

**The original documents are located in Box 122, folder “4/29/75 - Final Evacuation of Saigon (2)” of the John Marsh Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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Conversation Memo

0:900

4-29-75

The air evacuation by helicopter which you were advised of last night is still underway and is expected to be completed by about mid-day.

The evacuation is located principally at two places: the airport and the Embassy

complex. It is understood that the airport ~~has been~~ <sup>is being</sup> completed ~~and~~

~~and~~ <sup>are being</sup> security forces ~~have been~~ withdrawn from there.

Approximately 35 Americans were removed by boat from Can Tho in the Delta when the evacuation began.



At this time the evacuation is continuing from the Embassy where it is estimated about 2,000 persons are scheduled to be airlifted, of which about 200 are American evacuees and approximately 200 are security forces.

Since the evacuation began, it has been learned that the number of Vietnamese represent a substantial portion of those leaving. Any figures that we now have are merely estimates. However, ~~at the Leadership Meeting which you are invited~~

~~to attend at 11:30~~, you will be given more precise figures on evacuees including

- 10:05 McClellan - <sup>want</sup> I just to make sure we get all americans out
- 10:06 Stennis - no problems or comment
- 10:08 Eastland - that means they are going to occupy Saigon. That's troops

Americans and Vietnamese.

The local situation in Saigon at the time of the evacuation necessitated a change in evacuation plans to include substantially larger numbers of Vietnamese than originally estimated last night.

Insofar as U.S. casualties are concerned, these include the two U.S. Marines that were killed earlier yesterday before the evacuation began, and a fighter bomber is reported to be lost into the sea but the circumstances of its crash have not been determined insofar as hostile action is concerned. With these two exceptions, there are no other U.S. casualties.



About 10:00 AM  
29 Apr. '75

The air evacuation by helicopter which you were advised of last night is still underway and is expected to be completed by about mid-day.

The evacuation is located principally at two places: the airport and the Embassy complex. It is understood that the airport evacuation is being completed and security forces are being withdrawn from there. Approximately 35 Americans were removed by boat from Can Tho in the Delta when the evacuation began.

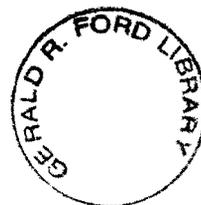
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Memo to President, re:  
Leadership mtg, War Power  
Act (w/2 attachments)

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 29, 1975



MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT  
FROM: JACK MARSH

As you are aware there is a question as to whether the War Powers Act applies in a rescue operation involving American citizens; however, to be on the safe side, we proceeded as though it does and consequently sought to comply with the Consultation Provision of the Act on the Saigon airlift.

These phone consultations began earlier this morning at about 12:30 a.m. shortly before the carrier lift off of the helicopters participating in the operation.

Leadership of the House and Senate and Jurisdictional Committees to include Appropriations were called by members of the White House Congressional Staff. There were a few cases where members could not be reached either because they were out of the City or their phone did not answer. Where a member could not be reached, a senior member of their staff was contacted, except in the case of three members in the Senate.

There is attached a summary of these early morning notifications.

Because the large number of Vietnamese evacuated exceeded initial plans and the advice given on the first notification to the Congressional leaders, a second consultation call was made at about 10:00 this morning to update these individuals. You are familiar with the message contained in the second conversation and a copy is attached.

It is important should the question occur as to why consultations or notifications did not occur earlier, for you to point out that in your public statements over the past several weeks, as well as statements by members of the Administration and your request for legislation for evacuation and the statements before Congressional Committees by witnesses clearly put the Congress on notice of the impending evacuation operation.

You might expect questions on the status and future of pending legislation related to this subject matter.

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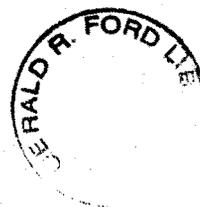
At this time the evacuation is continuing from the Embassy where it is estimated about 2,000 persons are scheduled to be airlifted, of which about 200 are American evacuees and approximately 200 are security forces.

Since the evacuation began, it has been learned that the number of Vietnamese represent a substantial portion of those leaving. Any figures that we now have are merely estimated. However, at the Leadership Meeting which you are invited to attend at 11:30, you will be given more precise figures on evacuees including Americans and Vietnamese.



The local situation in Saigon at the time of the evacuation necessitated a change in evacuation plans to include substantially larger numbers of Vietnamese than originally estimated last night.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 29, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR:

JOHN MARSH

THROUGH:

MAX FRIEDERSDORF

FROM:

VERN LOEN *VL*

SUBJECT:

Congressional calls on the Vietnam  
evacuation - April 29



MEMBER: Speaker Albert

DATE: 4/29/75

TIME: 12:45 a.m.

PLACE: At the home of Mike Reed

CONTACT: Vern Loen spoke with Mike Reed who is  
Administrative Assistant to the Speaker

COMMENTS: O.K. - Speaker is out of town, will relay word.



MEMBER: Minority Leader John Rhodes

DATE: 4/29/75

TIME: 12:30 a.m.

PLACE: At his home asleep

CONTACT: Vern Loen spoke personally with Mr. Rhodes

COMMENTS: It's about time



MEMBER: Rep. George Mahon

DATE: 4/29/75

TIME: 12:55 a. m.

PLACE: At the home of Keith Mainland

CONTACT: Vern Loen spoke with Keith Mainland who is  
Chief Counsel - Appropriations Committee

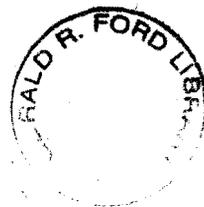
COMMENTS: Good under circumstances. You've heard  
reaction on Hill.



MEMBER: Rep. William Broomfield  
DATE: 4/29/75  
TIME: 12:48 a.m.  
PLACE: At the home of Everett Bierman  
CONTACT: Vern Loen spoke with Ev Bierman who is  
Minority Counsel for the International Relations Committee  
COMMENTS: All Americans? Broomfield on red-eye special  
coming in from San Francisco.



MEMBER: Rep. Elford Cederberg  
DATE: 4/29/75  
TIME: 12:40 a.m.  
PLACE: At his home asleep  
CONTACT: Vern Loen spoke personally with Rep. Cederberg  
COMMENTS: Sending troops in? O.K., Thanks.



MEMBER: Rep. John McFall  
DATE: 4/29/75  
TIME: 12:41 a. m.  
PLACE: Residence  
CONTACT: Doug Bennett talked personally with Rep. McFall  
COMMENTS: Thank you - good luck.



MEMBER: Rep. Mel Price  
DATE: 4/29/75  
TIME: 12:38 a. m.  
PLACE: Residence  
CONTACT: Doug Bennet talked personally with Rep. Price  
COMMENTS: Thank you, sorry you have to work so late.



MEMBER: Rep. Bob Wilson

DATE: 4/29/75

TIME: 12:35 a. m.

PLACE: Residence

CONTACT: Doug Bennett talked personally with Rep. Wilson

COMMENTS: Q - Does this mean evacuation of South Vietnamese  
will not continue?  
A - I don't know - probably will depend upon situation  
in Saigon after the extraction.



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 29, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR:

MAX L. FRIEDERSDORF

FROM:

WILLIAM T. KENDALL *WTK*

SUBJECT:

Notification of Senate Leadership  
of the evacuation of Saigon

The attached log indicates the Senators reached by William Kendall, Pat O'Donnell, and Bob Wolthuis this day relative to the notification of the Leadership of the evacuation of Saigon.



April 29, 1975

SENATOR	TIME	W. H. CALLER	COMMENT
Mansfield	12:30 a.m.	WK	Oh Lord -- Thanks for calling.
Scott	12:35 a.m.	WK	Expected it. Called for it yesterday
Thurmond	7:15 a.m.	WK	Approved. Asked questions about military situation near Saigon
Stennis	12:35 a.m.	RKW	Hope all goes well. Thanks
McClellan	12:30 a.m.	RKW	Good luck. Thank you.
Eastland	12:38 a.m.	RKW	Not available. Talked to Courtney Pace. Did not give notice, but tried to find whereabouts of Eastland.
Griffin	12:22 a.m.	POD	"Thank you-hope it works out."
Sparkman	12:30 a.m.	POD	"Thanks for letting me know; I'll be relieved when we get the last American out."
Case	12:35 a.m.	POD	"Thanks very much; I appreciate your letting me know."
Byrd	7:20 a.m.	WK	Glad we are doing it. Asked if Vietnamese were included.
Young	12:30 - 1:00 a.m.	POD	Not reachable



Second Notification  
Vietnam Evacuation (Saigon)  
Tuesday, Morning 4/29

SENATOR	TIME	W. H. CALLER	COMMENT
Griffin	10:15 a.m.	POD	"Thank you -- I'll look forward to details at the 11:30 Bipartisan Leadership meeting."
Robert Byrd	10:24 a.m.	POD	"Thank you; how many VN went out last night and this morning?"
Sparkman	10:20 a.m.	POD	"Thank you for letting me know. I'll have to leave the 11:30 meeting early--am hosting luncheon for King Hussain."
Young	10:22	POD	Senator on plane back to D. C. from Minneapolis. Gave statement to Gordon West who will meet at airport and drive him to 11:30 Bipartisan Leadership Meeting.
Case	10:18	POD	Francis Henderson, A.A. advises that Bill Kendall has already called with the information
Mansfield	10:15	WK	Thanked WK. No comment. Looking forward to 11:30 meeting.
Scott	10:44	WK	Took information. No comment General approval of the way things were going so far.
Thurmond	10:30	WK	No comment. Asked if South Vietnamese Air Force could get heavy equipment out.



Case	10:35	WK	Not available. Gave information to AA (Frances Henderson) who said it would be transmitted to Senator Case as soon as he arrived.
McClellan	10:05	RKW	Just want to make sure all Americans get out
Stennis	10:00	RKW	No comment
Eastland	10:08	RKW	This means they will occupy Saigon. Tragic.
Humphrey (at request of Sec: Kissinger)	10:45	WK	He thanked for a very complete briefing. Appreciated Secretary's thoughtfulness.



MEMBER: Rep. Bob Michel

DATE: 4/29/75

TIME: 12:28 a. m.

PLACE: At his home in Washington, D. C.

CONTACT: Charles Leppert spoke personally with Rep. Michel

COMMENTS: I guess that helo operations means the use of troops?  
Yes, to secure landing zones.  
How many?  
Approximately 1200 Marines will be used to secure the landing zones. The operation will also have U. S. tactical air support.  
How many do we have to get out?  
Approximately 900 Americans and some Vietnamese personnel but primarily - 98% U. S. personnel.  
When will this take place?  
Operation will begin at approximately 12:45 to 1:00 a. m. our time tonight EDST.



MEMBER: Rep. Thomas E. Morgan

DATE: 4/29/75

TIME: 12:42 a. m.

PLACE: In Washington, D. C.

CONTACT: Charles Leppert spoke with Rep. Morgan personally.

COMMENTS: Going to use helicopters?  
Yes.  
That's too bad because I have that resolution on humanitarian and evacuation aid up tomorrow.  
I wish it could have been delayed another day at least.



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

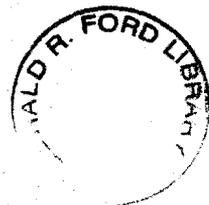
DATE: 4/29/75

TIME: 12:49 a. m.

PLACE: Washington, D. C.

CONTACT: Charles Leppert talked personally with Rep. O'Neill

COMMENTS: How many Americans do we have to get out?  
Approximately 900 Americans with some Vietnamese.  
How many Vietnamese did we get out today?  
Do not know the number taken out today but we have  
evacuated approximately 38,000 who are staged at  
Subic Bay, Guam and Wake Island.  
Do you expect some problems?  
We do expect some problems but are using approximately  
1200 Marines and U. S. tactical air-support to secure the  
operation.  
"That's too bad that we have to go this route."  
"Charlie, tell the President thank you for informing me."



Memo to President, (short  
one) re:conversation memo

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 29, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JACK MARSH

This is the final conversation guide used by the Congressional people in conferring by phone with the Leadership.



The air evacuation by helicopter which you were advised of last night is still underway and is expected to be completed by about mid-day.

The evacuation is located principally at two places: the airport and the Embassy complex. It is understood that the airport evacuation is being completed and security forces are being withdrawn from there. Approximately 35 Americans were removed by boat from Can Tho in the Delta when the evacuation began.

At this time the evacuation is continuing from the Embassy where it is estimated about 2,000 persons are scheduled to be airlifted, of which about 200 are American evacuees and approximately 200 are security forces.

Since the evacuation began, it has been learned that the number of Vietnamese represent a substantial portion of those leaving. Any figures that we now have are merely estimated. However, at the Leadership Meeting which you are invited to attend at 11:30, you will be given more precise figures on evacuees including Americans and Vietnamese.



The local situation in Saigon at the time of the evacuation necessitated a change in evacuation plans to include substantially larger numbers of Vietnamese than originally estimated last night.

Insofar as U.S. casualties are concerned, these include the two U.S. Marines that were killed earlier yesterday before the evacuation began, and a fighter bomber is reported to be lost into the sea but the circumstances of its crash have not been determined insofar as hostile action is concerned. With these two exceptions, there are no other U.S. casualties.



Memo to Kissinger re:  
conversation guide

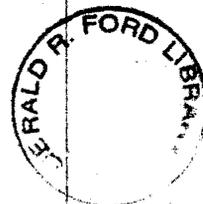
THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

April 29, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: SECRETARY KISSINGER

FROM: JACK MARSH

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The evacuation is located principally at two places: the airport and the Embassy complex. It is understood that the airport evacuation is being completed and security forces are being withdrawn from there. Approximately 35 Americans were removed by boat from Can Tho in the Delta when the evacuation began.

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Statement by the  
President, April 29, 1975

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

APRIL 29, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

During the past week, I had ordered the reduction of American personnel in the United States mission in Saigon to levels that could be quickly evacuated during an emergency, while enabling that mission to continue to fulfill its duties

During the day on Monday, Washington time, the airport at Saigon came under persistent rocket as well as artillery fire and was effectively closed. The military situation in the area deteriorated rapidly.

I, therefore, ordered the evacuation of all American personnel remaining in South Viet Nam.

The evacuation has been completed. I commend the personnel of the Armed Forces who accomplished it, as well as Ambassador Graham Martin and the staff of his mission who served so well under difficult conditions.

This action closes a chapter in the American experience. I ask all Americans to close ranks, to avoid recrimination about the past, to look ahead to the many goals we share and to work together on the great tasks that remain to be accomplished.

# # #



Ltr. from President to  
Speaker & President Pro  
Tem. 4/30/75

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 30, 1975

Dear Mr. President:

On April 4, 1975, I reported that U.S. naval vessels had been ordered to participate in an international humanitarian relief effort to transport refugees and U.S. nationals to safety from Danang and other seaports in South Vietnam. This effort was undertaken in response to urgent appeals from the Government of South Vietnam and in recognition of the large-scale violations by the North Vietnamese of the Agreement Ending the War and Restoring the Peace in Vietnam.

In the days and weeks that followed, the massive North Vietnamese attacks continued. As the forces of the Government of South Vietnam were pushed further back toward Saigon, we began a progressive withdrawal of U.S. citizens and their dependents in South Vietnam, together with foreign nationals whose lives were in jeopardy.

On April 28, the defensive lines to the northwest and south of Saigon were breached. Tan Son Nhut Airfield and Saigon came under increased rocket attack and for the first time received artillery fire. NVA forces were approaching within mortar and anti-aircraft missile range. The situation at Tan Son Nhut Airfield deteriorated to the extent that it became unusable. Crowd control on the airfield was breaking down and the collapse of the Government forces within Saigon appeared imminent. The situation presented a direct and imminent threat to the remaining U.S. citizens and their dependents in and around Saigon.

On the recommendation of the American Ambassador there, I ordered U.S. military forces to proceed by means of rotary wing aircraft with an emergency final evacuation out of consideration for the safety of U.S. citizens.

In accordance with my desire to keep the Congress fully informed on this matter, and taking note of the provision of section 4 of the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93-148), I wish to report to you that at about 1:00 A.M. EDT, April 29, 1975, U.S. forces entered South Vietnam airspace.

LD R. FORD LIT

A force of 70 evacuation helicopters and 865 Marines evacuated about 1400 U.S. citizens, together with approximately 5500 third country nationals and South Vietnamese, from landing zones in the vicinity of the U.S. Embassy, Saigon, and the Defense Attache Office at Tan Son Nhut Airfield. The last elements of the ground security force departed Saigon at 7:46 P.M. EDT April 29, 1975. Two crew members of a Navy search and rescue helicopter are missing at sea. There are no other known U.S. casualties from this operation, although two U.S. Marines on regular duty in the compound of the Defense Attache Office at Tan Son Nhut Airfield had been killed on the afternoon (EDT) of April 28, 1975, by rocket attacks into a refugee staging area. U.S. fighter aircraft provided protective air cover for this operation, and for the withdrawal by water of a few Americans from Can Tho, and in one instance suppressed North Vietnamese anti-aircraft artillery firing upon evacuation helicopters as they departed. The ground security forces on occasion returned fire during the course of the evacuation operation.

The operation was ordered and conducted pursuant to the President's Constitutional executive power and his authority as Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Armed Forces.

The United States Armed Forces performed a very difficult mission most successfully. Their exemplary courage and discipline are deserving of the nation's highest grati...

Sincerely,

**GERALD R. FORD**

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



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 30, 1975

Dear Mr. Speaker:

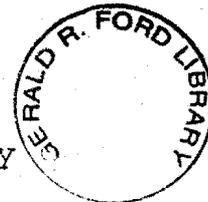
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In the days and weeks that followed, the massive North Vietnamese attacks continued. As the forces of the Government of South Vietnam were pushed further back toward Saigon, we began a progressive withdrawal of U.S. citizens and their dependents in South Vietnam, together with foreign nationals whose lives were in jeopardy.

On April 28, the defensive lines to the northwest and south of Saigon were breached. Tan Son Nhut Airfield and Saigon came under increased rocket attack and for the first time received artillery fire. NVA forces were approaching within mortar and anti-aircraft missile range. The situation at Tan Son Nhut Airfield deteriorated to the extent that it became unusable. Crowd control on the airfield was breaking down and the collapse of the Government forces within Saigon appeared imminent. The situation presented a direct and imminent threat to the remaining U.S. citizens and their dependents in and around Saigon.

On the recommendation of the American Ambassador there, I ordered U.S. military forces to proceed by means of rotary wing aircraft with an emergency final evacuation out of consideration for the safety of U.S. citizens.

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The United States Armed Forces performed a very difficult mission most successfully. Their exemplary courage and discipline are deserving of the nation's highest gratitude.

Sincerely,

**GERALD R. FORD**

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



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

April 30, 1975

To: John Marsh ✓  
General Scowcroft

From: Phil Buchen

Attached is a copy of my  
redraft -- for our 12:45  
meeting.



On 4 April 1975, I reported that US naval vessels had been ordered to participate in an international humanitarian relief effort to transport refugees and US nationals to safety from Danang and other seaports in South Vietnam. This effort was undertaken in response to urgent appeals from the Government of South Vietnam and in recognition of the large-scale violations by the North Vietnamese of the Agreement Ending the War and Restoring the Peace in Vietnam.

In the days and weeks that followed, the massive North Vietnamese attacks continued. As the forces of the Government of South Vietnam were pushed further back toward Saigon, a drawdown of US personnel and their dependents was conducted.

On 28 April, the defensive lines to the northwest and south of Saigon were breached. Tan Son Nhut Airfield and Saigon came under increased rocket fire and for the first time received artillery fire. NVA forces were approaching within mortar and anti-aircraft missile range. The situation at Tan Son Nhut Airfield deteriorated to the extent that the airfield was unusable. Crowd control on the airfield was breaking down and the collapse of the Government forces within Saigon appeared imminent.

Notwithstanding the use of diplomatic and other means to terminate the conflict, the situation presented a direct and imminent threat to the remaining US citizens and their dependents in and around Saigon. In view of this situation, and on the recommendation of the American Ambassador there, I ordered U. S.



military to proceed by means of rotary wing aircraft with an emergency final evacuation out of consideration for the safety of U.S. citizens.

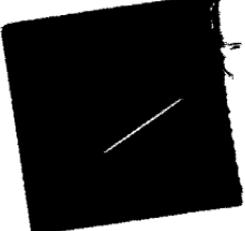
In accordance with my desire to keep the Congress fully informed on this matter, and taking note of the provision of section 4 of the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93-148), I wish to report to you that at about 1:00 AM EDT, 29 April 1975, US armed forces rotary wing aircraft entered South Vietnam airspace. Preliminary reports indicate that approximately 70 helicopters protected by an armed security force of about 850 Marines evacuated nearly 1400 US citizens, together with approximately 5500 third country nationals and South Vietnamese from landing zones in the vicinity of the US Embassy, Saigon, and the Defense Attache Office at Tan Son Nhut Airfield. The last elements of the ground security force departed Saigon at 7:46 PM EDT 29 April 1975. Two crew members of a Navy search and rescue helicopter are missing at sea. There are no other known US casualties from this operation, although two US marines on regular duty in the compound of the Defense Attache Office at Tan Son Nhut Airfield and not equipped for combat, had been killed on the afternoon (EDT) of 28 April 1975, by rocket attacks into a refugee staging area. US fighter aircraft were tasked to support the operation and in one instance were required to silence North Vietnamese anti-aircraft artillery firing upon the civilian laden helicopters as they departed. The ground security force was required to return fire during their extraction.

LD R. FORD LR

The operation was ordered and conducted pursuant to the President's Constitutional executive power and authority as Commander-in-Chief of US Armed Forces.

The United States Armed Forces performed their difficult mission most successfully and have once again earned the nation's gratitude.





THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

April 30, 1975

To: John Marsh   
General Scowcroft

From: Phil Buchen

Attached is a copy of the  
material we will be discussing  
with Martin Hoffmann and  
Monroe Leigh at 12:45 today.

Hope you can attend, or can  
send someone.



REQUEST/RECEIPT FOR LDX TRANSMISSION

CC STATION SERIAL NUMBER 300

TIME PROCESSED AT NMCC

30 APR 75 09 19

RECEIVED

ADDRESSEE: PLSE ENTER STATION, TOR, OPERATORS SIGNATURE AND RETURN TO NMCC:

FROM: WHITE HOUSE

TOR: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: '75 APR 30 AM 9:24

TO BE FILLED IN BY REQUESTER

FROM: Col Zane Sinkelstein OFFICE/DESK: OCJCS

PHONE NR: OX7-1309

TO:

WHITE HOUSE Mrs Philip Buchan  
Cabinet Room Advisor

STATE DEPT Mrs. Monrose Seal  
Legal Advisor

CIA 632-9598

NSA \_\_\_\_\_

ANMCC \_\_\_\_\_

DIA (PENT) \_\_\_\_\_

DIA (ARL HALL) \_\_\_\_\_

DNA \_\_\_\_\_

NPIC (NAVY YARD) \_\_\_\_\_

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS \_\_\_\_\_

CLASSIFICATION None

PAGES 3

On 4 April 1975, I reported that US naval vessels had been ordered to participate in an international humanitarian relief effort to transport refugees and US nationals to safety from Danang and other seaports in South Vietnam. This effort was undertaken in response to urgent appeals from the Government of South Vietnam and in recognition of the large-scale violations by the North Vietnamese of the Agreement Ending the War and Restoring the Peace in Vietnam.

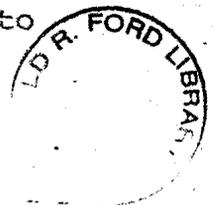
In the days and weeks that followed, the massive North Vietnamese attacks continued. As the forces of the Government of South Vietnam were pushed further back toward Saigon, a drawdown of US personnel and their dependents was conducted.

On 28 April, the defensive lines to the northwest and south of Saigon were breached. Tan Son Nhut Airfield and Saigon came under increased rocket fire and for the first time received artillery fire. NVA forces were approaching within mortar and anti-aircraft missile range. The situation at Tan Son Nhut Airfield deteriorated to the extent that the airfield was unusable. Crowd control on the airfield was breaking down and the collapse of the Government forces within Saigon appeared imminent.

Notwithstanding the use of diplomatic and other means to terminate the conflict, the situation presented a direct and imminent threat to the remaining US citizens and their dependents.



In accordance with my desire to keep the Congress fully informed on this matter, and taking note of the provision of section 4 of the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93-148), I wish to report to you that I ordered the US Armed Forces to evacuate US nationals and dependents of US nationals, together with foreign nationals, including South Vietnamese to whose lives a direct and imminent threat existed and who could be accommodated by the operation. At about 1:00 AM EDT, 29 April 1975, US armed forces rotary wing aircraft entered South Vietnam airspace. Preliminary reports indicate that approximately 70 helicopters protected by an armed security force of about 850 Marines evacuated nearly 1400 US citizens, together with approximately 5500 third country nationals and South Vietnamese from landing zones in the vicinity of the US Embassy, Saigon, and the Defense Attache Office at Tan Son Nhut. The last elements of the ground security force departed Saigon at 7:46 PM EDT 29 April 1975. Two US Marines were killed in the early afternoon (EDT) of 28 April 1975 as a result of North Vietnamese rocket attacks on refugee staging area in the Defense Attache Office compound. Two crew members of a Navy search and rescue helicopter are missing at sea. There are no other known US casualties. US fighter aircraft were tasked to support the operation and in one instance were required to silence North Vietnamese anti-aircraft artillery firing upon the civilian laden helicopters as they departed. The ground security force was required to return fire during their extraction.



The reason for the introduction of US military forces equipped for combat into the Saigon area was to bring about the evacuation of US citizens and their dependents, together with certain other alien noncombatants whose lives were directly and imminently threatened. The operation was ordered and conducted pursuant to the President's Constitutional executive power and authority as Commander-in-Chief of US Armed Forces.

In the proud tradition of professionalism that has characterized their performance in Southeast Asia and elsewhere, the United States Armed Forces performed the difficult and hazardous mission with discrimination and dispatch. They have once again earned the nation's gratitude.



Memo for the Files

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

April 29, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE FILES

FROM: JACK MARSH

The attached is a conversation summary of the information conveyed through the Congressional Relations Staff for the purpose of advising Congressional Leaders on the Saigon evacuation. Attached also is a draft of a memo prepared by the National Security Council several days previously and passed out on the evening of the notification.



The President has asked me to advise you that he has ordered the evacuation of all Americans located in the Saigon area.

To accomplish this, a helicopter lift from carriers off-shore will begin on or about 12:45 a.m. and will proceed to two major landing zones in the Saigon area after a flight of approximately 25 to 30 minutes. The two landing areas are the U. S. Embassy and Tan Son Nhut Airport.

It is expected there will be evacuated approximately 900 U. S. Nationals and possibly some Vietnamese incidental to the lift, but it will principally evacuate Americans at the two sites.

To assist in this operation will be approximately 1,200 U.S. Marines who will have the task of securing the landing zones. The airlift and evacuation will be provided tactical air support and is expected that its duration will be from two and one half to four hours from liftoff time if all goes well.

For your information, there is a 12 hour time difference with Saigon and it is also requested that you keep a close hold on this information for at least one hour after this call.

Comment: In the event you are asked as to why there are news reports on the evacuation, you may indicate it is your understanding that local correspondents in Saigon intercepted radio transmissions from the Embassy to the contingent at the Airport and reported through press means the information learned from these transmissions.



1. Lift begin about 1:00 am

{ 2. Embassy compound

{ 3. Other location / Airport

4. U.S. <sup>APP.</sup> 900 / total lift

5. U.S. carriers

7 6. USMC search landing zone

7. Tactical air spt.

4 8. Only U.S. / Almost.

9. 2½ - 3 hrs. if gas way

10. Possible outside - 1200

11. 12 hrs. difference.

12. 25 min ppt.

13. Close hold / 1 hr.

