to join with my colleagues this morning in expressing my congratulations and commendation to the President of the United States for the firm, aggressive, and successful leadership which he has taken in the *Mayaguez* incident. I think this is one of the few high points that we have had in our foreign and military policy in the past few months, and I am delighted at the outcome. I think the action the President has taken demonstrates, first of all, that in spite of all our difficulties in Vietnam, we can be firm when we have to, and we do have the will to exercise our military power in the defense of our own interests when the occasion demands.

The thing that has impressed me most in this incident is that the President did consult with the leaders of Congress at every step of the way. In addition, there were substantial briefings of other Members of Congress. Mr. Speaker, I believe we have here in this case a clear demonstration of the kind of cooperation that should exist between the Congress and the White House on foreign policy. It was successful this time, and I hope it continues in the months and days ahead. The handling of the *Mayaguez* case should demonstrate clearly to the rest of the world that Americans cannot be pushed around, and that we can and will respond promptly and firmly to all challenges.



## THE "MAYAGUEZ" AFFAIR

(Mr. FLYNT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute, to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous matter.)

Mr. FLYNT. Mr. Speaker, with the confirmation that the United States has retaken the *Mayaguez* and successfully rescued its crewmembers, I want to commend the President and express my support for his prompt and forceful response to an intolerable act of piracy.

I supported the President in his efforts to secure release of the *Mayaguez* through diplomatic efforts, but when these diplomatic efforts proved fruitless, he acted with courage and wisdom in his decision for decisive military action.

As a result of the President's decisive action, the lives of the captured crewmen have been saved, and the United States has exhibited in the strongest possible terms that we are a nation that has both the will and the capability to resist blatant acts of aggression promptly and effectively. I am confident that had the President not responded with promptness and force as he did, the United States would have become involved in a series of similar humiliating incidents, and I commend him and our American forces for their service to our country.

## SS "MAYAGUEZ": PROUD NEW CHAPTER IN AMERICAN HISTORY

(Mr. BROOMFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BROOMFIELD. Mr. Speaker, a difficult and dangerous moment has been turned into a proud new chapter in our history.

From the President, who made the tough decisions coolly and decisively, to the Congress, which set aside partisanship to provide unified support, to our combat forces who carried out a dangerous and difficult operation with courage and precision, the world saw an America which commanded its admiration and respect.

By our strong but measured response, we showed our allies and enemies alike that we can still unite as a nation and respond to a clear and arrogant threat to our interests in a bold but responsible manner.

In one convincing action, the President has reaffirmed our willingness to fight for our commitments and reinforced the freedom of international sea lanes for all nations of the world.

Through all of the incredible pressures of the crisis, the White House adhered scrupulously to the requirements of the War Powers Act in keeping the Congress apprised of developments involving the commitment of the U.S. troops to combat. I was very pleased with the close and careful consultation the White House offered the Congress.

## SS "MAYAGUEZ": A SUCCESSFUL OPERATION

(Mr. MICHEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MICHEL. Mr. Speaker, I just want to commend those gentlemen from the other side, particularly the reasonable voices in this House who have risen to applaud the President for the strong action he has taken within the last several days. Up until late yesterday there were some pretty timid voices being aired publicly around the country, particularly from the other body, suggesting delay, more patience, more consultation. If we had gone that course everything would have been lost. So I commend those who have stood firm here in support of the President today.

I would also further suggest that in view of our not being as welcome as we once were in some of these countries around the globe, we do well to maintain our superiority in air and sea power. The oceans are broad and expansive and as good as our carriers are we certainly cannot afford any further cutbacks and maintain our security. More than ever we need this flexibility.

In consideration of the Armed Forces procurement bill later on today, I think we would do well to keep this in mind.



May 15, 1975

# SS "MAYAGUEZ": EFFECTIVE WAY OF DEALING WITH IRRESPONSIBLE ACTION

(Mr. SIKES asked and was given permission to extend his remarks at this point in the RECORD.)

Mr. SIKES. Mr. Speaker, the President took forthright action in putting down an act of piracy committed by an irresponsible government in seizing an American ship and its crew. It was obvious that the new Communist government in Cambodia felt that it could take its turn in twisting Uncle Sam's tail without repercussion. They expected to keep the ship and extort a king's ransom for the crew. They even attempted a typical Communist face-saving maneuver by ordering the ship and crew out of their waters after it had been recovered by U.S. forces. Even their own people know that you cannot believe what Communists say.

President Ford has shown the world America does have the courage to stand by our principles. This time we remembered there are effective ways to deal with irresponsible actions. The Communists understand this language. The American people will applaud. Hopefully, this is a sign of new policies and new concern for America's world stature.

America now can hold its head high again.

## THE "MAYAGUEZ" AFFAIR

(Mr. EDWARDS of Alabama asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute, to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous matter.)

Mr. EDWARDS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of our country and our President today. When the chips were down, we did not shirk our responsibility in a time of crisis.

The President did a superb job of dealing with a very tense situation concerning the Cambodian seizure of the *Mayaguez*. He tried every diplomatic avenue, but when these avenues turned out to be deadend streets, he moved decisively

with a restrained use of our military forces to protect American lives and property.

It grieves me that American lives were lost in this operation, but do not tell me that there might have been a better way. Let us have no Monday morning quarterbacking on this one. The time came when a show of strength was required and President Ford did not flinch. He displayed on our behalf a national resolve to take swift and appropriate action. If Vietnam was a low point for the United States, then the recapturing of the *Mayaguez* and the saving of all its crew is certainly the first step on the road back.

Someone has referred to the tyranny of the weak and the weakness of the strong. It's easy for a small upstart of a country to flex its tiny muscle and attempt to inflict damage and embarrassment on a powerful country like the United States. It is not so easy for the strong nation to respond in a firm but measured way.

I think we met the test. We could have acted like a helpless giant, as we did in the *Pueblo* affair, or we could have blown Cambodia off the face of the earth. I believe President Ford's strong, decisive, and prompt response was appropriate for the situation and he should be commended for his sound judgment.

## FORD BOOSTS AMERICAN MORALE

(Mr. YOUNG of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, President Ford's bold and courageous action in sending Marines to retrieve the *Mayaguez* and her crew from the Communist pirates has given American morale a much-needed shot in the arm.

For too long, we have suffered the indignities perpetrated on our Nation by foreign aggressors.

For too long, we have exercised a diplomatic and military restraint in the face of repeated provocation, a restraint which has weakened our global image and our national pride in being the leader of the free world.

For too long, we have been forced to sit helplessly by as our ships, our men, our properties have been seized by others.

President Ford has at last drawn the line. He has made it clear to the rest of the world that we have had enough, and that we will no longer tolerate these aggressions against our Nation.

By acting swiftly and decisively, he has retrieved not only the *Mayaguez*, but also our national pride. He has restored confidence in the United States as the greatest Nation in the world, a nation willing to stand up for itself and its citizens.

I applaud the President for his action, and say that I am always proud to be an American, but today for some reason, that feeling is just a little something extra.





## THE "MAYAGUEZ" AFFAIR

(Mr. GOLDWATER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOLDWATER. Mr. Speaker, the Congress should be proud of the way in which President Ford has handled the *Mayaguez* hijacking. His firm, measured response to an obviously illegal act that threatened the freedom of the seas was most appropriate. The credibility of the United States was at stake in this affair. Dilatory action by the United States clearly could have led to another *Pueblo*-type debacle.

I am especially relieved that all 39 crewmen of the *Mayaguez* were safely recovered. The faith and confidence of their families and loved ones have been rewarded. And, their safe recovery was accomplished in a manner in which the entire Nation can be proud.

It is a sad commentary that the recovery of our crew and vessel seized in an act of piracy cost the lives of two U.S. marines and resulted in several casualties. The Marines have long been proud of their "first in, last out" tradition. They again lived up to that tradition and demonstrated that in the defense of liberty and freedom they are always willing to pay the necessary price. Further, the actions of the Navy and Air Force made the recovery of the ship and crew possible and clearly minimized the risks and loss of life throughout the entire operation.

President Ford's actions have clearly demonstrated that the recent events in Vietnam are not indicative of a general loss of American courage and determination. His decisiveness has reinforced the international credibility of the United States. It is to his credit that the entire operation was balanced, timely, and appropriate. I commend him for his handling of the whole incident.

## IT IS GREAT TO BE AN AMERICAN

(Mr. MONTGOMERY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MONTGOMERY. Mr. Speaker, it is great to be an American.

My congratulations to President Ford and the U.S. military for this necessary successful military operation.

Let other nations around the world take notice that America is still strong and will stand up for what is right.

I offer my condolences to the family and loved ones of those Americans who lost their lives.

## THE "MAYAGUEZ" AFFAIR

(Mr. SISK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute, to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous matter.)

Mr. SISK. Mr. Speaker, I wish to lend my full support to President Ford in the actions he authorized to free the American merchant ship *Mayaguez* which was seized by the new Cambodian regime.

Mr. Ford acted with deliberation, yet with boldness and firmness in freeing the ship and protecting its crewmembers. His actions should be clear evidence to all in the world that this Nation is prepared to protect its citizens and its property.

At a time when many are questioning the resolve of American foreign policy or its willingness to stand up to its aggressors, Mr. Ford did not hesitate to place the full military weight of this Nation behind a decision which was right and proper.

There should be no doubt in anyone's mind that this Nation will not be pushed around, and that we are prepared to use whatever force is necessary to protect American lives and property.

I commend the President, and I think we all owe him our thanks.

As one of the authors of the War Powers Act, I was deeply pleased to see that Mr. Ford complied fully with the act by keeping Congress completely aware of all actions taken to free the *Mayaguez* and its crewmembers.

The President and the U.S. Armed Forces acted boldly and in the best interests of this country. We should stand behind them.

## THE NEED TO BE PREPARED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GONZALEZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, during the past couple of days we have had once again a dramatic reminder of the need to be prepared. It is a lesson we seem incredibly prone to forget—despite Pearl Harbor, despite the lightning emergency of the Yom Kippur war, and despite even the most recent emergency at sea, involving the ship *Mayaguez*. That incident is not even over yet, as we debate this bill.

What all these emergencies prove, and what we can never forget, is that we do not have the time to gear up and get ready for action. There is no time for planning, for a leisurely preparation. Our military forces have to be ready, willing, and able to act in an emergency. What is more—and even more important, we have to be able to maintain action. We have to have not only strength to act, but strength to continue to act, for as long as need be, to protect our people and our interests, wherever they are challenged.

Yet, I see in this bill a less than adequate response to that kind of need.



ALEXANDER SENDS TELEGRAM TO  
PRESIDENT FORD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ALEXANDER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I sent the following telegram to President Ford:

The Honorable GERALD R. FORD,  
The President of the United States,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: I applaud your efforts to protect the rights of American vessels to safe transit on the high seas. Our allies and adversaries alike must be assured that the United States will defend the lives and property of Americans.

Safety of world commerce is vital to the U.S. as well as other nations and acts of piracy must be met with appropriate force to discourage a continued deterioration of global stability.

Sincerely,

BILL ALEXANDER,  
Member of Congress.

PRESIDENT FORD'S COURAGEOUS  
DECISION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. ZABLOCKI) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Speaker, the seizure of the American merchant ship, the *Mayaguez*, by a Cambodian naval vessel earlier this week, was a reprehensible and serious violation of international law. As a result of this provocation, the situation over the last few days has indeed been tense, sensitive, and serious. Wisdom and prudence was on the side of acting with caution and yet with firmness.

I commend President Ford and our Nation's leaders for making the courageous decision to retrieve the seamen and the freighter, *Mayaguez*, albeit a calculated risk was involved. It is with pride and appreciation that I join in praise and congratulations to our troops for the valor and courage they have demonstrated in the operation. We are especially pleased that the ship's entire crew was rescued, including a fellow Wisconsinite, Mr. Salvatore Puntillo. I join with his family and friends in the joy of his safe release.

At the same time, we sincerely regret the loss of any U.S. Marines and those injured in the operation, and join in sympathy to their loved ones. The American people are greatly indebted to and grateful for their sacrifice.

It is our sincere hope that this bold and successful action will prove to be a lasting deterrent against future similar acts of piracy and other potential violations of international law.

Regrettable as were the circumstances necessitating this reasoned use of force, one clearly positive aspect of the situation is that the worth of the war powers resolution has once again been demonstrated. Among other considerations, the President has properly filed a prompt report appropriately in compliance with section 4(a)(1). While such a 4(a)(1) report would normally activate the section 5 and succeeding "congressional action" procedures of the resolution, the fact that our troops are disengaged from the situation makes that a moot point. However, if such congressional followup action were in order, I, for one, would vote in favor of a resolution supporting the President's action.

## AMERICA CAN BE PROUD

(Mr. BAUMAN asked and was given permission to extend his remarks at this point in the RECORD.)

Mr. BAUMAN. Mr. Speaker, the President's handling of the seizure by Cambodia of the American merchant ship *Mayaguez* has been in marked contrast to the way similar incidents have been handled in the past. After giving diplomatic negotiations a reasonable opportunity to work, we went in with a well-planned, well-executed military operation, and successfully took back the ship and its crew. This success have given many of us a renewed pride in the United States, a pride which it has sometimes been difficult to feel in the recent past. Believe me, Mr. Speaker, it feels good to be proud of your country.

Compared to the vacillation which followed the capture of the *Pueblo* by North Korea, the decisiveness with which President Ford acted to retrieve the *Mayaguez* is commendable. In a world which had ample reason to doubt the will of the United States to protect its own interests, the President has demonstrated that we will not tolerate piracy of our ships or kidnapping of our citizens. One shudders to think what the consequences might have been had the President not acted quickly. I am grateful that he did so.

Perhaps this decisiveness will be a turning point in American dealing with other countries. Our desire for détente and disengagement has led some people to wonder whether we were on our way to becoming patsies for the world. Hopefully the resolve and decisiveness displayed in the *Mayaguez* incident will soon be reflected in the way we approach such problems as Cuba, the Panama Canal, Portugal, and relations with other Communist countries.

For the U.S. Marines who conducted this successful operation I have nothing but admiration and congratulations. Their courage under fire validates the proud tradition of the Marines as some of the finest fighting men in the world. The U.S. Navy is also to be congratulated for its outstandingly skillful handling of a difficult situation.

Thank you, Mr. President. All Americans can hold their heads just a little higher today.



## WORLD COURT SHOULD SETTLE LEGAL ISSUES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FINDLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FINDLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rejoice in the success of President Ford's action which led to the rescue of both the ship and crew off Cambodia.

The action entailed great risk but at stake was a great principle—freedom of the seas. If the United States, as one of the two world superpowers, had equivocated in dealing with this act of piracy, the safety of all ships at sea would have been jeopardized.

In my opinion, the President acted entirely within his constitutional authority. He is called by history, tradition, and the Constitution to use military force to a reasonable extent to protect U.S. lives abroad. Considering what was at stake in terms of principle, the use he made of military force was reasonable.

The President could wisely take a further step related to this incident. He could give even greater standing to the principle of freedom of the seas, and the underlying concept of the rule of law not force in international affairs by inviting Cambodia to join the United States in placing any and all legal issues which may arise in connection with the incident before the International Court of Justice at the Hague for adjudication. The United States should offer in advance to accept the judgment of the court.

Cambodia has already made allegations against the United States of espionage, provocative action, violation of

territorial rights. No doubt Communist propaganda mills will grind out other charges. The world will be watching to see how we respond.

By inviting Cambodia to join in letting the Court settle all such issues, our Government would effectively disarm its critics.

The United States is the world's foremost exponent of the rule of law. Here is an opportunity for the United States to prove it means what it says.

The rescue was an exercise in power, and, in my view, a prudent one. The referral to the Court would raise the issue to an even higher plane and prospect. It could open a new era in which disputes between even the greatest and smallest of powers are settled ultimately by the application of legal principles and conventions.

For all these reasons, I have transmitted this recommendation to the appropriate officials in the State Department.

## WELL DONE

(Mr. FASCELL asked and was given permission to extend his remarks at this point in the Record and to include extraneous matter.)

Mr. FASCELL. Mr. Speaker, President Ford and the officers and men who planned, participated in and executed the successful operation to rescue the U.S. vessel *Mayaguez* and its crew are to be congratulated on a job well done. The task and the decisions that had to be made were exceptionally difficult. The success achieved demonstrates clearly the resolution and ability of the United States to respond reasonably and effectively to dangerous and unanticipated events.

It is reassuring to know that at the decisionmaking level the legally constituted mechanism for crisis management, the National Security Council, met frequently. From their deliberations it would appear that under severe pressure only carefully considered action was approved. This should help restore confidence in the integrity and effectiveness of our governmental mechanism for crisis management—confidence which had been severely eroded.

As from any event there may be some lessons which we should learn from this incident. Among issues which should be pursued more fully in my judgment are:

The effectiveness of our mechanism for evaluating potential dangers to our merchant marine and the speed with which appropriate warnings are issued and protection provided;

Mutual obligations of the United States and Thailand in the situation and the impact of our operation on our long term policy interests in the area.

The adequacy and timeliness for Presidential-congressional consultations before and during periods of crisis.

It is my intention as chairman of the International Political and Military Affairs Subcommittee to pursue each of these matters. First, I intend to ask the General Accounting Office to study the adequacy of our system for protecting our mariners and minimizing the danger of future incidents like the one involving the *Mayaguez*. Second, the subcommittee will hold hearings following the Memorial Day recess on U.S. policy in the Far East and explore among other questions the issue of the implications of our actions for Thailand. Third, it is my intention to work with both the House leadership and the White House to reach a clearer mutual understanding of what is meant by consultations before and during foreign policy crises; who should be included in such consultations and what mechanisms, if any, should be formally constituted to facilitate cooperation, trust, and understanding between the President and the Congress which are vital in a moment of crisis.





# Senate

THURSDAY, MAY 15, 1975

(Legislative day of Monday, April 21, 1975)

## THE RETRIEVAL OF THE MAYAGUEZ

Mr. ROBERT C. BYRD. Mr. President, in respect of the military operation which took place yesterday and last night involving the retrieval of the U.S.-flag vessel the *Mayaguez*, I congratulate the President of the United States on the firmness with which he acted. I express my great pride in the Marines and in the various services that participated in the operation, and my gratitude that the operation was successful.

I also express my pride in the American people for the unity of support which they demonstrated in regard to this crisis.

## IN PRAISE OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE ARMED FORCES

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, today is one of those moments in history when all Americans should lay aside political considerations, and stand united in praise of those gallant men of our armed services who have demonstrated to the world that the United States has not discarded its sense of honor.

The full details of the retrieval of a merchant ship, flying the U.S. flag, are not yet available. But we do know that America, in the finest traditions of a nation born in courage, honor, and self-respect, has met the challenge of an arrogant and unlawful seizure of property and U.S. citizens. The ship and its crew are on the way home.

Early reports indicate that there may have been casualties among the American Marines sent to retrieve the ship and its crew. If that sad report is true, then this Senator extends his deepest sympathy to their families. But to all of the gallant men involved in this episode, I offer the heartfelt gratitude of what I am confident is the vast majority of Americans who yet realize the value of national honor.

So, Mr. President, let me say again that this is a day to lay aside partisan politics, and extend a hand of gratitude and admiration to the President of the United States, who faced this crisis with courage and wisdom. He will be remembered in history for his conduct in this difficult episode. I, for one, am very proud of him today.

## THE NEED FOR A STRONG DEFENSE

Mr. CURTIS. Mr. President, I thank my distinguished friend. I congratulate him upon his statement. I congratulate him on his forthright position for the defense of the country.

I believe in the light of our disaster in Vietnam and other world factors that we should put as first priority improving and strengthening the defense of the United States of America. I believe that will save lives. I believe it will prevent war.

If the Senator will yield further, I join him in commending the President of the United States for his action in reference to the piracy by Cambodia of seizing a ship and American citizens on the high seas. The courageous and decisive action by President Ford will do more for the cause of liberty around the world than all of the diplomatic negotiations and conferences that have been held in the last few years and will be held in the next few years.

We have a responsibility not to be the world's bully but to be strong enough so we are respected. The nations of the world will respond to the United States when they realize what our position is, that it is sound and unwavering, and that they can depend upon it.

I do not suggest—in fact, I would oppose—any idea that the United States should go to war to correct every wrong around the world. We cannot do it. But we should never lend our influence to an injustice, and we should be strong enough so that when we take a position the freedom-loving people and the strong nations around the world will line up with us.

No one likes to bet on a losing horse. No one likes to buy stock in a company that is headed for bankruptcy. If we want ours, and if we want to preserve the peace of the world, we had better not be totally devoted to destroying our defense and adding to the welfare state, because if we do we will not have any liberty to enjoy.

The time has come for us to have a defense system that will give free men confidence everywhere, knowing that it will never be used to start a war, but will always be used in the cause of peace.

Again I commend my distinguished colleague, and I commend the President of the United States.

Historians will draw contrasts between this recent seizure and the seizure of the *Pueblo*. I shall not propose to do that. It will be done. History will render the verdict of what kind of actions preserve peace, save lives, and strengthen the United States and freedom around the world.

## Mr. CRANSTON

I join with the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. CURTIS) in supporting the firm and resolute action taken yesterday by President Ford in saving the lives of American citizens in the Cambodian incident and in retrieving the American ship which was seized on the high seas by the Cambodian Government.

President Ford was faced with a very difficult decision. I think the action he took was appropriate, and one which is in the best interests of the United States. I commend the President.





## DEFENSE AND FOREIGN POLICY

Mr. TOWER. Mr. President, I think it is fortuitous that this day was selected by those of us who want to discuss defense and foreign policy in the wake of what has happened in Southeast Asia relative to the piratical act of the seizure of an unarmed American merchant vessel.

At the outset, I should like to say that I think the President acted with resolve, and acted expeditiously. I think if he had waited any appreciable amount of time longer the situation might have been such that we could not have retrieved this American vessel nor extricated its crew.

I am sure that the action of the President will receive the approbation of the American people. The immediate reactions I have gotten from my own State have been favorable.

I am also pleased to note that there has been a favorable bipartisan reaction on the part of Members of Congress. I think this is what we would expect of any President, be he Democrat or Republican, and I hope that in the eyes of the rest of the world this enhances confidence in the United States to react, and to react expeditiously, to a situation of this kind.

I think the President's actions will go a long way in restoring confidence on the part of our allies in the will and determination of the United States and at once convince our adversaries that we will not be lightly pushed around.

Mr. GARN:

That there is today a widely perceived military imbalance is shown, I believe, by the action of the Cambodian Government in seizing a merchant ship belonging to a U.S. corporation. I am not talking about the domino theory—which must surely be established as a fact by now—but about the very real destabilization which has taken place in Southeast Asia following our withdrawal, and in other parts of the world. The fact is that unless some action is taken immediately to redress the imbalance, we can expect to see many more cases of adventurous nations "biting the tiger's tail," as Senator BUCKLEY puts it. Under these circumstances it is essential that we give clear signals to the rest of the world, and that we give them immediately. I am pleased that the President has taken such decisive action in the case of the Cambodian act of piracy with an American ship. This is certainly a clear and unmistakable signal to the world that we will not be pushed around by anyone.

In Europe, our signal should be unequivocal that any force reductions will be carried out only in accordance with the principal of balance so long insisted upon by the entire NATO alliance. That alliance is facing critical strains at the present time, and we should carefully avoid any unilateral or bilateral action which would increase those strains.

On the larger scale, we need to approach international diplomatic situations with more realism, and less of the naive idealism which has characterized our dealings with Communist nations in recent years.

Mr. GARN. Mr. President, I am very pleased at the action of the President of the United States in the Cambodian situation. He certainly has given a clear signal to the world that we are not going to continue to allow our tail to be bitten. I am pleased that he did send in the troops. I am pleased that the ship and the American crew members have been rescued.

I hope that the Cambodians and the other Communists in Southeast Asia know that we are not going to continue

to put up with it; that we are not going to back down; that if they do not stop it and leave us alone, we are going to step on them with a big, heavy foot. I am very pleased at what has transpired in the last 24 hours.

## THE SEIZURE OF THE "MAYAGUEZ"

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I have some prepared remarks, but before I refer to them, I will take this occasion to commend the President of the United States for the action he has taken in the last few days with reference to the very serious problem that arose in Cambodia.

On May 12, the day before yesterday, I sent a telegram to the President of the United States. I told him I did not think any reason existed for us to tolerate the act perpetrated by Cambodia against the American men and the American vessel.

I urged him, as Commander in Chief, to take whatever steps were necessary to retrieve the ship and our men.

I further indicated to him that if anything was needed from Congress to support his action, this Senator was ready to act.

I indicated in that telegram that further delay appeared to risk the lives of American merchant marines and to erode the international integrity of America's traditional freedom of the seas, that this could lead only to continued harassment and challenge to America's position as leader of the free world.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have the telegram printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the telegram was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[Telegram]

MAY 13, 1975.

THE PRESIDENT  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

Mr. President: No reason exists for the United States to tolerate the act of piracy perpetrated by Cambodia against American men and an American vessel. I urge you as Commander-in-Chief to take whatever steps are necessary to retrieve the ship and our men. If anything is needed from Congress to support your action, this Senator is ready

to act. Further delay appears to risk the lives of American merchant marines and erode the international integrity of America's traditional freedom of the seas. This can only lead to continued harassment and challenge to America's position as leader of the Free World.

PETE V. DOMENICI,  
U.S. Senator.



May 15, 1975

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE

A RED-LETTER DAY IN THE OFFICIAL LIFE OF PRESIDENT FORD

Mr. HARRY F. BYRD, JR. Mr. President, in the judgment of the senior Senator from Virginia, Wednesday, May 14, 1975, was a red-letter day in the official life of President Gerald Ford.

The Senator from Virginia earlier commended President Ford for his firm and resolute action in retrieving an American ship which had been taken over on the high seas. I commended him for his action in saving the lives of 40 American crewmen.

If the President had temporized, if those crewmen had been taken to Cambodia, it would have been very difficult or impossible to have saved them if the Cambodian Government was determined that they would not be saved.



A REESTABLISHMENT OF  
INTEGRITY

Mr. BROCK. Mr. President, I appreciate the generosity of the Senator from Idaho.

I would like to associate myself with the remarks of the Senator from Wyoming. I appreciate his candor and his courage in speaking forth. I thoroughly agree with what he has had to say. I must say that I woke up this morning with a prayer of thanksgiving for the President of the United States. I believe he took an enormously courageous step in reestablishing the integrity of this Nation after it has been much battered in recent weeks and years. I, for one, want to say that I not only appreciate his courage and his leadership, but I am deeply grateful that that man was in that office at that particular time to act in the interest of the American people.

We simply must learn the lesson of history. We have a talent for forgetting it. We made a horrible and unforgivable mistake about 6 years ago when another naval ship of the United States was seized. We lacked the ability, the will

or whatever to respond. As a result, we had a major breach of our national security that has damaged this country extensively and will continue to do so in years to come.

This time we acted in a different fashion. National security was not involved in the direct sense of the ship. But national security was very much involved in the sense that this Nation is the only thing that stands between mankind and the return to the dark ages of slavery. It is about time we knew that, because the rest of the world understands it and understands it very clearly, both friend and foe alike.

A sense of relief has swept not only the people of the United States but the people of the free world at the reassertion of American will, integrity, and principle. It is a remarkable and refreshing thing to behold. I believe the President deserves our thanks and our prayers for his continued efforts in this regard.

I know the families of 39 or 40 men feel this way, but I think 220 million Americans feel the same way. I appreciate it.

I do believe there is one lesson to be learned, and that is this: We have allowed the lapse of our national security forces to the point where we could very quickly, in the next few years, come into fundamental jeopardy. We might not have saved those men. It was very close as to whether or not the *Coral Sea* and the attendant naval vessels could get there in time to save not just the ship, because that was not consequential, but 40 American lives, to act in the interest of American nationals wherever they might be.

We have allowed our Navy to become much weakened. We are at the lowest level of funding since 1951. It is about time somebody stopped talking about the increase in defense expenditures when we have had an absolute reduction in those expenditures for the last 5 consecutive years in constant dollars. That is a dangerous course to take. It is dangerous not just in Southeast Asia, but it is dangerous worldwide. If you want to look at a tinderbox, look to the Middle East where the 6th Fleet may be the only reason this country has not been involved in a war in that particular area. We were there when we had to be there, and we had the forces to be sure that other people were not there.

We do not have to look back before 1973 to remember the instance when the Soviet Union threatened to move in and the President decided as how they might have to climb over the 6th Fleet. They decided that was too high a mountain to climb.

Maybe we need to understand in this small instance just how essential the capacity for response to the national security is in an uncertain world. I hope and pray that the Congress will reconsider some of its actions to reduce not just our research and development, which I was discussing with the Senator from Ohio, but the hardware, the muscle, of our ability to maintain the peace. That is the fundamental question—not

how to engage in war but how to maintain the peace. You do it through strength, through integrity, through action on principle rather than expediency. That is what the President of the United States demonstrated with great clarity in the last 24 hours. I, for one, am humbly and deeply grateful that we had a man of his integrity and capability in that office in these hours. For myself, I want to extend my gratitude to him.



PRESIDENT FORD ACTS IN "MAYAGUEZ" RECOVERY WITH EFFECTIVE RESULTS

Mr. RANDOLPH. Mr. President, on Tuesday morning, May 13 I released the following statement, as follows:

The seizure of the *Mayaguez* by the Cambodians is an act of piracy, as correctly described by President Ford. I support his instruction to the State Department to demand the immediate release of the ship which flies the flag of the United States.

Until all the facts surrounding the seizure are known, I do not advocate a particular course of action. However, aggressive diplomatic efforts to secure release of the vessel and her crew must be pursued.

Mr. President, on this morning, I released a second statement, as follows:

Americans approve of the successful recovery of the *Mayaguez* and its crew. I believe President Ford acted properly and that the military operation was necessary.

Our President has exercised his constitutional authority with effective results.





# THE RESTORATION OF CONFIDENCE IN AMERICA

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. President, millions of Americans today are proud of the courageous correct action President Ford has taken to retrieve the *Mayaguez*. This has done more to restore confidence in Washington and to repair the tarnished image of America worldwide than any event of the past year.

This country is solidly behind the President. The effect of that action has been to reestablish in significant degree world respect for the United States.

Mr. President, without the strong defense establishment maintained by the United States, it would have been impossible to even contemplate retrieving the *Mayaguez* by force. If the United States were not the most powerful nation in the world, the President would not have been able to make the decision he did to take positive action, as confidently or as expeditiously as he did. Obviously, no other nation stood ready to come to the rescue of the *Mayaguez*. The world knows that this is a powerful nation that views power as an obligation and not a privilege, and that has been pointed out a number of times on this floor today already. This is a Nation that does not abuse the power it has. The President could, because we have this power, with great confidence, order the action necessary to retrieve this American vessel, without fear of interven-

tion by those who have chosen to ally themselves with the new, reckless and naive Government of Cambodia. The *Mayaguez* incident is further strong evidence against ever allowing the United States of America to become a second-rate military power.

I would like to take his occasion to compliment the distinguished Senator from Ohio for calling attention, specifically, to some of the illusions that I think all too many Americans suffer in these days. Those illusions are believing, without facts to back the beliefs, that all is well, despite the fact that, in terms of real dollars, we have been cutting back on the military budgets of our country, in my opinion, for all too long.

Congress—and only Congress—can insure that America remains No. 1.

The President has the constitutional responsibility as commander in chief to see to the national security. We applaud along with Americans all over this country today—President Ford for his ability to act resolutely, courageously and quickly. In the long run, this kind of affirmative action will enhance world peace and promote respect for the rights of others.

America, by virtue of this action in Cambodia, serves notice on the rest of the world that we have been misjudged badly should our withdrawal from Indochina be thought indicative of a failure to stand for principle throughout the world.

The retaking of the *Mayaguez* and the recovery of its entire crew is the kind of definitive action, as all military history has proved time and again, that saves lives, makes less likely the possibility of war, and encourages respect for the rights of others.

Mr. President, I have been somewhat disturbed and saddened by some reports that came across in the media this morning of criticism of the President for not having consulted sufficiently with the leadership of the Congress. I have heard in recent days and weeks that there are those in this body and in the other body, and I think it includes people on both sides of the aisle, who have position papers prepared that anticipate the President's actions on significant issues that he will have to face so as to be ready with an immediate response no matter which side of an issue he comes down on, criticizing him and trying to undercut the leadership that he has displayed.

I do not know whether that is true or not. I could not state, as far as my personal knowledge is concerned, that it is true. But I say, Mr. President, as I read and follow what takes place, and the criticisms that are made from time to time by people who first attack the President from the right, and then from the left, it seems to me that there is some rather compelling evidence to indicate that that is the case.

If that is the situation, and I must admit that it seems that it could be, I am saddened by it. This would seem to me to illustrate a lack of responsibility, a lack of dedication and a lack of commitment to our country that ought to come first.

I believe, Mr. President, that putting such a high priority on personal political considerations does not serve our Nation well. We could all serve America better. In the long run it would be smarter politics, though I am certainly in no position to advise my colleagues as to the astuteness of a particular political position. But I do not think the typical American is as uncomprehending or as easily misled or deceived as some people seemingly conclude he is by virtue of the statements that they make.

These are tough times. They are times when we all know by virtue of the tragedy that occurred in Indochina, that America, more effectively to discharge the leadership role which it has, needs to have, first, a restoration of confidence in the minds of Americans in the leadership of America. Second, we need, as one people, to reassert the kind of decisive action, the ability to reach a conclusion and to take a course of action, that will command the respect and admiration of the rest of the world.

I am lecturing no one in particular, Mr. President. But I hope that despite the impending 1976 Presidential elections, it could be understood, that the more than 200 million Americans at home, in every hamlet and city of this country, want to have this country's actions and this country's future placed first and above every other consideration.



May 15, 1975

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE

FOREIGN POLICY AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

Mr. STONE. Mr. President, under the illusion of détente with China, our President asked for accord and intervention to free the *Mayaguez* and its crew; and what our country heard in response was a thunderous silence.

For us to rely on the good will of Soviet adversaries in the face of repeated incidents worldwide and over recent years indicating with total clarity an attempt to weaken the free world or the West will invariably be seized upon to the height of folly on our part.

IMPROVEMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF THE DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. CURTIS. Mr. President, I am happy to join with my colleagues this morning in speaking out for the improvement and strengthening of the defense of the United States.

What would have happened in the last few days if the United States had not had the equipment, the weapons, and the trained manpower to compel Cambodia to return not only a vessel but 41 citizens of America?

I raise my voice in praise of President Gerald Ford. He is a much bigger man around the world today than he has ever been in his life because he has shown leadership, he has been positive, he has been firm, he has served the cause of peace. He put an end to aggression, and he has served notice upon a world that is discouraged about what happened in Vietnam, and many of them about to lose confidence in America, and now they know that America is not through, that America does not fall on its knees and surrender to communism.

President Gerald Ford acted in the interest of the people. He acted in the interest of saving lives. It was successful. Millions of thoughtful and patriotic people throughout the United States will applaud what he has done.

Free people around the world will approve and many enslaved people, likewise, will applaud, because they say: "Here is a nation that stands for something."

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC VITALLY IMPORTANT TO AMERICA'S NATIONAL SECURITY AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

Mr. FONG.

Who now can truthfully say it does not matter to us in America whether all of Southeast Asia goes Communist. We did not have these incidents when Cambodia, Laos, and South Vietnam had regimes friendly to America.

I am relieved that President Ford's prompt and vigorous action brought about the safe release of the crew and recovery of our merchant ship, the *Mayaguez*, and also the release of the

Thai fishermen. I pay highest tribute to our valiant military personnel for their courage and their sacrifice.



## THE "MAYAGUEZ" INCIDENT

Mr. BROOKE. Mr. President, the reports that the *Mayaguez* crew and ship have been rescued is extremely good news. That members of our Armed Forces perished in effecting that rescue brings deep sorrow not only to the families and loved ones of these men but to all Americans. Their death is a stark reminder, as if we needed another, that the resort to force always extracts a high toll.

The evidence is still inconclusive as to the exact nature of the incident. And before intelligent evaluations can be made as to the wisdom of the decision to resort to force, much more information is needed. I state this not by way of criticism of the President's action. I, for one, presume that it came only after a careful evaluation of the options available. I do believe, however, that a thorough inquiry into the decision to use force is in order, both to provide the American people with the relevant facts and to allow us to determine what actions can be taken to forestall similar events occurring in the future.

Such an inquiry, to be truly useful, requires careful attention to facts, rather than fragmentary reports and suppositions. Therefore, I have today submitted a list of questions to the Secretary of State regarding the *Mayaguez* affair. I ask unanimous consent that my letter to the Secretary be placed in the RECORD at this point.

The *Mayaguez* incident raises several larger issues.

First, I am convinced that we must restore any lost credibility. And we must do so in a much more sophisticated manner than simply emphasizing our military capabilities. While the latter may be necessary under extreme circumstances, it cannot be allowed to assume the predominant position it has in the past. Sophisticated diplomacy, a diplomacy indicating our recognition of our lessened preeminence in the international system and our inability to dictate the course of history, will become increasingly important as we seek to maintain the stability necessary for the protection of our vital interests.

Second, the manner in which the *Mayaguez* incident was handled by the Executive indicates that some improvement has taken place in the communication patterns between the Executive and the Congress. Nevertheless, expressions by some of the congressional leadership that they were merely informed rather than consulted indicates that further improvements are still needed. Moreover, the Congress has yet to institute adequate communications channels to enable the leadership to keep the membership sufficiently informed on the general aspects of evolving crisis situations. While one recognizes that a certain degree of confidentiality must be maintained, it is self-evident that a greater degree of communication is necessary within the Congress as well as between the Congress and the Executive.

The *Mayaguez* incident indicates that a respite from the entanglements of world politics will not be forthcoming for

our country. Our position in the world means that we will be called upon to shoulder continued burdens that will tax our strength and endurance. We cannot avoid such burdens. But we can begin to reassess the manner in which we will respond to them and, hopefully, evolve the capacity to limit the number of situations wherein force rather than diplomacy characterizes our response.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter I have addressed to the Secretary of State today.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

MAY 15, 1975.

HON. HENRY A. KISSINGER,  
The Secretary of State,  
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: I am relieved to learn of the successful rescue of the *Mayaguez* crew and the ship. However, as you know, I deeply regret the deaths of several members of the armed forces. Their deaths are one more stark reminder that the resort to force always has a high price.

While I presume that the decision to use force was made after careful consideration of all available options, I am convinced that a thorough study must be made of the factors that led to that decision and subsequent events. Therefore, I would appreciate receiving an early response to the following questions:

1. Did the *Mayaguez* violate any territorial or sovereign rights of Cambodia?
2. What was the basis for our government's claim of the illegality of the seizure of the *Mayaguez* by the Cambodians? Specifically:
  - a. Was the island off of which it was seized a recognized possession of the Cambodian government?
  - b. How far off the island was the *Mayaguez* when it was seized?
  - c. What are the recognized limits of territorial control of waters off the islands in the area?
  - d. Do the Cambodians claim a 12-mile limit?
  - e. Does the U.S. government recognize only a 3-mile limit?
3. What cargo was the *Mayaguez* carrying at the time of its seizure?
4. What was the port of origin and the destination for this specific voyage of the *Mayaguez*?
5. What was the purpose of the *Mayaguez's* voyage?
6. Was the *Mayaguez* an armed ship?
7. What had been the scope of our intelligence gathering operations in the area where the seizure took place? Was the *Mayaguez* in any way connected with such operations?
8. Was the *Mayaguez* in prior contact with the U.S. government aircraft or ships prior to the seizure? If so, what was the extent and nature of those contacts and for how long had they been established prior to the seizure?
9. What was the specific and detailed time frame and sequence of such events from the point of seizure, the demand for the return of the ship and crew, the requests for third party help and the time of the first U.S. attack?
10. When did the United States government first receive notice of the seizure, and what attempts were made at that time to communicate with Cambodian officials to register our protest and indicate our intentions to do what was necessary to obtain the release of the crew and its ship?
11. What attempts were made to obtain the intercession of third parties including the

United Nations to effect a diplomatic resolution of the incident? Exactly who was contacted, what was requested of each, and what was the timing of those contacts in relationship to the decision to resort to force and the actual use of force?

12. What, if any, communications were received, directly or indirectly, from the Cambodian government prior to their radio announcement that they would be willing to return the crew and the ship? What, if any, communications did we try to forward to that government prior to that announcement and prior to the use of force?

13. What exactly precipitated the initial attacks on the Cambodian naval vessels? Specifically:

a. Was there a Cambodian attempt to move the crew or the *Mayaguez* after the ship had been anchored off Tang Island?

b. How many of our reconnaissance craft had been fired upon and hit prior to our resort to force?

c. Were the Cambodian patrol craft that were destroyed or disabled moving toward the *Mayaguez* when they were interdicted?

d. Had the crew of the *Mayaguez* been removed from the *Mayaguez* prior to the time we initiated our use of force?

14. What were the targets of our attacks on the mainland? Did our attacks serve any immediate purpose directly related to the rescue of the crew and the ship or were they primarily punitive in nature?

15. What are the details regarding the deaths and injuries of members of our armed forces?

16. Had there been other reported incidents of harassment of other vessels by Cambodia prior to the seizure of the *Mayaguez*? If so, why weren't instructions sent to all U.S. flag vessels to divert from the area?

17. How many combat forces and how many ships were actually involved in the rescue operations?

18. How many combat forces were landed on the *Mayaguez* and on Tang Island?

19. Were troops transported from Thailand for the operation contrary to the express requests of the Thai government? What communications were received from the Thai government in reference to the incident and the potential and now actual use of U.S. bases in Thailand as staging areas? What was the U.S. reply to Thai requests?

20. What was the degree of resistance encountered on Tang Island? How much ammunition was expended by our forces?

21. What were the number of U.S. and Cambodian casualties?

22. Exactly how were the crew members of the *Mayaguez* recovered? Were any of them harmed in any way? Were the crew members released by the Cambodians or were they actually rescued?

While my questions are many, I believe immediate answers will greatly facilitate the understanding necessary to make judgments both as to the wisdom of our response to the immediate incident and the manner in which we might prepare ourselves to respond to similar incidents in the future. I look forward to receiving your earliest reply.

Sincerely,

EDWARD W. BROOKE.





# COMMENDATION FOR THE PRESIDENT IN REGAINING SS "MAYAGUEZ"

Mr. BAKER. Mr. President, I commend President Ford for the action taken toward regaining the SS *Mayaguez* and her crew.

I believe that the President's conduct in this matter was a careful mix of caution, diplomatic initiative and appropriate use of armed force pursuant to an entirely lawful and desirable purpose. In the wake of our disengagement from Southeast Asia, I think that firmness particularly was required in the face of an act of aggression directed against an unarmed U.S. merchant vessel in the course of passage on an established trade route. The precedent established by the President's action, I believe, will serve the Nation well in the difficult times ahead.

The President chose wisely and well and, in my judgment, acted within the scope of his constitutional and statutory authority within the framework of the War Powers Resolution. I believe that the Nation and the Congress fully support the President's exemplary conduct.

## REMEMBERING THE CASUALTIES AT KOH TANG ISLAND

Mr. GLENN. Mr. President, all Americans share the feeling of relief and pleasure that the *Mayaguez* crewmen and ship have been rescued.

But amid the euphoria surrounding this welcome event, it is important to remember that a few have died or been wounded so that others could be rescued.

The Marines sent to the ship and Koh Tang Island performed a very difficult mission representing the United States in the best "Semper Fidelis" tradition of the corps.

While many families receive the good news that loved ones are safe, others are receiving casualty notices. It is important that we remember both groups as we celebrate the successful conclusion of the *Mayaguez* incident.

# "MAYAGUEZ" UNDERWAY

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, all of us in this body are, of course, relieved at the news that the merchant ship *Mayaguez* is, at this moment, underway on its own power, manned by its own crew.

The fact that America will act with measured force and in timely fashion to insure the safety of her citizens has been asserted once again by the bravery, and the sacrifice, of U.S. military. We are all saddened by the news of casualties among the Marines who went in to the small island of Koh Tang to rescue the crew. Our sympathies extend to their families and friends and to their comrades in arms, and no words of gratitude any of us can summon would measure up to the debt each of us owes to these brave men.

## TOO EARLY FOR GENERALIZATION

Mr. President, close as we are to the disappointing conclusion to our long involvement in Southeast Asia, it is too soon to attempt any major generalizations about the impact of this incident on the way in which other nations view the United States. I am hopeful that it will help erase any doubts that may have arisen about American resolve to use force when force is required and justified to protect American interests.

I believe it has done much to allay any misgivings that may have been entertained in this country or elsewhere about any of the recent congressional actions to limit Presidential ability to respond in an emergency. The President did respond. He did so and at the same time consulted with Congress and made such reports as required under the legislation passed in 1973, the War Powers Act.

I will admit, too, Mr. President, that it is a good and an accustomed feeling to find near unanimity among my colleagues for the first time since the early days of my experience in the Congress, over an American use of military force, however limited it may have been.

Though there seems to be an irreducible minimum of my colleagues who are prepared to criticize any assertive action this country may take in defense of its own interests, and who do so now in regard to this action, the overwhelming majority of American citizens from all walks of life, have shown enthusiasm in their support for these actions.

## FORD MOVED DELIBERATELY

I believe President Ford did what he had to do. He moved deliberately after trying diplomacy first. But the first military engagements, which most of us learned about early yesterday, were motivated by the need to prevent the transfer of the American crew members to the Cambodian mainland. Any delay or over-cautiousness in that decision would have led to far greater complications. With Americans on the mainland, the analogy to the *Pueblo* situation would have been complete and our ability to take effective action to secure their release would have been severely restricted.

Only timely, prudent and firm action by the President in consultation with the National Security Council and the Congress prevented the repetition of that situation which would have been a tragedy for the crewmen and an embarrassment for the Nation.

## AMERICA'S RESPONSE TO THREAT

Mr. President, this was one, rather isolated and in some people's mind perhaps a minor incident. But in my view, it is an example of how America must respond to any threat to her own interest. We cannot allow ourselves to be at the mercy of the whims and vagaries of small nations that may entertain illusions about our will or about their own abilities to confront us.

For, if we yield to small nations, or show indecision when they confront us, or accept the counsel of those who would have us be overcautious in dealing with them, then the message of our unwillingness to act in our own best interest will not be lost on larger nations, friendly or hostile.

We are strong. We are a guarantor still of world peace. We are what we are and we cannot be defensive or apologetic about acting to protect ourselves, our citizens or our interests.

The President, I believe, did what he had to do. And the vast majority of Congress, in giving him their enthusiastic support did what they ought to do.





Clifford Hansen

"Your courageous correct action to retrieve the Mayaguez did more to restore confidence in the Administration and to repair the tarnished image of America world wide than any event since you became President. This country is behind you solidly, and the rest of the world must respect the U.S. "

J. Glenn Beall

"You are to be congratulated for the carefully considered but firm steps. . . Your decisive action was not only clearly in the national interest but also serves as a signal to the other countries of the world that the U.S. will do its part to assure that thoughtless criminal acts do not interfere with the freedom of communication and commerce between the people of the world. "

Jake Garn

"I compliment you on the way you handled the entire affair. . . I am proud of you, I congratulate you, and I am encouraged by your action. "

Bob Dole

"The American people are grateful to you for your leadership and calm but deliberate firmness in the successful effort to secure ship. . . helped to erase doubts about America's resolve to act firmly when firmness is required. "

James Buckley

"This is just to express my great admiration for the manner in which you handled the Mayaguez situation. "

Wm Roth

"I applaud the firm, timely action you took to recover the Mayaguez and its crew. Your determination will protect American shipping and seamen from similar incidents. . . When I praised your action before an audience of several hundred in Delaware yesterday, they cheered loudly. "

Edmund Muskie

Commends the President for the effective manner in which he handled the Mayaguez incident. "I would also like to express my appreciation for your restraint in seeking to recover the ship and her crew through diplomatic channels before considering the use of force."

Howard Baker

"Congratulations on a difficult job well done. I think that your actions . . . were at the same time cautious, but firm, and certainly effective. I fully support your decisions and I think the country will profit from the experience. "

William Walsh	Highly commends the President . " . . . demonstrates the type of take charge leadership this country needs. "
Bill Young	Highly commends the President. "Your courageous and bold action has given American morale a much-needed shot in the arm. With one decisive stroke, you have restored the integrity and credibility of the U.S. in the world community. "
Manuel Lujan	"I believe your decisive action is a sign of true leadership and was necessary. I applaud the steps you took to protect the life, rights, and property of American citizens. "
Floyd Spence	"Your actions . . . were a credit to the Office of the President. Public reaction to your handling of this crisis proves once again that the American people will rally behind positive action and decisive leadership. "
George O'Brien	"Congratulations on a job extremely well done. . . . your firm and calm resolve not to permit any further sacrifice of American men and materiel was in the best American tradition. "
Alphonzo Bell	"I commend you most highly for the courageous and patriotic manner in which you resolved the incident. . . believe that anything short of the decisive and expeditious action taken would have had grave consequences for the future foreign relations of this nation, and you have my wholehearted support for your meritorious handling of this critical test of America's international policy. "
Kika de la Garza	"Your actions on the incident have to be listed among the major decisions of any President. Your friends consider them as one of the greatest moments of Jerry Ford -- we are proud. "