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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAY 15, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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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GERALD R. FORD

MAY 15, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

TEXT OF LETTERS FROM THE PRESIDENT TO THE
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

May 15, 1975

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I am transmitting today a bill to authorize Foreign Assistance programs for fiscal years 1976 and 1977 and for the transition period July 1, 1976 through September 30, 1976.

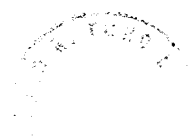
This proposal reflects both current realities and continuing uncertainties.

One reality is that we live in an interdependent world -- a world in which the actions or inactions of any one great nation can affect the interests of all. By its actions, this nation will play its proper role in influencing the course of world events to make a better world for all. Foreign assistance is an essential element in the U.S. commitment to this objective.

A second reality, however, is that the recent events in Indochina have had a profound impact on the assumptions underlying the assistance requirements in my 1976 Budget, transmitted in February. There has not been sufficient time to fully assess the implications of these changes on foreign assistance requirements. What is abundantly clear, however, is the urgent need to assist those people who have been forced to flee from Indochina. I have already requested legislation to permit us to meet this need and I urge speedy congressional action.

A third reality is the continuing tension in the Middle East -- an area which has been wracked by war and even now knows only an uneasy peace. The United States has made every effort to assist in finding a solution to the problems in this part of the world and is now undertaking a thorough reassessment of every aspect of our relations with the countries of the Middle East.

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These current realities are also the source of continuing uncertainties about the 1976 foreign assistance program.

In order to permit the fullest possible consideration of foreign aid requirements by the Congress, the legislation I am transmitting today contains specific funding proposals for development assistance and related programs. However, because of the uncertainties caused by changing events, this request does not include specific amounts for grant military assistance, foreign military credit sales and some economic supporting assistance programs at this time. For these accounts, I am requesting an authorization for such sums as may be necessary and will return to the Congress with specific funding proposals as soon as possible.

The review of our policies in the Middle East, which I initiated last month, will not be completed until later this summer. I have, therefore, also omitted specific requests for assistance to the four major Middle Eastern aid recipients until this review is completed.

With this bill, the Congress is now in a position to begin consideration of those elements of our foreign aid programs on which I have made firm recommendations. The other specifics will be transmitted as soon as our reviews permit. I urge that the Congress consider and enact this legislation.

Sincerely,

GERALD R. FORD

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A BILL

To amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as the "Foreign Assistance Act of 1975".

DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

SECTION 2. (a) Chapter 1 of part 1 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is amended as follows:

(1) In section 103(a), relating to food and nutrition, immediately after "1975," insert "\$534,500,000 for the fiscal year 1976, and \$635,000,000 for the fiscal year 1977,".

(2) In section 104, relating to population planning and health, immediately after "1975," insert "\$180,500,000 for the fiscal year 1976, and \$210,000,000 for the fiscal year 1977,".

(3) In section 105, relating to education and human resources development, immediately after "1975," insert "\$71,000,000 for the fiscal year 1976, and \$85,000,000 for the fiscal year 1977,".

(4) In section 106, relating to selected development accounts, immediately after "1975," insert "and \$45,300,000 for the fiscal year 1976, and \$40,000,000 for the fiscal year 1977".

(5) In section 107, relating to selected countries and organizations, immediately after "1975," insert "and \$32,000,000 for the fiscal year 1976, and \$40,000,000 for the fiscal year 1977".

(b) Section 209(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is repealed.

AMERICAN SCHOOLS AND HOSPITALS ABROAD

SEC. 3. Section 214 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, relating to American schools and hospitals abroad, is amended as follows:

(1) In subsection (c), immediately after "\$19,000,000," insert "and for the fiscal year 1976, \$9,800,000 and for the fiscal year 1977, \$9,800,000".

(2) In subsection (d), immediately after "\$6,500,000," insert "and for the fiscal year 1976, \$7,000,000 and for the fiscal year 1977, \$7,000,000".

HOUSING GUARANTIES

SEC. 4. Title III of Chapter 2 of part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is amended as follows:

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(1) In section 221, relating to worldwide housing guaranties, strike out "\$355,000,000" and insert in lieu thereof "\$505,000,000".

(2) In section 222(c), relating to housing projects in Latin American countries, strike out "\$550,000,000" and insert in lieu thereof "\$650,000,000".

(3) In section 223(1), relating to general provisions, strike out "June 30, 1976" and insert in lieu thereof "September 30, 1978".

INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

SEC. 5. Chapter 2 of part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is further amended by adding at the end thereof of the following new titles:

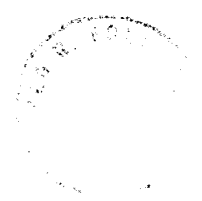
"TITLE XII - INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

SEC. 296. General Authority. -- (a) The Congress recognizes that in a world of growing population with growing expectations, increased food production and improved distribution, storage and marketing in the developing countries is necessary not only to prevent hunger but to lay the economic base for growth. Current levels of nutrition and food supply are not now adequate; just to maintain them will require that current production be doubled by the end of the century. Moreover, in an interdependent world economy, the increased availability of food, of higher nutritional quality, in any sector of the world, can benefit all. The greatest potential for increasing world supplies is in the developing countries in which the gap between food demand and food supply is greatest, and current average yields are low.

"(b) The Congress further recognizes that sustained agricultural research is necessary if the quantity, quality, and availability of food are to be increased, in both developed and developing countries. Key roles in this effort are played by international agricultural centers, universities and research institutions, in the United States and elsewhere, through their agricultural research work and in the dissemination of increased agricultural knowledge to the farmer.

"(c) It is the sense of the Congress that research bearing on agricultural production, distribution, storage and marketing in the developing countries conducted in a growing network of internationally oriented agricultural research institutions must be expended substantially and rapidly if the steadily growing demand for food is to be met. Such research should receive continued, increased, and where possible, longer-range support from national, international, and private sources. In adopting this title, Congress expresses the commitment of the United States to the expansion of such research in order to hasten and encourage the long-term planning and institutional growth needed to secure the most beneficial research results.

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"SEC. 297. Authorization. -- To carry out the intent of Congress as expressed in section 296, the President is authorized to use any of the funds made available under section 103 of the Act to provide assistance on such terms and conditions as he may determine in support of programs of food research for the benefit of developing countries and areas. Such funds may be made available without regard to the provisions of section 110(b) and 211(d) of this Act."

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMS

SEC. 6. (a) Section 302 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is amended as follows:

(1) In subsection (a), immediately after "\$165,000,000" insert "and for the fiscal year 1976, \$189,500,000 and for the fiscal year 1977, \$214,900,000."

(2) In subsection (b)(2), immediately after "\$14,500,000" insert "and for use beginning in the fiscal year 1976, \$27,000,000."

"(b) In section 54 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1974, strike out 'part III' and insert in lieu thereof 'part I'."

CONTINGENCY FUND

SEC. 7. Chapter 5 of part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is amended as follows:

(1) In the chapter heading, strike out "Disaster Relief" and insert in lieu thereof "Contingency Fund."

(2) Section 451(a) is amended to read as follows:

"(a) In addition to amounts otherwise available for such purposes, there are authorized to be appropriated to the President from time to time such amounts as may be necessary to provide availabilities for obligations to provide assistance authorized by this part for any emergency purpose, in accordance with the provisions applicable to the furnishing of such assistance: Provided, however, That availabilities of funds which have not been previously obligated shall at no time exceed \$10,000,000. Amounts appropriated hereunder shall remain available until expended."

INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL

SEC. 8. Section 482 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is amended by inserting "and \$42,500,000 for the fiscal year 1976 and \$42,500,000 for the fiscal year 1977" immediately after "1975."

INTERNATIONAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE

SEC. 9. Part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is further amended as follows:

(1) Chapter 9 of Part I is retitled "Chapter 9 - International Disaster Assistance."

(2) Section 491 is renumbered "Section 495."

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(3) Immediately after the heading "Chapter 9 - International Disaster Assistance" insert the following new sections:

"Section 491 - International Disaster Assistance.

(a) The Congress, recognizing that prompt United States assistance to alleviate human suffering caused by natural and man-made disasters abroad is an important expression of the humanitarian concern and tradition of the American people, affirms the willingness of the United States to provide assistance for the humanitarian relief and rehabilitation of peoples and countries affected by such disasters. Such humanitarian assistance both symbolizes the concern of the United States for the welfare of people in need throughout the world, and also constitutes an important element in the foreign relations of the United States in its efforts to contribute to a stable international peace.

"(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this or any other Act, the President is authorized to furnish assistance to any foreign country or international organization on such terms and conditions as he may determine, for disaster relief and rehabilitation, including assistance relating to disaster preparedness, and to the prediction of an contingency planning for natural disasters abroad.

"Section 492. Authorization. (a) In addition to amounts otherwise available for such purposes, there is authorized to be appropriated to the President from time to time such amounts as may be necessary to provide availabilities for obligations for disaster relief and rehabilitation assistance authorized by this section: Provided, however, that availabilities of funds which have not been previously obligated shall at no time exceed \$20,000,000. Amounts appropriated hereunder shall remain available until expended.

"(b) The President shall submit quarterly reports to the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and to the Speaker of the House of Representatives on the programming and obligation of funds authorized by this section."

(4) Section 639 is repealed.

(5) Sections 639A and 639B are renumbered sections 493 and 494, respectively, and inserted after section 492.

(6) Section 452 is renumbered section 495A and inserted after section 495.

MILITARY ASSISTANCE

SEC. 10. Chapter 2 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is amended as follows:

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(1) Section 504(a), relating to authorization, is amended by striking out "\$600,000,000 for the fiscal year 1975" and inserting in lieu thereof "such amounts as may be necessary for the fiscal year 1976 and for the fiscal year 1977;"

(2) Section 506(a), relating to special authority, is amended by striking out "the fiscal year 1975" in each place it appears and inserting in lieu thereof "the fiscal year 1976" in each such place.

(3) Section 514, relating to the stockpiling of defense articles for foreign countries, is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 514. Stockpiling of Defense Articles for Foreign Countries. -- No defense article in the inventory of the Department of Defense which is set aside, reserved, or in any way earmarked or intended for future use by any foreign country may be made available to or for use by any foreign country unless such transfer is authorized under this Act or the Foreign Military Sales Act, or any subsequent corresponding legislation, and such transfer is charged against funds authorized under such legislation or against the limitations specified in such legislation, as appropriate, for the fiscal period in which such defense article is transferred."

SECURITY SUPPORTING ASSISTANCE

SEC. 11. Section 532 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is amended by inserting immediately after "\$660,000,000" a comma and "for the fiscal year 1976 and for the fiscal year 1977, such amounts as may be necessary."

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

SEC. 12. (a) Part II of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is amended by adding at the end thereof the following new chapter:

"CHAPTER 5 -- INTERNATIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

"SEC. 542. General Authority. -- The President is authorized to provide education and training for military and related civilian personnel of foreign countries on such terms and conditions as he shall determine, including --

(1) attendance at military educational and training facilities in the United States (other than the Service Academies) and abroad;

(2) attendance in special courses of instruction at schools and institutions of learning or research in the United States or abroad; and

(3) observation and orientation visits to military facilities and related activities in the United States and abroad.

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"SEC. 543. Authorization. -- There are authorized to be appropriated to the President to carry out the purposes of this chapter such amounts as may be necessary for the fiscal year 1976 and for the fiscal year 1977.

"SEC. 544. Purposes. -- Education and training activities conducted under this chapter shall be designed:

(1) to encourage effective and mutually beneficial relationships and increased understanding between the United States and foreign countries, in furtherance of the goals of international peace and security; and

(2) to improve the ability of participating foreign countries to utilize their resources, including defense articles and defense services obtained by them from the United States, with maximum effectiveness, thereby contributing to greater self reliance by such countries."

(b) The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is amended as follows:

(1) Section 502B(d), relating to human rights, is amended by inserting "or chapter 5 (international military education and training)" immediately after "(supporting assistance)".

(2) Section 504(a)(1), relating to authorization, is amended by striking out "(other than (1) training in the United States, or (2) for Western Hemisphere countries, training in the United States or in the Canal Zone)".

(3) Section 510, relating to restrictions on training foreign military students, is repealed.

(4) Section 622, relating to coordination with foreign policy, is amended as follows:

(A) In subsection (b) immediately after the phrase "(including civic action)" insert the words "and military education and training".

(B) Subsection (c) is amended to read as follows:

"(c) Under the direction of the President, the Secretary of State shall be responsible for the continuous supervision and general direction of economic assistance, military assistance and military education and training programs, including but not limited to determining whether there shall be a military assistance (including civic action) or a military education and training program for a country and the value thereof, to the end that such programs are effectively integrated both at home and abroad and the foreign policy of the United States is best served thereby."

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(5) Section 623, relating to the Secretary of Defense, is amended as follows:

(A) In subsection (a)(4), immediately after the word "military", insert the words "and related civilian".

(B) In subsection (a)(6), immediately after the word "assistance", insert a comma and the words "education and training".

(6) Section 632, relating to allocation and reimbursement among agencies, is amended as follows:

(A) by inserting in subsections (a) and (e) immediately after the word "articles", wherever it appears, a comma and the words "military education and training"; and

(B) by striking out in subsection (b) the words "and defense articles" and inserting in lieu thereof a comma and the words "defense articles, or military education and training".

(7) Section 636, relating to provisions on uses of funds, is amended as follows:

(A) In subsection (g)(1), immediately after the word "articles", insert a comma and the words "military education and training".

(B) In subsection (g)(2) and in subsection (g)(3), strike out the word "personnel" and insert in lieu thereof the words "and related civilian personnel".

(8) Section 644, relating to definitions, is amended as follows:

(A) Subsection (f) is amended to read as follows:

"(f) 'Defense service' includes any service, test, inspection, repair, publication, or technical or other assistance or defense information used for the purposes of furnishing military assistance, but shall not include military educational and training activities under chapter 5 of Part II."

(B) There is added at the end thereof the following new subsection:

"(n) 'Military education and training' includes formal or informal instruction of foreign students in the United States or overseas by officers or employees of the United States, contract technicians, contractors (including instruction at civilian institutions), or by correspondence courses, technical, educational, or information publications and media of all kinds, training aids, orientation, and military advice to foreign military units and forces."

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(c) Except as may be expressly provided to the contrary in this Act, all determinations, authorizations, regulations, orders, contracts, agreements, and other actions issued, undertaken or entered into under authority of any provision of law amended or repealed by this section shall continue in full force and effect until modified by appropriate authority.

(d) Funds made available pursuant to other provisions of law for foreign military educational and training activities shall remain available for obligation and expenditure for their original purposes in accordance with the provisions of law originally applicable thereto, or in accordance with the provisions of law currently applicable to those purposes.

OPERATING EXPENSES

SEC. 13. Part III of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is amended by adding at the end thereof the following new section:

"Sec. 665. Operating Expenses. There is hereby authorized to be appropriated to the President for the fiscal year 1976 \$205,200,000, and for the fiscal year 1977 such amounts as may be necessary for operating expenses of the agency primarily responsible for administering part I. These amounts may be increased by transfer of other funds made available under this Act, but the total amount available to carry out this section shall not be increased by more than 10 per centum of the amount initially made available."

REIMBURSABLE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

SEC. 14. Section 661 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is amended by striking out "in each of the fiscal years 1975 and 1976" and inserting in lieu thereof "in the fiscal year 1975, \$2,000,000 in the fiscal year 1976, and \$2,000,000 in the fiscal year 1977,".

INDOCHINA ASSISTANCE

SEC. 15. Part V of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and sections 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39 and 40 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1974 are repealed. All determinations, authorizations, regulations, orders, contracts, agreements and other actions issued, undertaken or entered into under authority of any provision of law repealed by this section shall continue in full force and effect until modified, revoked or superseded by appropriate authority.

MIDDLE EAST SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FUND

SEC. 16. Section 903(a) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is amended by inserting a comma and "for the fiscal year 1976 and for the fiscal year 1977, such amounts as may be necessary" immediately following "\$100,000,000".

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FOREIGN MILITARY SALES

SEC. 17. The Foreign Military Sales Act is amended as follows:

(1) In section 31(a), relating to authorization, strike out "\$405,000,000 for the fiscal year 1975" and insert in lieu thereof "such amounts as may be necessary for the fiscal year 1976 and for the fiscal year 1977".

(2) Section 33, relating to regional ceilings, is repealed.

TRANSITION PROVISIONS

SEC. 18. (a) There are authorized to be appropriated for the period July 1, 1976, through September 30, 1976, such sums as may be necessary to conduct programs and activities for which funding was authorized for fiscal year 1976 by this Act in accordance with the authorities applicable to such programs and activities for such fiscal year.

(b) Effective October 1, 1976 --

(1) Subsection 506(a) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 relating to special authority, is amended to read as follows:

"The President may, if he determines it to be in the security interests of the United States, order defense articles from the stocks of the Department of Defense and defense services for the purposes of part II, in addition to military assistance otherwise authorized to be furnished under this chapter, only in such amounts as are provided in appropriations acts for military assistance. The value of such orders under this section in any fiscal year shall not exceed \$150,000,000.";

(2) Subsection 506(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, is repealed, and appropriations to the President of such sums as may be necessary to reimburse the applicable appropriation, fund, or account for orders issued prior to October 1, 1976, under subsection 506(a) of that Act are hereby authorized; and

(3) Subsection 632(d) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, is amended by striking out the words "Except as otherwise provided in section 506,".

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SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS OF THE PROPOSED FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1975

I. INTRODUCTION

The proposed Foreign Assistance Act of 1975 (hereinafter referred to as "the Bill") is an amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (hereinafter referred to as "the Act"). The Bill also amends the Foreign Military Sales Act, as amended (hereinafter referred to as "the FMSA"). The major purpose of the Bill is to provide authorization for appropriations for activities under the Act and the FMSA for fiscal year 1976. In accordance with section 607 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, authorizations for fiscal year 1977 are also included.

The fiscal year 1976 authorization levels requested for programs under part I of the Act are those set forth in the President's budget. Specific levels are not included for programs under part II of the Act or the FMSA because of ongoing reassessments within the Executive Branch with respect to the Middle East and Indochina. Information regarding the requested levels for these programs will be submitted as soon as possible. The principal substantive amendments in part I of the Act are the creation of a new International Disaster Assistance chapter, and a new International Agricultural Research program; and in part II of the Act a new International Military Education and Training chapter is established.

II. PROVISIONS OF THE BILL

Section 2(a). Development Assistance Authorizations.

This subsection, consisting of five paragraphs, provides development assistance authorizations which will permit the Executive Branch to conduct the overall bilateral development assistance programs at budget request levels. The specific authorizations provided are as follows:

(1) This paragraph amends section 103(a) of the Act, which authorizes funds to alleviate starvation, hunger and malnutrition and to provide basic services to poor people by increasing their capacity for self-help by extending the existing authorization through fiscal year 1976 at a level of \$534,500,000 and through fiscal year 1977 at a level of \$635,000,000. The overall development assistance program reflects a continuation of the policy to increase emphasis on the food and nutrition sector which was initiated during fiscal year 1974 and has gained further impetus in the aftermath of the World Food Conference.

(2) This paragraph amends section 104 of the Act, which authorizes funds to reduce population growth, to increase family planning, and to prevent and combat disease by extending the existing authorization through fiscal year 1976 at a level of \$180,500,000 and through

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fiscal year 1977 at a level of \$210,000,000.

(3) This paragraph amends section 105 of the Act which authorizes funds to reduce illiteracy, to extend basic education and to increase manpower training in skills related to development by extending the existing authorization through fiscal year 1976 at a level of \$71,000,000 and through fiscal year 1977 at a level of \$85,000,000.

(4) This paragraph amends section 106 of the Act which authorizes funds to help solve economic and social development problems in fields such as transportation, power, industry, urban development and export development by extending the existing authorization through fiscal year 1976 at a level of \$45,300,000 and through fiscal year 1977 at a level of \$40,000,000.

(5) This paragraph amends section 107 of the Act which authorizes funds to support the general economies of recipient countries or for development programs conducted by private or international organizations by extending the existing authorization through fiscal year 1976 at a level of \$32,000,000 and through fiscal year 1977 at a level of \$40,000,000.

Section 2(b). Repeal of Section 209(c).

This subsection repeals section 209(c), which was added by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1971. Section 209(c) states that the President should reduce bilateral loans under the Act, with the objective that the total amount of such loans not exceed \$100,000,000 not later than June 30, 1975. Amendments to the Act since 1971 and those proposed to the development assistance chapter establish authorization levels that project a loan program in excess of \$100,000,000, as of June 30, 1975.

Section 3. American Schools and Hospitals Abroad.

This section, consisting of two paragraphs, amends section 214 of the Act, which authorizes assistance to institutions located outside the United States that are sponsored or founded by U.S. citizens. The eligible institutions are schools and libraries, and hospital centers that conduct medical education and research programs. The amounts authorized will permit the Executive Branch to conduct this program at budget request levels.

(1) This paragraph amends section 214(c) by extending the dollar authorizations through fiscal years 1976 and 1977 at annual levels of \$9,800,000.

(2) This paragraph amends section 214(d) by extending the foreign currency authorizations through fiscal years 1976 and 1977 at annual levels of \$7,000,000.

Section 4. Housing Guarantees.

This section, consisting of three paragraphs, amends title III of chapter 2 of part I of the Act as follows:

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(1) This paragraph amends section 221 to increase worldwide housing investment guaranty ceiling from \$355,000,000 to \$505,000,000 through fiscal year 1978.

(2) This paragraph amends section 222(c) to increase the Latin America housing investment guaranty ceiling from \$550,000,000 to \$650,000,000 through fiscal year 1978.

(3) This paragraph amends section 223(1) to extend the duration of the housing investment guaranty program through the end of fiscal year 1978.

Section 5. International Agricultural Research.

This section creates a new title XII in chapter 2 of part I of the Act, the purpose of which is to authorize and fund an expanded and sustained international agricultural research program to meet the food needs of the world and to lay an economic base for growth.

New section 296 recognizes the need for increased food production, distribution, storage and marketing in the developing countries, both to prevent hunger and for growth, and the interdependence of the world food economy. It recognizes the great potential for increased production in developing countries.

Particularly, it emphasizes the need for sustained agricultural research and its dissemination by international agricultural centers, universities and research institutions in the United States and elsewhere.

It states the sense of Congress that agricultural research bearing on developing country food production, distribution, storage and marketing, in the network of internationally oriented research institutions, must be substantially and rapidly expanded, on a continued and longer-range basis. It expresses the commitment of the U.S. to the expansion of such research, in order to promote the necessary long-term planning and institutional growth.

Section 297 authorizes the use of any funds authorized to be available for food and nutrition assistance under section 103 of the Act to support programs of agricultural research benefitting developing countries. Funds used under this authority would not be subject to the limitation on research activities in section 211(d) of the Act. The agricultural research program would not be subject to the three-year restriction on project funding contained in section 110(b) of the Act, since in many cases a long-term commitment will be essential to the achievement of research goals. The section indicates that funds should be made available on a long-term basis where to do so would help sustain and build such efforts, or encourage support by others. It is contemplated that in administering the program, AID will use fully its existing authorities, such as section 635(h), permitting commitments of assistance for not more than five years, subject to any future action of the Congress. Where there may be a present need to obligate funds on a long-term basis, e.g., for up to five years, for research costs, it is contemplated that this may be done.

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Section 6. International Organization and Programs.

This section, consisting of two paragraphs, amends section 302 of the Act as follows:

(1) This paragraph extends the authorization for International Organizations and Programs under section 302(a) through fiscal year 1976 at a level of \$189,500,000 and through fiscal year 1977 at a level of \$214,900,000. This authorization will enable the Executive Branch to make its voluntary contributions to international organizations whose programs are focused on the developing world at budget request levels.

(2) This paragraph extends the authorization for the Indus Basin Development grants under section 302(b) at a level of \$27,000,000 to enable the Executive Branch to make voluntary contributions to the Indus Basin Development Fund at the budget request level for fiscal year 1976 and to make an additional contribution of \$4,500,000 in the interim quarter or in fiscal year 1977.

Section 7. Contingency Fund.

This section, consisting of two paragraphs, amends chapter 5 of part I of the Act as follows:

(1) This paragraph changes the chapter heading from "Disaster Relief" to "Contingency Fund." This change will avoid confusion with chapter 9 of the Act as added by section 9 of the Bill.

(2) This paragraph amends section 451(a) of the Act, which authorizes the President to provide assistance authorized by part I for any emergency purpose. This amendment would create a permanent authorization for this purpose. Appropriations, however, would be limited by proviso that at no time could availabilities of funds which had not previously been obligated exceed \$10,000,000. It is the intent of this section to make available sufficient funds to meet emergency requirements other than those arising from disasters. By making the authorization a permanent one, the Executive Branch will have to seek appropriations (but not new authorizing legislation) to replenish the Contingency Fund as it is drawn down.

Quarterly reporting requirements and the prohibition on gifts of existing law would be retained. This authorization is less than the President's budget request of \$30,000,000 but is consistent with it. The President's budget request was finalized prior to the division of the Contingency Fund into the existing Contingency Fund and a separate Famine and Disaster Assistance Fund.

Section 8. International Narcotics Control.

This section amends section 482 of the Act, which authorizes appropriations for assistance to control the illicit production and trafficking in dangerous drugs. The amendment extends the authorization through fiscal

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year 1976 at a level of \$42,500,000 and through fiscal year 1977 at the same level. This authorization will enable the Executive Branch to conduct its international narcotics control program at budget request levels.

Section 9. International Disaster Assistance.

This section consists of six paragraphs which consolidate existing disaster assistance authorities into a single chapter in the Act and authorize funds for disaster assistance purposes.

(1) This paragraph retitles chapter 9 of part I to read "International Disaster Assistance."

(2) This paragraph relocates within the chapter the existing authority for assistance to refugees in Bangladesh.

(3) This paragraph adds sections 491 and 492 to the Act, containing new authority for International Disaster Assistance.

Section 491(a) is a statement of policy that reiterates the humanitarian and political importance which the United States attaches to efforts aimed at alleviating human suffering caused by natural and man-made disasters abroad.

Section 491(b) authorizes the President to furnish assistance to any foreign country or international organization for disaster relief and rehabilitation, which assistance is defined to include assistance relating to disaster preparedness and to the prediction of and contingency planning for natural disasters. The subsection also provides that such assistance may be furnished without regard to the restrictions and prohibitions contained in other provisions of law.

Section 492(a) is a permanent authorization for appropriations to provide assistance authorized by section 491. The appropriations are limited by a proviso that imposes a ceiling of \$20,000,000 on availabilities of funds which have not been obligated previously. It is the intent of this section to permit AID to have sufficient funds available at all times to meet the relief and rehabilitation needs that may arise from disasters which cannot be foreseen. By making the authorization a permanent one, the Executive Branch will have to seek appropriations (but not new authorizing legislation) to replenish the fund as it is drawn down. This new funding mechanism should assure that the U.S. Government will always have funds available to respond to disasters abroad.

Section 492(b) retains the quarterly reports on uses of funds required by present law in the context of section 639. This request is consistent with the President's budget request of \$30 million for the Contingency Fund. As indicated previously, the budget request was prepared prior to the enactment of the famine and disaster authority of section 639.

(4) This paragraph repeals section 639, which is replaced by sections 491 and 492.

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(5) This paragraph rennumbers sections 639A and 639B, which deal with assistance to the drought-stricken nations of Africa, and places them in the new International Disaster Assistance chapter.

(6) This paragraph rennumbers section 452, which deals with assistance to Pakistan and Nicaragua and places it within the new International Disaster Assistance chapter.

Section 10. Military Assistance.

This section, consisting of three paragraphs, amends chapter 2 of part II of the Act, which contains authority for military assistance.

(1) This paragraph amends section 504(a) to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 1976 and 1977 of such amounts as may be necessary for military assistance.

(2) This paragraph extends for fiscal year 1976 the President's special authority under section 506(a) of the Act to draw down Department of Defense stocks and services to meet unforeseen emergency needs for military assistance.

(3) This paragraph amends section 514 of the Act by prohibiting the transfer to or for the use of any foreign country, whether by grant or sale or otherwise, of defense articles in the stocks of the Department of Defense which are set aside, reserved, or in any way earmarked or intended for future use by any foreign country, unless: (1) the transfer is authorized by and subject to all the restrictions of the Act or the FMSA, and (2) the transfer is charged against MAP funds, section 506 drawdown limitations, FMS credit funds, FMS credit and guaranty program ceiling, or other appropriate statutory limitations in effect at the time transferred.

Under the funding restrictions of section 514, as it now reads, the war reserve and the contingency requirements of our own armed forces and of our allies would have to be separately computed, financed by different appropriations, and would seemingly have to be earmarked for separate uses. Under an amended section 514, our armed forces would have full title and control of all such stocks and could utilize any part of such stocks for our own requirements, should circumstances so require, even though acquired in whole or in part based on possible use by allies. Unless so amended, further MAP materiel grants might have to be limited to new procurement, with the delays this often entails, or by removing the equipment from the very hands of our own active armed forces.

Section 11. Security Supporting Assistance.

This section amends section 532 of the Act which authorizes assistance to friendly countries and organizations to support or promote economic or political stability. The amendment authorizes the appropriation

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of such amounts as may be necessary for these purposes for fiscal years 1976 and 1977.

Section 12(a). International Military Education and Training.

This subsection adds to part II of the Act a new chapter 5, establishing a program of international military education and training. Under this new chapter, the education and training of foreign military and related personnel will be conducted in a program separate and distinct from the military assistance. Military assistance, as authorized by chapter 2 of part II of the Act will henceforth be concentrated on materiel assistance. The new chapter consists of three sections, as described below:

General Authority. Section 542 authorizes the President to provide military education on such terms and conditions as he shall determine and describes the kind of activities that can be engaged in under this chapter. These activities include attendance by foreign military personnel and related civilians at U.S. and foreign military facilities for education or training purposes. This includes international military educational facilities such as those under NATO auspices. Also permitted is attendance by such foreign personnel at pertinent courses of instruction at non-military public and private educational and research institutions. In addition, observation and orientation visits by foreign military and related civilian personnel would be provided under this chapter.

Authorization. Section 543 authorizes the appropriation of funds to the President to carry out the purposes of the chapter.

Purposes. Section 544 describes the purposes of the new chapter as encouraging mutually beneficial relationships and increased understanding, while improving the ability of participating foreign countries to manage their resources and thereby to increase their self-reliance. These specific purposes distinguish the new education and training chapter from the more general military assistance program.

Section 12(b). Conforming Amendments to the Foreign Assistance Act.

This subsection amends the Act to eliminate all references to training from chapter 2 of part II, which deals with military assistance, because military education and training programs will no longer be conducted as military assistance. Thus, statutory provisions applicable to "military assistance" would not be applicable to military education and training programs under chapter 5. The subsection also amends part III of the Act, containing general, administrative, and miscellaneous provisions, to clarify the application of those provisions to the new chapter on international military education and training. The specific amendments made by this subsection are:

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(1) This provision adds international military education to the definition of security assistance contained in section 502B(d) of the Act, concerning human rights.

(2) This provision deletes the exclusion of "training only" countries from the thirty-one country limitation on the number of countries that can receive military assistance contained in section 504(a) of the Act.

(3) This provision repeals the restriction on the number of foreign military students to be trained in the United States. According to section 510 of the Act, this number cannot exceed in any fiscal year the number of civilians brought to the United States in the previous fiscal year under the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961.

(4) This provision makes clear that the roles of the Chief of the United States Diplomatic Mission and of the Secretary of State with respect to international military education and training will be the same as they are for military materiel assistance programs. This is achieved by inserting a reference to military assistance in subsections (b) and (c) of section 622 of the Act.

(5) This provision extends the supervisory responsibilities of the Secretary of Defense under section 623(a) (4) of the Act to military-related civilian personnel, consistent with the scope of the new chapter on international military education and training. It also makes the supervisory responsibility of the Secretary of Defense over Department of Defense functions relating to military assistance expressly applicable to military education and training as well.

(6) This provision makes the provisions of section 632 of the Act, concerning reimbursement among agencies, expressly applicable to military education and training in the same manner as that section applies to military materiel assistance.

(7) This provision amends section 636(g) of the Act to ensure that part II funds are available for administrative, extraordinary and operating expenses incurred in furnishing military education and training. It also makes part II funds available for reimbursement of certain expenses incurred in connection with training and orientation visits of military-related civilian personnel, consistent with the scope of the new chapter on international military education and training.

(8) This provision modifies the definition of defense service in section 644(f) of the Act so as to exclude references to training. By this change, the authority to furnish training as military assistance under chapter 2 of part II of the Act will be terminated. In addition, the definition of training is made a separate subsection, subsection 644(n), which will apply to the new chapter on international military education and training. The changes made by this provision are not intended to affect the sale of training as a defense service under the FMSA.

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Section 12(c). Preservation of Existing Actions.

This technical subsection makes clear that the amendments to the Act affected by this section will not call into question the continuing validity of actions taken under authority of any provision amended or repealed by this section, such as regulations and contracts.

Section 12(d). Interim Funding.

This technical subsection authorizes funds heretofore made available for activities which will be funded in the future under the new international military education and training chapter to be obligated and expended either in accordance with the originally applicable authority or under the new authority.

Section 13. Operating Expenses

This section creates a new category of funding designed to cover all AID operating, administrative and personnel expenses. An authorization is provided for fiscal year 1976 at a level of \$205,200,000 and for fiscal year 1977 at whatever level may be necessary. Because the Agency cannot project with absolute precision the travel requirements and operating costs connected with new programs, some funding flexibility is required. This is provided by the authority to augment the new account by no more than 10% with other funds made available under the Foreign Assistance Act.

Section 14. Reimbursable Development Programs.

This section amends section 661 of the Act, to authorize the use of up to \$2,000,000 rather than \$1,000,000 in funds made available under part I to facilitate access to raw materials and stimulate reimbursable aid programs, and to extend the authority through fiscal year 1977.

Section 15. Indochina Assistance.

This section repeals part V of the Act, which authorized funds for the relief and reconstruction of South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, and also repeals sections 34 through 40 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1974, which set forth certain policies and principles regarding aid to Indochina and authorized funds for Indochina during fiscal year 1975 subject to certain allocations and restrictions. These separate and detailed provisions are no longer necessary. The validity of actions taken under the authorities repealed by this section are preserved by a standard saving clause.

Section 16. Middle East Special Requirements Fund.

This section authorizes the appropriation of such amounts as may be necessary for the Middle East Special Requirements Fund for fiscal years 1976 and 1977.

Section 17. Foreign Military Sales Act Amendments.

This section, consisting of two paragraphs, amends the FMSA as follows:

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(1) This paragraph amends section 31 of the FMSA to authorize such amounts as may be necessary to carry out a program in fiscal years 1976 and 1977. An aggregate ceiling on credits and the principal amount of guaranteed loans for these fiscal years is not included, pending the completion of the pending reassessment within the Executive Branch.

(2) This paragraph repeals section 33 of the FMSA, which imposes an aggregate annual ceiling of \$40,000,000 on military assistance, credits and guarantees to African countries. Section 33 has not limited arms purchases by African countries, but has inhibited the United States' ability to be responsive to reasonable requests for credit in connection with such purchases. In the absence of this limitation, arms sales to African countries would continue to be governed by the criteria which are generally applicable under the FMSA, including considerations of foreign policy, arms proliferation, degree of weapons sophistication, and human rights implications.

Section 18. Transition Amendments.

This section responds to requirements created by the enactment of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-344). Title V of that Act changes the commencement of the fiscal year from July 1 to October 1 beginning with FY 1977. The transition period, July 1, 1976, through September 30, 1976, is legally neither a fiscal year nor any fraction of a fiscal year. The section authorizes the appropriation of such sums as may be necessary to carry out the programs and activities, for which other provisions of this Act authorize funding for fiscal year 1976, during this transition period. The section also makes clear that the authorities that will be available to conduct these programs and activities during fiscal year 1976 will also be available during the interim months, including a limited grant program of overseas excess defense articles.

Section 401 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 provides that proposed legislation to authorize new spending authority shall not be in order after the adjournment of the first session of the 94th Congress for consideration by either House of Congress, unless such proposed legislation also provides that such new spending authority is to be effective for any fiscal year only to such extent or in such amounts as are provided in appropriation Acts. Consequently, subsection (b) of this section modifies the President's special drawdown authority under section 506 of the Act, effective with fiscal year 1977, to authorize military assistance appropriations to be made from time to time for purposes of reimbursing the military departments for assistance they provide, in addition to that otherwise authorized, when and if the President determines it to be in the

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security interests of the United States. This authority is not to be used routinely to supplement MAP funds, but is necessary to meet unforeseen, emergency requirements for military assistance which might arise in the course of any fiscal year.

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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 11:58 A.M. EDT

MAY 15, 1975

THURSDAY

MR. NESSEN: We ought to welcome our Iranian friends who are here for the Shah's visit and are joining us at our briefing today.

I bet they don't have anything like this in Persia, do they?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: They do?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: The President went to bed last night at 1 o'clock and slept later than usual this morning. He got up at 7 o'clock. He indicated that he was not sure whether he had forgotten to turn his alarm on or turned it off and rolled over and went back to sleep, but anyway, he slept until 7:00.

I guess the only other event here to sort of tie up the last loose ends is that I was in with the President at 9:35. Brent Scowcroft came in and said, "Mr. President, we are reasonably sure that all the Marines are out," and he indicated that the destroyers would still cruise close in to the shore and broadcast by bullhorns to find any stragglers who might have been inadvertently left behind.

Q Was there no roster?

Q Is there any word that any were left behind?

MR. NESSEN: I talked to Laitin, and there is currently underway on the HOLT, the WILSON and the CORAL SEA a muster, and the muster is expected to be completed sometime around noon, at which point Joe will be able to give you a firmer figure on casualties and so forth.

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After sleeping until 7:00, the President got into the office at 7:45. He met with the usual round of staff people.

At 10:30, a lot of you went out on the lawn and watched the arrival ceremony for their Imperial Majesties and heard the exchange of remarks, and also you saw the meeting begin at 11 o'clock.

After the meeting is over, we will have a posting of information about the meeting, and we will do that before we give a lunch lid.

We have posted the coverage arrangements for tonight's white tie dinner in honor of the Shah and the Empress.

Tomorrow night, at 8 o'clock -- I don't think we have announced this previously -- the President will be honored to attend a reciprocal dinner given by the Shah and the Empress at the Iranian Embassy.

Q This also is for coverage?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Is this the first reciprocal dinner --

MR. NESSEN: -- that he has ever attended.

Q Since becoming President?

MR. NESSEN: On the overseas trips?

Q Here.

MR. NESSEN: We better check the record on that, Fran.

We will post the coverage arrangements on that. What I anticipate would be a protective travel pool and probably a prepositioned pool inside the Iranian Embassy. We will work that out. That is 8 o'clock tomorrow night.

Q Is that black tie also?

Q Are you fixing it so the travel pool can get inside, too, because we don't have that many reporters?

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MR. NESSEN: We will get the arrangements, Helen.

At 12:30, the President is meeting with Senators Mansfield and Scott and Case and Sparkman. This is a meeting to discuss Senate action on repealing the Turkish aid embargo. You probably know that the President asked for this legislation in his speech to Congress on April 10, and Senators Mansfield and Scott are cosponsors of a bill which would authorize the restoration of aid to Turkey.

At 2 o'clock the President will have one of his regular meetings with the Vice President.

At 3:45 the President will go over briefly to the Residence to meet Mrs. Giscard d'Estaing, who is here on a private visit and will be having tea with Mrs. Ford. The others attending that tea are the wife of the Deputy Chief of Protocol, Ambassador Rockwell, and the wife of the French Ambassador in Washington.

Q Is that open for coverage?

MR. NESSEN: No, it is not.

The papers I think which were distributed here just a moment ago show that the President is nominating Christopher U. Sylvester, of Hatton, Indiana, to be a member of the Renegotiation Board. I think you know what that is.

The President also is transmitting to Congress today the annual report of the National Heart and Lung Advisory Council. You have the letter of transmittal, and for those of you who wish full copies of the report, we have that in the Press Office for you.

I don't have anything further. We were going to announce the putting green today, but I thought Peter would take offense at that, so we didn't do it. (Laughter)

Q Peter who? (Laughter)

Q Ron, as he discusses the Turkish aid, is there any concession or any new thing on the part of Turkey that you wish to announce in regard to the narcotics trade?

MR. NESSEN: No, I don't have anything on that.

Q The agreement from them on this?

MR. NESSEN: I have not even heard of this.

Q Is the United States going in to recapture the three detained Americans in Laos?

MR. NESSEN: Just before I came out here, Helen, your wire service reported that the three had been released. That is not confirmed, but that is the report.

Q Has the President shared any further with you his views on the success of the mission?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Does he consider it over, basically?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, with the proviso that this muster is going on board the destroyers and the carrier and the destroyers are continuing close into the shore, broadcasting through a bullhorn for anybody who might have gotten left.

Q Do we have the casualties?

MR. NESSEN: Joe says that that will be produced by the muster.

Q Will the American Naval presence remain in the Gulf of Thailand for a while, first? Secondly, what kind of advisories are we now giving American boats, both commercial and Naval vessels, in that area?

MR. NESSEN: On the ship movements, I just don't have any idea. The Pentagon can help you on that. As far as I know, the mariners warning remains. I don't know that it has been withdrawn. That would be something to ask Defense.

Q Do you have copies available from the President to the Congress on the War Powers Act?

MR. NESSEN: I am told that the President's letters of notification in compliance with the War Powers Act have been released on the Hill, and we are running off copies now and will give them to you after the briefing.

Peter was trying to ask a question.

Q Whatever diplomatic effort was made before the military force was introduced?

MR. NESSEN: I think I told those who stayed here last night that -- or I recalled to them the public statements of the State Department -- on Monday the head of the Chinese liaison office here did go to the State Department at the Department's request and was given a message, which was essentially the same as the public statement; that no reply ever came from the Cambodians, and that the Secretary General of the United Nations was also asked to use his good office and there was no indication that he was able to have any success.

Q When was that done?

Q The Secretary General was only approached yesterday in the morning. Isn't that right at about the time when we were already engaged in military action there, after we had already completed one military operation and hours before we did another one?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have the precise timing of the message to the UN. I did see where a UN official was quoted, after the request for the UN to use its good offices, as saying that the UN had a serious problem with this because they had no way of knowing even who to deal with on the other side, so that did not appear to be a fruitful avenue.

Q It raises the question of how do we know that any of these messages -- whether it was possible to get any of these messages through to Phnom Penh.

MR. NESSEN: We don't, Peter.

Q Did the Chinese say that they would cooperate in trying to send the message and did they say whether they had any reply?

MR. NESSEN: We never got a reply.

Q Will the Marines be going back to Thailand?

MR. NESSEN: I am sorry, I missed the thrust of the first part of it.

Q The first question is, did the Chinese agree to cooperate as a transmitter of this message?

MR. NESSEN: All that happened, Carrol, was that they took the message and then we never heard back from them.

Q Do we know whether the Chinese transmitted the message?

MR. NESSEN: We don't. I said that last night.

Q We did not hear back from the Chinese, as well as the Cambodians?

MR. NESSEN: That is correct.

Somebody asked a question about Marines going back to Thailand. The Marines involved in the operation have gone to the CORAL SEA.

Q Where are the crewmen being taken, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: The crewmen are back on their ship. The ship is under its own power and is going to Singapore.

Q Is the cargo intact, do you know?

Q I thought it was going to Sattahip.

MR. NESSEN: No, that was its destination before this episode, but it is now going towards Singapore.

Q Is the ship leaving Tang Island?

MR. NESSEN: It must be because the two destroyers are still around the island and the freighter is moving toward Singapore.

Q No air surveillance?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have that fact.

Q Any casualties among the crew?

Q Any escort for the MAYAGUEZ?

MR. NESSEN: For the freighter? I don't know of any, but you ought to check the Pentagon.

Q Ron, during this crisis with the Chinese, did the United States issue a 24-hour ultimatum, or did we, at any time, do that?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Were there any casualties among the MAYAGUEZ crew?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Is there any reason for the ship going to Singapore.

MR. NESSEN: It was the ship's choice, I suppose.

Q R&R?

MR. NESSEN: They have an office out there, I think, in Singapore.

Q Is all their cargo still aboard?

MR. NESSEN: It was, but I don't know what their reasons are.

Q Ron, you mentioned yesterday that there was a broadcast of that Presidential message to the Cambodians over a channel which we understood they received.

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Were there continuous messages going all the way through; in other words, when the President said he wanted the ship returned immediately. The previous statement that you put out, were those similarly transmitted by radio directed to the Cambodians?

MR. NESSEN: They were not transmitted by that particular method and I really have gone almost too far in explaining how that message was broadcast. I am just not able to go any further.

Q Can you say that --

Q The message.

MR. NESSEN: The one that was broadcast directly to them? Well, whether they got it through the commercial wire services, which, as you know, was one of our intentions in announcing it here, or whether they got it through that radio frequency method, there is no way of knowing. They do seem to have responded to it.

Q Were there other radio frequency messages passed during the crisis?

MR. NESSEN: Directly by that method?

Q Well, I don't know what the method is, right, so I don't know whether directly by the method.

MR. NESSEN: No other messages were passed by that method.

Q Well, what messages were passed, and how?

MR. NESSEN: As I say, through the Chinese.

Let me consult with my advisers here for a minute.

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I just want to tidy up one bit on the message that, as the State Department has indicated earlier in the week, the Chinese liaison office chief did come over on Monday and received the message.

The State Department has said that and the Congressional leaders yesterday were told that the Chinese took the message and 24 hours later brought it back and there was no acknowledgement of whether it had been or not been transmitted to the Cambodians.

Q Brought it back, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Brought the message back? I don't understand.

MR. NESSEN: I don't understand why you don't understand.

Q He brought the subject back? Is that what you are saying?

MR. NESSEN: Brought the documents, or the piece of paper, back.

Q That indicates they did not send it, doesn't it?

MR. NESSEN: Not necessarily.

Q What does it indicate?

Q Did they say whether they sent it, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I don't really think we can go any further on this. I have told you about all I can tell you.

Q It indicated that the Cambodians refused to accept the message because it contained a threat?

MR. NESSEN: Ted, I don't have the vaguest way of knowing what it signifies.

Q Ron, as long as the President has taken this very decisive action on behalf of one merchant ship, unarmed, can the American Tuna Boat Association count on similar protection as far as 200 miles off the Equadorian coast, or not?

MR. NESSEN: I think you know, Les, that the matter of the tuna boats is being handled through diplomatic means.

Q Ron, it does not seem unreasonable to ask you what the Chinese Ambassador said when he brought the message back.

MR. NESSEN: I think I have probably gone as far -- perhaps further than I should -- and I think this is a matter that was handled by the State Department.

Q Do you consider that we never gave an ultimatum in any way to the Cambodians?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know, you know, what the purpose of talking about ultimatums is. You have the language of the message. You have my saying, in response to a question, that there was no deadline or time limit set.

Q Have you released the text of the note?

MR. NESSEN: I said the note was virtually similar to the public statement that we made on Monday.

Q Ron, aren't you creating a little bit of a mystery here? You said originally, I thought, that we didn't know whether the Chinese had transmitted this and from what you are now saying, I kind of get the impression that we do know, but for whatever reasons you have, you are not able or willing to say.

MR. NESSEN: I don't see how you draw that conclusion, Lou. The facts are as I have laid them out. Whether it was transmitted or whether it was not transmitted, we have no way of knowing.

Q Can we state that it was rejected?

MR. NESSEN: I would not say that if I were you, Helen, because I have not heard anything here to indicate that it was rejected.

Q Doesn't the return of the original message indicate that it would not accept it?

MR. NESSEN: Why would you draw that conclusion?

Q Because they would not want to touch this with a 10-foot pole, and simply bring it back with no explanation. (Laughter)

Q Ron, the Chinese know we are not short of paper. (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: Peter, you know, the facts are laid out there and I am not going to go any further.

Q Ron, what is the assessment in the White House of why the Cambodians turned the crew loose?

MR. NESSEN: You know, all through this, both the seizure of the ship and the release of the ship, obviously we have no way of knowing the motives of the Cambodians. I do think there is a feeling here that -- at least the appearance of it is that -- the minimum force used in this did have some influence on the Cambodian actions.

The sequence of events would certainly point to at least that appearance. The military forces were moving in. Then, there was the broadcast on Phnom Penh Radio which referred to the approach of the HOLT. At the time of the broadcast, the military operation was already underway.

At about 9:15 or so, 9:18 or so, we did send that message to the Cambodians saying that they had made no reference to the release of the crew and that we would stop the military operation when they released the crew, and at 10:23, a boat appeared waving a white flag, the crew was released, and at 11:16, the order was given to cease the operation.

So, the sequence of events would indicate that the --

Q The order was given at 11:16?

MR. NESSEN: 11:16 to cease all offensive operations and to withdraw. So, without possibly being able to read the motives of the Cambodians, the sequence of events would indicate that the military force did influence their decisions.

Q Ron, just to follow up on that, when you spoke about offering to cease military operations, is there any feeling here that the Cambodians released the crewmen because they feared continuing military operations, including bombing of the mainland, which had already begun?

MR. NESSEN: There is no way, truly, of knowing the motives of the Cambodians, Phil, and all we have is the kind of textual evidence of the sequence of events.

Q Ron, do you know how badly we smashed up the Cambodian air force in the attacks on the airfields?

MR. NESSEN: I don't, myself, and I think Joe will be doing some assessments later in the day.

Q What was the time of the bombing of those shore targets?

MR. NESSEN: Beginning at 8:45 p.m.

Q Will this be a modus operandi in the future or are we going to take it on a case-by-case basis?

MR. NESSEN: There would certainly be the hope that there would be no more cases like this.

Q Ron, have we any idea why those Thais went back in their boat? Did their government tell them to?

MR. NESSEN: It is not entirely clear, Sarah.

Q Ron, you were also talking about that boat. Was the boat that they came out in the Thai ship that had been captured earlier and did all the 40 crewmen come out together or did they come out separately, or one group at 10:15 --

MR. NESSEN: No, everybody was on the one boat and the one boat appears to have been -- again, Laitin will have to nail down these details as he gets them nailed down -- the boat appeared to be a Cambodian gunboat.

Q All 45 were aboard that boat?

MR. NESSEN: That is correct.

Q There were released and not recaptured?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q That is what we are trying to get cleared up.

Q He means recaptured by us.

Q Rescued by us.

MR. NESSEN: I see. No, the boat approached with a white flag.

Q Which boat did the Thais take back to Thailand, the gunboat or did they have one of their own?

MR. NESSEN: That is all very vague at the moment.

Q On a boat off the island?

MR. NESSEN: That is also unclear and there has been a garbled message from the MAYAGUEZ as it moves toward Singapore. It just has not been the opportunity to talk to everybody and find out what happened, and when.

Q Is there any indication of these Thais at all, where did they get them?

MR. NESSEN: They were crew members.

Q But they were not listed on the original roster.

MR. NESSEN: That is right.

Q What was the kind of boat that they came out on, whose boat was it?

MR. NESSEN: As I say, from what we know now, from what I got from Laitin, it was a Canadian gunboat.

Q Was there a Cambodian crew aboard?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that, Mort.

Q Ron, you were saying you don't know where the crew was and what they were doing. Is that because you didn't know and if you did know, could you tell us where they were?

MR. NESSEN: No, it was because we didn't know.

Q Do you know now whether the crew was aboard any of those vessels sunk? Did we know at the time where they were?

MR. NESSEN: We didn't know precisely where they were and still don't, for that matter, but the planes took, I think we would have to say, special precautions to ascertain as much as possible that the Americans were not on the boats that were attacked and those precautions seemed to have worked because they were not on the boats attacked.

Now, there was one boat where there was some doubt and the doubt was caused by the fact that there appeared to be more people on the deck than the normal complement of one of those boats and that is the boat that was not attacked and has reached Kompong Som.

Q Did we pick up any of these Cambodians in the water or did they all die, or what?

MR. NESSEN: I have no way of knowing, Helen.

Q Ron, in fact, some of the ships that were sunk, did they not come out to port from the mainland?

MR. NESSEN: I talked to Laitin and it is still confused as to whether they were coming or going or just sailing around.

Q Ron, in view of all the confusion about messages, and what is happening and all, does anyone in the White House have the feeling now in retrospect that the Cambodians may not have gotten the message properly and they could not respond in time as a result?

MR. NESSEN: The original--both the public warning which was issued here on Monday and presumably worked its way through news channels to Phnom Penh, and the message that was given to the Chinese for transmittal--and then 2-1/2 days went by before any military action was taken.

MORE

Q Ron, to pursue the subject just one last time, aside from the messages that we have mentioned that the public statements, the letter through the Chinese and the radio broadcast through this special channel, were any other messages passed by the United States Government to the Cambodians or directed to the Cambodians?

MR. NESSEN: There were those three.

Q Were there any others?

Q Ron, I want to make one final try at this message that was given to the Chinese.

As you know, in diplomatic procedure, when a message is returned, that is because the country to which it is directed has rejected it.

MR. NESSEN: Jim, I don't know that.

Q Do you give this interpretation in the case of this message?

MR. NESSEN: I would not urge you to take that interpretation.

Q Ron, can you find out?

Q What other interpretation could there be?

MR. NESSEN: Jim, as I say, all I can do for you is lay out the facts as we know them.

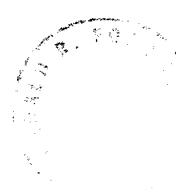
Q Inscrutable?

MR. NESSEN: Dick says they are inscrutable.

Jim, all I can do is lay out to you the facts and tell you that there are areas that we simply don't know the answers.

Q When Mr. Chen brought the message back, whoever he gave it to at the State Department -- Mr. Ingersoll, or whoever it was -- didn't he say something or didn't the State Department official ask him, you know, here are you bringing this back and why are you bringing this back? What happened?

MR. NESSEN: For any details beyond what I have been able to tell you, you need to talk to the State Department.



Q Have you been told by the State Department what was said?

MR. NESSEN: Jim, I thought I said over and over again that there is no way of knowing whether the Chinese transmitted the message or not.

Q You mean when the State Department asked why they were bringing the message back, the Chinese would not answer and gave them no information? What happened over there?

MR. NESSEN: Jim, you need to deal with the State Department on that level of detail.

Q Ron, how closely can you fix the time now precisely that President Ford decided that force had to be used in this incident?

MR. NESSEN: There were, as you know, two orders given, one to prevent Cambodian gunboats from going to or from the island, and that was given on -- I have lost track of days a little bit here -- Tuesday. I think the NSC meeting then was at 10:30.

Q Your announcement said the action commenced at 8:30 p.m. that night.

MR. NESSEN: That night, yes.

Q What about the second one?

MR. NESSEN: The second one, the decision was taken at the NSC meeting yesterday afternoon, which began at 3:30, and ended somewhat after 5:00. The actual order was given at 4:45, to begin military operations for the recovery of the MAYAGUEZ and its crew.

Q Ron, on Tuesday I was under the impression that one of those boats got away.

MR. NESSEN: That is right.

Q And you seem to imply today we let it get away because there might be Americans on it.

MR. NESSEN: That is correct.

Q We let them get away?

MR. NESSEN: That is correct.

Q Ron, a couple other loose ends here.

MR. NESSEN: Let me just nail it down. In all of these cases, in all of the boats, there was, first of all, an effort to warn it not to move and that was by fire that was not directed at the boat, but basically fire across the bow and that was done in that case, too.

Then, the boats which did not take the warning but continued to move were attacked, but in the case of this boat, it was not attacked because of at least a doubt as to whether there were any Americans aboard.

Q Ron, you seem to have prepared now a chronology of this whole event. Could that be distributed?

MR. NESSEN: It is not quite in the form for distribution, but I think we are working on it.

Q Do you plan to put it out when it is complete?

MR. NESSEN: I certainly do.

Q Do you have any idea whether that might be today?

MR. NESSEN: Oh, yes. We have all the numbers. All we have to do is put it in the form.

Q Talking about the numbers, do you have the message center updated yet?

MR. NESSEN: Yes. Let's do this by various categories now.

From the time that we first announced the capture of the MAYAGUEZ -- which was what, Monday afternoon about 1:15, 1:45 or something like that -- from that time until 11:30, 11 o'clock, telegrams and letters --

Q When?

MR. NESSEN: We are checking.

From the time we announced the capture until 11:30 this morning, telegrams and letters in favor of taking strong action -- and I am going to generalize a little bit -- 1,514 telegrams and letters; against taking strong action, 17; and there were two assorted comments. (Laughter)

Q In favor that the President took strong action? Is that the category?

Q Was the Chinese response among those?
(Laughter)

Q They sent it here, Ron, instead of Cambodia.

MR. NESSEN: There was no response received.

Q One was Chinese and one was Cambodia.

MR. NESSEN: Seventeen. I don't understand this breakdown of categories. Now I have it straight.

What I have just given you, 1,514 to 17, was from the capture of the ship until we announced the sinking of the gunboats. Now, that is just that period of time and the favorable telegrams and letters there represented urging to take strong action.

From the time that the gunboats were sunk until 11:30 this morning, letters and telegrams approving the President's action numbered 2,657. Those opposing the President's action numbered 503, and assorted comments, 28.

Q These are in addition to the first ones?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, and I will do the arithmetic for you, if you want me to.

Q That 2,657 is support, right?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, support for the action and 503 against and 28 comments.

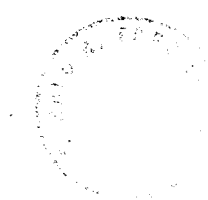
Now, if you add those two periods of time together, you get 4,171 letters and telegrams in favor of --

Q In favor of what?

MR. NESSEN: In the first case, taking strong action and then in the later period support of what he was doing; 520 opposed and 30 comments.

Now, the telephone tally for the entire two and a half day period --

Q That was all mail?



MR. NESSEN: That was mail and telegrams.

Telephone for the entire two and a half day period supporting either strong action or after the action was taken supporting it, 1,978 phone calls in favor; 157 against, apparently no phone calls were just idle comments. (Laughter)

Just to further refine this down to the most recent period, included in that earlier list of telegrams of support and so forth, those that have been received since midnight, which is roughly the period since the episode was concluded -- since midnight, 1,436 telegrams in favor, 170 opposed --

Q This is included --

MR. NESSEN: This is included in what I have already given you, but this is from midnight on.

Q Did you say only telegrams?

MR. NESSEN: Only telegrams. 170 against and 27 comments. Finally, there are about 4,000 telegrams and mailgrams which have not been opened and counted yet.

Q Based on this, Ron, do you think that this is a policy that has helped the President's standing with the American people, this action?

MR. NESSEN: Lou, just frankly, that was never a consideration during any point of this.

Q My question does not say it was.

MR. NESSEN: The sole consideration in considering what action to take at every step was the safe recovery of the ship and the crew.

Q Okay. Accepting that as the premise, could you answer my question?

MR. NESSEN: I would leave that to pundits.

Q Ron, some Members of Congress have complained that the President consulted with them after the fact and they felt he should have consulted with them prior to ordering the Marines into action. What is the White House response to this? Does the White House feel it lived up to the requirements of the War Powers Act, and was any formal protest received from any Members of Congress on this?

MR. NESSEN: No. As far as I can tell, certainly the consensus of Congress is supportive. The President believes that he complied with the statute. I saw a quote somewhere on the wire today from Senator Sparkman, the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, in which he said he was called three times, I believe, and was asked down here once.

I think the quote was, "That is enough consulting for me." (Laughter)

Q Was his opinion ever asked as to the final action?

MR. NESSEN: I am sure all of you know from reading the War Powers Act that there is no requirement to get approval and the President believes he did comply with the law.

I think it is interesting that at the bipartisan leadership meeting yesterday Senator Case, who is a coauthor of the Case-Cooper amendment -- Case-Church, Cooper-Case; in any case, he is the coauthor of one of those (Laughter) -- that he felt that when he was told by the President that he had ordered military action -- it has been a long nighttime -- that he felt that the amendment of which he was the coauthor in no way restricted the President from this kind of military action, it had nothing to do with hampering an action to save American lives and that he supported the President's action.

It is a long way of answering, Dick, that there has been no, as far as I am aware, major complaint about not living up to the War Powers Act. In fact, I saw -- Senator Jackson, I think, turned around today, didn't he, and didn't he say that -- what was it -- high marks for the President?

Q Ron, a couple of loose ends on the ship, here. For one thing, the little boat with the white flag that came bearing the crewmen, did that boat originate from the mainland indicating that all the crewmen had been taken to the mainland?

MR. NESSEN: I talked to Joe about that this morning and that detail is one of those that is not nailed down yet.

Q Okay. The other thing, has it been firmly determined yet whether the seizure of the MAYAGUEZ was on orders from on high or not just an isolated act of Cambodian boats without orders of their superiors?

MR. NESSEN: There is no way, as I say, to interpret the motives of the Cambodians.

Q Did the Marines take prisoners, or hostages, in the operation at all?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know, they didn't.

Q Ron, a number of the Congressmen on the Hill are asking whether the President will come up to the Hill for an in-person report. Is that being considered?

MR. NESSEN: I had not heard of this request.

Q I spoke to several of them this morning.

MR. NESSEN: I had not heard it discussed here. I have not heard of any plans to report.

Q Ron, the personal stories of these crewmen won't be known until they get to Singapore?

MR. NESSEN: Unless a better radio contact can be arranged than this one they had this morning.

Q The military didn't put anybody on board to interview them?

Q Before they were put back on the MAYAGUEZ.

MR. NESSEN: I just don't know that, Jim. It is a Pentagon --

Q The military didn't put anybody on board. They didn't talk to them or get a report or a written report, or anything?

MR. NESSEN: I just don't know, Sarah. Joe Laitin can tell you.

Q Do you know the time it will take them to get to Singapore?

MR. NESSEN: I don't.

Q Ron, was there any diplomatic reaction? Did our allies send any messages of support?

MR. NESSEN: I checked the State Department, and as far as they can determine, there have been no official messages received on this matter from other countries.

Q Ron, in deciding whether to attack onshore targets, was there any consideration in the White House given to doing that as a punitive action as opposed to merely as a preemptive action against the possibility of those bases being used to launch supportive military action?

MR. NESSEN: Not in the least, Mort. Those were real threats. As I think I told some of you early this morning, there were 2,400 Cambodian troops at Kompong Som. There were 17 Cambodian airplanes at one of the air bases. There were amphibious craft capable of taking those troops out to the island which would have been an overwhelmingly larger force than the Marines.

As the President told the Congressional leaders yesterday, he never would have forgiven himself if he had not taken the precaution of making sure that those Cambodian planes, ships and troops on the mainland didn't come and attack the Marines, and it was a decision supported by the Joint Chiefs of Staff as a wise military precaution.

Q Is that a quote?

MR. NESSEN: "I would never forgive myself." That is a quote.

Q Was there ever dissension between the President and Kissinger in connection with what move to be made?

MR. NESSEN: No, not that I am aware of.

Q Ron, where did the planes come from that made the first attack on the island? Did they come from Thailand or across the bay?

MR. NESSEN: The planes that attacked Kompong Som and Ream came from the CORAL SEA. The others I am not sure about.

Q The original attack on Koh Tang.

MR. NESSEN: There was never an aerial attack on Koh Tang.

Q Can you repeat that quote? "I would never forgive myself."

MR. NESSEN: Let me dig it out.

Q Will you also repeat the statistics, the number of planes and troops?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Have you got a number of amphibious ships? Could you give us that?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

2,400 Cambodian troops at Kompong Som; 17 Cambodian airplanes -- and I am not sure whether that is at --

Q Those were destroyers.

Q All of which were ours in the first place; is that right?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that, Jim.

And amphibious craft that were capable of taking the troops to the island.

Q How many?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have a count on that.

The President said at one point that it would be too great a risk not to have this supportive action on the mainland and then he said, "I would never forgive myself," and that is the end of the actual direct quote.

To paraphrase the rest of the sentence, it was if the first wave of Marines had been attacked by 2,400 Cambodians. That is a paraphrase.

Q Ron, we took out the planes, but, of course, what would have gotten those troops out there were the amphibious craft. Did we take those out, also?

MR. NESSEN: Jim, I just don't have a battle assessment. That is something the Pentagon will have to do for you.

Q How many Marines were there on the island?

MR. NESSEN: I only have a very rough number. Really, these precise battle statistics are going to be gone into at great length by Laitin today.

Q Ron, do we know how many, if any, of those gunboats were former U.S. gunboats that they gave them or sold them?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have any knowledge, any way of knowing that, Peter.

Q Do you know about how many Khmer Rouge were on the island?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. The Pentagon is going to give you a battle report that will go on and on.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END

(AT 12:40 P.M. EDT)

MAY 16, 1975

INFORMAL BRIEFING
BY
RON NESSEN

The Briefing Room

11:33 A.M.

MR. NESSEN: Henry will brief at the State Department at 12:15. Also, I am just told that Henry will have casualty figures at 12:15.

Q Cambodians, too?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that.

Q Where did you get that from?

MR. NESSEN: What, the casualty figure?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: From the Pentagon just now.

Q Are they releasing it?

MR. NESSEN: I think the first release -- well, I think they will be leaked between now and 12:15, if I know the Pentagon.

Q You will be finished here in time for us to get over there?

MR. NESSEN: I am not even here.

Q Ron, can you get us some reaction from the President on how he feels about the fact that the casualties almost number as many, or more, as the crew members on the MAYAGUEZ?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, I will.

Q Is the President going to speak --

MR. NESSEN: I don't want to accept the premise of your question, first of all.

Q Do you know what they are?

MR. NESSEN: Fran, I know what they are nailing down right now.

Q What about the Cambodian body count?

Q Ron, do you know what was the total cost of this operation?

MR. NESSEN: I don't. The Pentagon would have that.

Q Ron, were you able to find out for certain whether there were two aircraft attacks on the --

MR. NESSEN: Yes, there were. Actually, there were -- you know, I would --

Q Since you are here, could you announce the Charlotte trip?

MR. NESSEN: Announce what?

Q The Charlotte trip.


MR. NESSEN: Since I'm here.

Q Does that mean you are going to hold the briefing?

MR. NESSEN: No, I am not going to hold a briefing.

Do we have announcements and things to put out?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. We have three small announcements, none of which --



MR. NESSEN: We can post this.

The President is going to make a trip to Charlotte next Tuesday, but we will post that with all the details of what it is. I think that is the best way to do it.

Q Charlotte what?

MR. NESSEN: North Carolina.

Q For a speech?

MR. NESSEN: It is a Bicentennial event.

Q Thursday?

MR. NESSEN: Tuesday.

Q Ron, will the President speak at that Scott reception on Sunday?

MR. NESSEN: What Scott reception?
Oh, in Philadelphia.

Q That is mostly informal?

MR. NESSEN: He will probably make some brief remarks of praise for Senator Scott, yes.

Q Ron, are you seriously going to put out the speech for Sunday morning?

MR. NESSEN: I think if we can get it in time and there is any interest in doing it that way, I would be happy to do it that way.

Let's see what the speck looks like before we decide.

MR. HUSHEN: We will try to get you an advance text, of course.

Q If you put it out for Sunday, a.m., can we get it early enough to get some --

MR. NESSEN: I understand your deadline problems for the Sunday paper.

Q How about the joint statement? Will there be one?

MR. NESSEN: Communique?

Q The Iranian meeting.

Q There will not be any joint communique?

MR. NESSEN: Not as of this time. As of this moment, no.

Q Ron, is the President going to sign the strip mining bill?

MR. NESSEN: There is no decision on that.

Q What is his deadline?

MR. NESSEN: May 20.

Q How about tomorrow? What does he do tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: The schedule is very light tomorrow. I don't have any details right now.

Q Do you think he will golf?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what the weather is going to be.

Q Ten percent chance of rain.

MORE

Q Can you tell us about the Charlotte time?
In the morning; afternoon?

MR. NESSEN: We are going to post them.

Q Has the President called the families of
the casualties, at least the ones that we know are dead?

MR. NESSEN: The Pentagon is pulling together
the names, and the President will send a personal
message, probably in writing, or phone calls to the
families of the casualties.

Q Did you say you had more figures on reaction?

MR. NESSEN: This is the kind of informal air I
like to maintain around here. (Laughter)

Q You give us less news because you don't
stand up at the podium.

Q Can you tell us when the pool is going to
be completed?

MR. NESSEN: I said by July 1.

Q Oh, really. Will it be open to all members
of the family?

MR. NESSEN: Which members are you referring to?

Q At the White House, he said we are all one
big family.

MR. NESSEN: I see.

Q I just was wondering, when do we plunge, Ron,
we family members?

Q What about the figures, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I can post this reaction in writing
so then you can see it.

Q We have other questions.

MR. NESSEN: Is it the 10:30 a.m. reaction?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: Okay. Well, you got it then.

Q Ron, at some point it would be nice to have some reaction on the general reaction as to casualties, how the operation went and so on.

MR. NESSEN: This isn't a briefing, don't worry.

Q Will we get that today?

MR. NESSEN: Obviously, the President regrets that there were any casualties, but certainly there was a risk in the operation. The operation succeeded in accomplishing its objective, which was purely and simply -- and no other objective -- other than to free the crew and the ship. So, it was successful.

Q Are you quoting the President, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I am reflecting his views, Peter, as I try always to do.

Q Nothing else?

MR. NESSEN: Purely and simply, and nothing else other than to free the ship and the crew. So, it succeeded in its objective. There were risks, as there are in any military operation, and he regrets the casualties and extends sympathy to the families and will do so in a more formal sense with either a phone call or a message.

Q Ron, the Post had a little piece this morning saying that a sister ship of the MAYAGUEZ was using the same route. I checked with the company, and they say they are in the area where the advisory was given.

Since it is just advisory and not really compulsory, are we maintaining any vessels in that area that would head off other merchant ships that may be in the area?

MR. NESSEN: Joe tells me that there will be some of the Navy ships remaining in the general area. Where precisely they are and which ones they are, I don't know.

Q That would be part of their plan?

MR. NESSEN: No. I was going to finish by saying I don't know of any plans to in any sense head off --

Q Ron, do you know who has the responsibility of warning merchant vessels in situations like this?

MR. NESSEN: The name of the organization is the Defense Mapping Agency.

Q Have we apologized to Bangkok?

MR. NESSEN: I prefer you address the questions on relations with Thailand to Henry.

Q Ron, the ships that are in the area, are they to respond to --

MR. NESSEN: Phil, you know that is hypothetical. Nothing has happened to anybody else.

Q They are heeding the warning that has been given out by --

MR. NESSEN: By not altering it, by sailing around that is --

Q You don't have your briefing book. Has the President --

MR. NESSEN: I got it all in my head, Walt.

Q Okay. Can you tell me about what our position is on recognizing the new government in Ho Chi Minh City, or Saigon?

MR. NESSEN: Henry will talk about that, if asked.

Q Ron, would you comment on a statement this morning that we were caught somewhat flatfooted by either bum intelligence or lack of intelligence on how many Khmer Rouge there were on the island?

MR. NESSEN: No. I think the Pentagon can probably talk to you about that, if there is any truth in it.

Q Ron, concerning the directive pure and simple -- (Rest of question inaudible on the tape.)

MR. NESSEN: The President very firmly rejects that idea.

Q What idea?

MR. NESSEN: Any idea there is speculation that he has seen printed that there was somehow-- if I am reflecting Neal's question correctly that he is suggesting that some people are writing that this occasion was welcomed, I think, to a certain degree. Well, the President rejects that that was a consideration.

Q Was he advised of the opportunity to bomb the shore installations as an extra bonus of the operation, as some senior official is reported as saying?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know who those senior officials are that you are quoting, but I can tell you that the bombing of the mainland was done for just the reason we said yesterday, which was to prevent the troops and planes that had there from coming and attacking the small force of Marines on the island.

Q Ron, have we established where the crew was taken after they were taken off the MAYAGUEZ?

Q I heard a report -- and I don't know if it is true at all -- that they were taken to the mainland.

MR. NESSEN: There is some indication that they may have spent part of the time on the mainland.

Q Then why would you bomb them?

Q Then why would you bomb them?

MR. NESSEN: I say there are some indications, but it is all very fuzzy and has not been resolved as of this morning, because I checked this morning.

Q Will Henry have that, do you know?

MR. NESSEN: I suspect that he will be able to --

Q Why did the military operations call for an attack on Koh Tang Island by the Marines if there was evidence that the crew had been taken to the mainland?

MR. NESSEN: I said yesterday that there was no clear idea where the crew was at that point.

Q If the pilot had told you that he had seen some people pacing on the deck of the ship --

MR. NESSEN: No, what I said was there were enough people on deck so that it appeared that the ship had more people on board than it normally would carry as a crew, so some doubt was raised as to who they were, and for that reason the ship was not sunk.

Q But you had-not reached the possibility that the crew had been taken off the ship?

MR. NESSEN: That is correct. There was some suggestion that some of the crew might have been on that boat.

Q Did the President order this operation in the calculation that the crew was on Koh Tang? Was that his assumption?

MR. NESSEN: It just was not known at that point.

Q But to assault Koh Tang with any idea that the crew was not there would be fruitless, would it not?

MR. NESSEN: You know, there was not any solid evidence that they were on the ship, on the island or on the mainland. I mean, you know, it is so silly to ask these questions when the Secretary of State and the President's National Security Advisor is going to go on in 35 minutes.

Q There are many critical questions and we are sitting here -- we have covered the story now for four days. We are very much involved. You are seeing the President three and four times a day. Does he think they are very valid?

MR. NESSEN: I just said that --

Q Ron, would you answer that question, then?

MR. NESSEN: I thought I answered it, Mort, that there was not solid evidence whether they were on the ship, on the island or on the mainland.

Q But you did have, as I recall, the scenario, you had indications that they had at least been on the island and might still be there; is that accurate?

MR. NESSEN: They might have been on the island, they might have been on the ship. There was a chance that some may have been on this ship that went to the mainland.

Q Ron, was any consideration given -- after the President received the report of the radio announcement and broadcast at 8:22 or 8:15 -- was there any consideration given to delaying the landing of Marines?

MR. NESSEN: The Marines were on the beach and under fire at about 7:17, a full hour before the translation arrived here.

Q According to your chronology, they took control of the MAYAGUEZ at 8:45.

MR. NESSEN: Yes, the HOLT pulled alongside at 8:45.

Q Did the President ever consider delaying the attack on Kompong Som?

MR. NESSEN: No, because the Marines were on the beach and under fire and there was the possibility that those planes and troops there would have come out and attacked them.

Q It would have taken some time to get the troops out.

MR. NESSEN: That was the purpose of the raid and the purpose remained.

Q Ron, was there any consideration to stopping any part of the activity that had not yet commenced, like the attack on the air base, once the radio message had been received?

MR. NESSEN: Received in its summarized translated form. Well, as you know, our response to the message was that we will stop instantly, as soon as you release the crew. The word came at 11:15 that the crew had been released and at 11:16, the order went out to stop the operation.

Q Was there any consideration before then? For example, the attack on the air base?

MR. NESSEN: I just answered over here that the reason for that attack remained regardless of what the message said.

Q Ron, did nobody -- not Marines, Navy or --

MR. NESSEN: No, Adam. Seriously, I note an expression that you are not satisfied with the answer.

Q Was there any consideration? You are telling me they decided not to -- you are saying it could not be done.

MR. NESSEN: I am saying that the purpose for the attack on the mainland remained after the message came and therefore, the attack was made.

Q No, that does not answer my question.

MR. NESSEN: Well, okay.

Q My question is, did they consider calling it off in light of the radio broadcast?

MR. NESSEN: The raid at 10:57?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: The purpose for the raid remained despite the radio message.

Q Ron, did the Navy, Marines or any other U.S. personnel -- more than one or just one, anybody -- go aboard the freighter when they started out with the guys to debrief them on their way to wherever they are going? I can't believe anybody is not on there giving them some information.

MR. NESSEN: If they are, certainly it has not gotten back here to clear up some of these questions because they are not cleared up at the Pentagon.

Q Ron, I have a related question, if I may. It is a slightly different subject but related.

MR. NESSEN: How did I get into a briefing? How did I get into a briefing?

I must say, I think this is the silliest exercise we have done in a long time.

Q Ron, if I could ask this, please?

MR. NESSEN: It is silly. I mean, the President's National Security Adviser --

MORE

Q Ron, just one question, and it has to do with this morning's Post, the following two-sentence statement: "As of this writing, the President has been too concerned with the logistics of zapping Cambodia to issue the statement about Human Kindness Day, at which more than 300 whites were beaten, mugged or robbed by youthful black hooligans outside Jerry Ford's White House back door. Welcome, America, to Washington and the Bicentennial, and be sure to bring your kids."

That is the Washington Post.

MR. NESSEN: The Washington Post wrote that?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: In its own name?

Q Yes.

Concerning such Federally funded events as Human Kindness Day, will the White House continue saying nothing or will it either guarantee Bicentennial visitors protection or else warn them to stay home?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have an answer for you.

Q Ron, could you get an answer to this?

MR. NESSEN: I doubt it.

Q Okay.

Q Ron, did the President order the military attacks with any confidence that the attacks would not lead the Cambodians to kill the crew?

MR. NESSEN: I know Henry can answer all these questions.

Q Could you try?

MR. NESSEN: As I say, there are risks in every military operation, but the PUEBLO episode was in people's minds here during the planning for this, and I think you are all familiar with the scenario of the PUEBLO case. It was felt that too much of a delay could have led to the kind of solution that occurred in the PUEBLO case.

Q Which was?

MR. NESSEN: That the people would be out of your reach if you waited too long.

Q That does not answer the question. What about the possibility that the men might have been killed by the Cambodians?

MR. NESSEN: There was also an impression in people's minds that the new Cambodian authorities' actions toward their own people since the takeover led people here to feel that if you waited too long, that the lives of the crew might be endangered, so it was considered better to -- there had been no indication that the crew had been harmed and it was felt that it would be better to go and get them after giving two and a half days for diplomatic efforts to succeed.

Q What actions have the Cambodians reported?

MR. NESSEN: Oh, the reports of executions and the evacuation of their capital and general attitude toward their people.

Q Did public opinion enter into or Congressional opinion enter into the President's decision in any way?

MR. NESSEN: The President's decision was based 100 percent and entirely on a single consideration, and that was getting the crew back and the ship back.

Q Was there any order issued to use minimal force to obtain that objective?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q The answer is yes?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Will this extend to other ships, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: Call Henry and tell him he does not need to brief. I have handled everything.

Q Ron, is this a policy that will extend to other ships in that area, or what?

MR. NESSEN: Which policy?

Q Suppose a sister ship is seized?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think I will deal with hypotheticals.

Q What is the policy of the Government, Ron? Is that a hypothetical that they will defend ships from being seized on the high seas or not?

MR. NESSEN: I just think it is hypothetical. No other ship has been seized, Les.

Q Ron, don't you feel there should have been more warning to other vessels in view of the fact that those other three ships were shot at or detained?

MR. NESSEN: The President has requested a report on the sequence of events in the past -- I guess it must add up to about two weeks now -- in terms of other incidents in the area and reports of those incidents and the distribution of those reports, and so forth?

Q Might we expect him to go public this week at some point?

MR. NESSEN: I think we have to wait for the information to be pulled together.

Q Where?

MR. NESSEN: From the various authorities who are involved.

Q What does this report cover?

MR. NESSEN: The previous two weeks and these other episodes involving the Korean ship and the Panamanian ship.

Q Can we assume this was because of his happiness over the lack of communication?

MR. NESSEN: I would not assume that. I think he just wants to know the facts of the case.

Q Do you know who in the Government is responsible for notifying mariners that there might be a danger there?

MR. NESSEN: I know that the warning is issued by this organization at the Defense Department.

Q The Army Map Service?

MR. NESSEN: I think it is called the Defense Mapping Agency.

Q No.

MR. NESSEN: We are on our third go-around now. Maybe I can just read the transcript.

Q You mean the warning for vessels to stay away was issued by the Army Map Service.

MR. NESSEN: Defense Mapping Agency.

Q And they warned people to stay away?

MR. NESSEN: That is right.

Q Who receives these reports? That is Commander-in-Chief, Pacific?

MR. NESSEN: Sarah, I think the Pentagon needs to give you that kind of detail. I just don't have it here.

Q That is what they gave me.

MR. NESSEN: Okay. Well, then, why do you ask?

Q Because it does not seem to be the same as Defense Mapping Service.

Q Thank you.

MR. NESSEN: You don't have to say "thank you," because we are not having a briefing today, Helen.

I came in to talk about resumption of aid to Turkey.

Q Ron, since the record is being made now --

Q Did anything come out or will that come out of the Kissinger briefing?

MR. NESSEN: I think he can be asked about that. It is up to Congress.

Q Would you take a question on another subject?

MR. NESSEN: Sure.

Q The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is sort of out of business right now simply because of the failure to fill a vacancy on there.

MR. NESSEN: I thought we just filled that.

Q Since last August, there was been a vacant seat on that Commission and then one man resigned and that left three, and then one of the three had a heart attack the other day, so that leaves two Commissioners.

MR. NESSEN: Didn't we just fill one?

Q You filled one but there was another one vacant that you have not filled since last August.

Q What is that? You mean he has a report on this already?

MR. NESSEN: You are kidding.

Q What is it?

MR. NESSEN: Sarah asked who is responsible for issuing warnings to international mariners.

The organization's name is the Defense Mapping Agency Hydrographic Center.

Q Usual spelling.

Q Customary or banal spelling of hydrographic.

MR. NESSEN: Why are you all here when the Secretary of State is having a briefing?

That is what I would like to know. I am a masochist.

Q If it is not a briefing, what is that nice reporter doing?

MR. NESSEN: I am held responsible for everything I say, some things I don't say.

Q Ron, are you any clearer now on what was going on when those gunboats were sunk? Yesterday you told us that it was not clear whether they were coming to the area.

MR. NESSEN: It is not clear to me, but it may be clear to the Pentagon.

Q This was the nicest non-briefing this week.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END

(AT 11:55 A.M. EDT)

