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4. Is the President concerned about reports of a deteriorating situation in Cambodia? Has the President made a decision yet on an Indochina supplemental assistance request? Has he decided on a dollar amount yet?

1/13/75
Guidance: We are watching the developments in Cambodia carefully and we are concerned about the high levels of fighting there. With regard to a supplemental request, the President is still contemplating a supplemental and he is giving the matter intensive consideration. No decision has yet been made on the amount of such a supplemental request.

Can go up \$300 million under the existing authorization, but no specific figures. Not looked in to that figure.

2. Can you explain reports that U.S. Air Force planes are flying ammunition into Cambodia?

GUIDANCE: The Pentagon has explained (and can give you further details on this subject) that military supplies are being flown into Vietnam by a U.S. civilian contractor using U.S. civilian pilots and U.S. Air Force planes leased by the contractor.

1/15/75

- 1/24/75
2. Can you confirm reports that the President will ask for ~~\$220 million additional assistance for Cambodia~~? When will he make this request. What is the President's current view of the situation in Cambodia and is the U.S. planning an emergency airlift to Phnom Penh?

Guidance: The President has said that he will be asking for additional assistance to Cambodia as well as Vietnam in light of the increased Communist offensive there. However, we are not prepared at this time to announce specific figures for Cambodia.

This year \$200 million (subvention)

We are of course concerned about the increased level of military action in Cambodia and we are watching the situation there carefully. I do not want to speculate from here on how the Administration might respond to insure continued flow of supplies to Cambodia. (The DOD can give you whatever details are available on our current supply effort to Cambodia.)

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1. Do you have any comment on the New York Times report this morning that the President's aid request for Cambodia may actually exceed the real needs of Cambodia?

17/75

Guidance: The thrust of that story is a totally inaccurate misrepresentation of the facts. The \$220 million requested by the President is a realistic amount to meet the minimum needs of the Cambodian Government. The State Department will be prepared this morning to provide you substantial details refuting this story.

FYI: The President's additional request for Cambodian aid will result in a total aid this year exceeding the Administration's request for \$362 million due to increased level of fighting in Cambodia. End FYI.

ITEMS FOR RESPONSE TO QUERY:

1. Can you confirm reports the Pentagon is ~~doubling its airlift to Cambodia?~~ Will the Air Force become directly involved again in Cambodia? Wouldn't this be against Congressional restrictions?

2/12/75

GUIDANCE: The Pentagon issued an announcement yesterday that it was expanding its civilian contracts to increase the airlift into Cambodia, due to the closing of the Mekong by the Communists and the increased levels of fighting in Cambodia. I would refer

questions on this matter to the Pentagon, but I take this opportunity to point out that the President remains very concerned about the serious military situation in Cambodia and the threat posed by increased Cambodian military actions at a time when the capability of the Cambodian Army is limited by supply restrictions. This emphasizes the urgency of prompt action on the President's request to Congress for an additional \$222 Million supplemental military assistance. The President again urges Congress to act as soon as possible on this request.

FYI ONLY: The Pentagon will say, if asked, that there are no plans at this time to use direct U. S. airlifts by the Air Force into Cambodia, but hopefully direct airlifts would not be prohibited by Congressional restrictions. END FYI.

3. ~~What is the President's reaction to Congressional action regarding additional funding for Cambodia?~~

2/13/75
GUIDANCE: The President is hopeful that the House and Senate will take expedient action to provide this urgently needed assistance. He has stated repeatedly his willingness to work with the Congress toward this end. We cannot comment further on the current legislative process regarding the funding.

FYI ONLY: It is reported that a new Prime Minister, Seni Premot, has been elected in Thailand and has called for the immediate removal of American troops there. If asked, repeat that we have consulted regularly with the Thai government on the presence of our forces and when the new government is in place, we assume consultations will continue. END FYI:

5. Can you confirm or deny the report that the Cambodian government has decreed that all rice brought into Phnom Penh by the American airlift will be withheld from civilians and used only by the military?

GUIDANCE: The American Embassy in Phnom Penh has issued a press release calling this story "completely erroneous". The Embassy ~~statement~~^{ent} is supported with facts and figures on the nature of the airlift and the distribution of the rice. I suggest you check with the State Department for specific details in the press release.

3/3/75

2. What is the Administration's reaction to Marshal Lon Nol's offer to step down if that will bring peace to Cambodia?

GUIDANCE: We ^{of course} ~~have no preference and~~ take no position concerning the internal politics of Cambodia so long as the Cambodians themselves ~~have a voice in deciding~~ how they shall be governed. We have stated ^{repeatedly} ~~before~~ that we are interested in resolving the situation in Cambodia through negotiation, rather than through armed conflict.

3/3/75

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6. ~~What is the Administration's reaction to Marshal Lon Nol's offer to step down if that will bring peace to Cambodia?~~

3/4/75

GUIDANCE: We have stated before that we are interested in resolving the situation in Cambodia through negotiation, rather than through armed conflict. We, of course, take no position concerning the internal politics of Cambodia so long as the Cambodians themselves decide how they should be governed.

See background.

1. ~~Does the President agree that military aid for Cambodia will stand a better chance of approval if it goes through a regular authorization process instead of the shortcut proposed by Passman?~~
Is the President concerned about delay on Congressional action on this bill?

GUIDANCE: The President continues to feel that Congress should act on his supplemental request as a matter of great urgency. It is not for us to comment on the legislative process followed by Congress but the President feels very strongly that action should be taken as soon as possible to provide assistance to Cambodia.

3/5/75

3/5/75

5. FYI ONLY: If asked about the attack on the American commercial plan taking part in the U. S. airlift of ammunition, rice and fuel to Phnom Penh, you may say that the plane arrived safely at its return destination in Thailand. For more details, refer to the Pentagon. END FYI.

2. Yesterday, Ambassador Habib implied that possibilities for negotiation in Cambodia in 1973 faded away because Congress legislated a cessation to U. S. air support to Cambodian forces in August of that year. At that time President Ford was a member of Congress. What is his reaction to Habib's assertion?

GUIDANCE: The President agrees with Ambassador Habib's assessment. The fundamental point of Habib's briefing, however, was to illustrate that the U. S. has in the past and continues to seek a diplomatic end to fighting in Cambodia through negotiations.

3/6/75

3. The situation in Cambodia seems to be deteriorating by the hour. Isn't it time to evacuate Americans from Phnom Penh?

GUIDANCE: Ambassador Dean and others with authority on the situation maintain that events do not warrant an evacuation at this time. They feel that they can be most useful if they continue to look for diplomatic alternatives to the conflict and to report on the situation as events unfold.

3/6/75

FYI ONLY: Evacuation would probably involve approximately 700 people.

1. Can you shed any light on the rationale by which we provide military and economic assistance to Cambodia when we hear frequent reports that our food and ammunition never gets to the people who need it the most?

GUIDANCE: Although we do provide for checks on the distribution of our aid to Cambodia and other countries, we do not have the personnel or the capability to monitor completely the bureaucratic processes of another nation regarding the distribution of assistance. We try to provide the levels and types of goods and services which will be useful, and we have to rely in some measure on the judgment of the government receiving our assistance.

3/6/75

8. ~~An article in the New York Times yesterday stated that Ambassador Dean suggested initiating contacts with the Khmer Rouge over a year ago but his suggestion was turned down by Secretary Kissinger. Can you comment on this allegation.~~

3/10/75

Guidance: Assistant Secretary Habib had a briefing last week on the history of our negotiating efforts in Cambodia during which a comprehensive list of our negotiating attempts was made public. I have nothing to add to his remarks.

FYI: The reported object of the negotiating effort, Khieu Samphan was apparently touring third world countries and it was suggested

supposedly that his path might cross with a senior American official. Whether the plan was unfeasible or was even formulated is unknown at this time. End FYI.

7. ~~Senator Humphrey said yesterday during a televised interview that he was shown cables between Washington and Phnom Penh. Can you elaborate on the nature and circumstances of his briefing?~~

Guidance: Senator Humphrey was briefed at the Department of State about the situation in Cambodia. Part of that briefing included a review of a number of cables but you would have to check with the State Department for the particulars.

3/10/75

FYI: Senator Humphrey was briefed by Assistant Secretary Habib. You should not agree to produce the cables or summaries of their contents. End FYI.

1. Is the President still committed to the figure of \$222 million as the level of assistance needed to ensure Cambodia's survival?

3/10/75

What's needed is what is adequate to get

Even the current approach - We want to work with Congress and speed is important.

~~Guidance: The President believes that the level of assistance he has requested is the minimum required to help Cambodia to survive. He has stated repeatedly that he is willing to work with the Congress in determining how and by what means this assistance is secured.~~

2. Reports from Cambodia are increasingly pessimistic about the ability of that country to survive even if we provide the full \$222 million. Aren't we just prolonging expectations and prolonging the conflict?

3/10/75

Thomson's remarks

^{if} ^{give}
Guidance: The assistance the President has requested will ~~enable~~ the ~~Cambodians~~ to hold their own into the rainy season thus persuading the Khmer Rouge of the seriousness of our commitment and the futility of their pursurance of the conflict, then negotiations may be possible. Therefore, the assistance may actually facilitate a peaceful resolution of the conflict and avoid a bloodbath that could ensue should the Khmer Rouge overrun the government.

5. The President originally requested \$222 million for Cambodia and is now encouraged at the prospect of getting \$125 million. Why did he ask for the \$222 million originally, and will the \$125 million be sufficient to assist the Cambodians?

GUIDANCE: The President has also stated that the Cambodians need assistance immediately because of the gravity of the situation. He is hopeful that the \$125 million will help the Cambodians through the current crisis. The President's original request for \$222 million was his assessment of the Cambodian's needs to hold their own militarily through the dry season.

3/12/75
P.Y.I. on # 5

The President is pleased with the Senate's action and without prejudging the amount hopes that the House will also ~~take~~ take expedient action. (Try to stay away from original assessment and convey Pres. encouragement by movement in the right direction.)

3/12/75 1. Is the President encouraged by the Senate subcommittee vote approving \$125 million in additional aid to Cambodia?

The important thing is that # is now moving in Congress. Time is critical

GUIDANCE: The President is pleased with the *fact that the* subcommittee ~~decision~~ and hopeful that the full House and Senate will take action expediently to provide Cambodia the assistance it so urgently needs. The President will continue to work with the Congress toward this end.

2. What is the Administration doing now to foster negotiations in Cambodia, and with whom would we negotiate?

3/12/75 GUIDANCE: The State Department has made the record our attempts at negotiation clear. Because the opposing side feels it has a chance for a military victory it has continually rebuffed our attempts to initiate negotiations. That is a major reason why aid is so urgently needed. For anything further on this subject, I would refer you to the Department of State.

1. What is the Administration doing now to foster negotiations in Cambodia and with whom would we negotiate?

GUIDANCE: The State Department has made the record of our attempts at negotiations very clear and the President spelled out our intentions and our efforts in his press conference last week. I have nothing further to add to their comments at this time.

3/13/75

FYI ONLY: If you are pressed, suggest that you quote from Habib's briefing of March 5. He is addressing the question of why the U. S. will not reveal the parties in the negotiations and why the outline of negotiation attempts was made public. Habib says:

"I said earlier that it's the hope of the United States -- and I believe that it is the hope, and I know that it is the hope, of the Khmer government -- that in some way, at some time, it will be possible to achieve that kind of negotiated settlement we've as assiduously sought.

"Now, in order to do that, one does not wish to close out channels. One does not wish to enter into such details at this moment that would in any way detract from the possibility in the future that should be able to achieve your objective.

"The Administration is seeking the support of Congress for its actions. It's seeking the support of the American people for its actions. The Administration also has some responsibility to account for its actions -- to you and to the public. And it was decided that the best way to do it was by putting out this outline.

"It was equally decided that it was not the best way, in terms of the basic objectives that we have in mind -- the peaceful settlement -- to specify or to give undue detail, which could -- in one way or another -- detract from any further effort." END FYI.

1. What does the President intend to do now in view of the action taken on the Hill yesterday regarding Cambodian aid?

GUIDANCE: The President is, of course, very disappointed by this turn of events, but he hopes at the time for decision by the full House and Senate, the assistance that Cambodia so urgently needs will be approved. He will continue to work with the Congress toward this end.

3/14/75

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 18, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: RON NESSEN

FROM: MARGARET VANDERHYE

SUBJECT: Morning Press Items

ITEMS FOR RESPONSE TO QUERY:

1. There are reports that the U.S. is getting ready to evacuate our Embassy from Phnom Penh. The Embassy staff are reportedly burning classified documents and are shipping out their personal belongings. Does that mean that we have given up on the Cambodian Government and that any further aid would no longer change the situation?

GUIDANCE: I have seen reports that some precautionary measures have been taken. Such procedures are routine under such circumstances. It in no way denotes any change in U.S. support for the efforts of the Cambodians to defend themselves, or in our estimate of their ability to continue to do so, provided the U.S. does not terminate its essential military assistance.

2. The latest press reports indicate a step-up in the level of fighting in Vietnam. Is this the offensive that a lot of people, including the Administration, have predicted for next year rather than this year?

GUIDANCE: We are watching the increase in the level of fighting closely and with considerable concern. This latest stepped up attack by the North Vietnamese main forces constitutes a major violation of the Paris Agreements.

These recent events underscore the need for urgent Congressional action on the request for an additional \$300 million in assistance to South Vietnam. I will continue to work with the Congress to ensure that the assistance South Vietnam needs to repel aggression and secure its survival is provided.

STARVATION IN CAMBODIA

Q. There are press reports of potential large scale starvation in Cambodia. Can you confirm this, and will the U.S. do anything to help?

A. We have no precise information on the present food situation in Cambodia. It is, therefore, difficult to say what is happening or to predict what will happen. The Cambodians have not asked us for assistance, and as you know, we do not have diplomatic relations with them.

KISSINGER AND THE B-52's

Q. A Parade Magazine article of Sunday, June 22, asserts that Secretary Kissinger was in favor of carpet bombing of Cambodia during the Mayaguez incident, but that the President decided against so extreme an action. Can you comment on the veracity of the report?

A. The State Department denied the charges made in the story on Friday, June 20. I would have nothing further to add to their statement. As you know, we never discuss what transpires in NSC meetings, including what decisions were reached or how they were formulated.

July 9, 1975

REPORTS OF CAMBODIANS ON SITUATION WITHIN

Q. Can you confirm the reports of the Cambodians now in Thailand who state that thousands have died or have been killed in Cambodia since the new government took over in April? Are U. S. officials talking to the Cambodians to determine whether, in fact, these reports are true?

A. We have seen and heard the same reports, but of course, we have no way of confirming them directly. As you know, we have had no communication with Cambodia since its self-imposed isolation several months ago. ~~While the Cambodians now in Thailand have been open and willing to talk about events in Cambodia, we cannot confirm their reports directly, though we have no reason to dispute them.~~

3. The question of Cambodian representation in the United Nations is due to be discussed this week. Do you have any comment on the outcome of this vote?

Guidance: We would expect that the legitimate government in Phnom Penh will ~~retain~~ its rightful seat in the United Nations.

ONLY retain
FYI: There is a move by Communist and Third World countries to unseat the Lon Nol government in favor of a Sihanouk government representation in the United Nations. We want to avoid saying anything that might look like we anticipate the Lon Nol government being unseated. End FYI.

4. FYI ONLY: The airlift of rice and supplies to Phnom Penh has resumed.

5. There are reports that the President may be willing to compromise with the Congress on Cambodian aid by lifting the \$200 million ceiling on military aid and permitting the Pentagon to shift \$50-\$75 million in existing funds into Cambodian assistance.

GUIDANCE: The President continues to believe that ~~300~~ ^{SUFFICIENT} million is the amount required to ensure Cambodia the means ^{to} ~~to defend itself.~~ He has stated repeatedly that he is willing to work with the Congress on the means by which this assistance is secured.

AID 0
SUFFICIENT
CAN BE

FINDING THE MOST EXPEDITIOUS

2-2-35

2. Yesterday, Ambassador Habib implied that possibilities for negotiation in Cambodia in 1973 faded away because Congress legislated a cessation to U. S. air support to Cambodian forces in August of that year. At that time President Ford was a member of Congress. What is his reaction to Habib's assertion?

GUIDANCE: ~~The President agrees with Ambassador Habib's assessment~~ The fundamental point of Habib's briefing, however, was to illustrate that the U. S. has in the past and continues to seek a diplomatic end to fighting in Cambodia through negotiations.

IF PUSHED - HABIB'S STATEMENT REFLECTS PRES' VIEW.

3. The situation in Cambodia seems to be deteriorating by the hour. Isn't it time to evacuate Americans from Phnom Penh?

We have no information to suggest that
GUIDANCE: ~~Ambassador Dean and others with authority~~ *feel* on the situation maintain that events do not warrant an evacuation at this time. They feel that they can be most useful if they continue to look for diplomatic alternatives to the conflict and to report on the situation as events unfold.

FYI ONLY: Evacuation would probably involve approximately 700 people.

4. Does the presence of a U. S. helicopter carrier in the Gulf of Thailand indicate that Americans will be evacuated shortly from Phnom Penh?

GUIDANCE: The U. S. fleet is always prepared for a number of contingencies which includes evacuation of Americans under certain circumstances.

FYI ONLY: We do not discuss operational movements from the White House. END FYI.

5. FYI ONLY: If asked about the attack on the American commercial plane taking part in the U. S. airlift of ammunition, rice and fuel to Phnom Penh, you may say that the plane arrived safely at its return destination in Thailand. For more details, refer to the Pentagon. END FYI.

2. What is the Administration's reaction to Marshal Lon Nol's offer to step down if that will bring peace to Cambodia?

GUIDANCE: We ~~have no preference and~~ ^{of course} take no position concerning the internal politics of Cambodia so long as the Cambodians themselves ~~have a voice in~~ deciding how they shall be governed. We have stated before that we are interested in resolving the situation in Cambodia through negotiation, rather than through armed conflict.

7. Is the President concerned about the deteriorating situation in Cambodia

Guidance: The President is following closely reports on the situation in Cambodia and he remains concerned about the situation there. He hopes that the Congress will act urgently on his request for additional military assistance.

I would refer you to the Department of Defense for any details on the current status of the emergency supply airlift.

Question: You ordered troops equipped for combat and helicopters to go into Phnom Penh for the purpose of evacuating American citizens and Cambodians without express authorization from Congress. Why then are you seeking from Congress clarification of your authority to order a similar use of troops and aircraft for evacuation of Americans and South Vietnamese from Saigon?

Answer: The situation in Phnom Penh created an emergency seriously threatening the lives of our citizens there, but the number of American citizens and possible Cambodians involved was relatively small and necessitated only a single and quick introduction of armed troops and helicopters into the area. I was advised that it was within my executive authority to act in such an emergency for the protection of American lives. This was done in consultation with Members of Congress and was followed by a full report of the operation to the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

The limited number of Cambodians evacuated at the same time along with Americans and their dependents, as well as some third party Nationals, required no additional armed troops and no more than one entry into the territory of Cambodia. By contrast the numbers involved in South Vietnam were much larger and may require operations of a much greater magnitude and number.

Even though my authority in this regard may exist, I would prefer if possible to get clarification from the Congress on a matter of this significance.

SUBJECT: Administration Attitude Regarding Cambodian Aid Bill
Compromise

QUESTION: Is the Administration now ready to accept a compromise bill on Cambodia aid, which includes a cut-off date of June 30?

ANSWER: No. The Administration's view has not changed with reference to the issue of a cut-off provision of June 30. There are many reasons for opposing the cutoff. It's most obvious effect -- to remove any incentive for the enemy to negotiate -- should be clear to everyone. Nevertheless, I feel very strongly that the whole Congress should be permitted to consider the vital issue of aid to Cambodia. Thus, I believe that the bill ought to be permitted to come to the floor of the House for a vote. Therefore, I feel it would be most helpful if the Committee would favorably report the bill -- including the Hamilton-Dupont Amendment if necessary -- in order to provide an opportunity for both debate and amendment on the floor.

QUESTION: So you are in effect overruling Mr. Ingersoll's opposition to the Hamilton-Dupont Amendment expressed last Thursday before the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

ANSWER: That is not the case. As I have already indicated, the Administration continues to oppose a cut-off provision. When Mr. Ingersoll took that position last Thursday, it was at the Committee's initiative that the bill was voted down. It is in view of that action that I have now asked the Committee to reconsider the measure, and report it out, so that the entire House membership can debate this vital issue.

Joy

~~SECRET~~ *W. W. Rosten*
EXECUTIVE BRANCH POSITION

Foreign Aid Appropriations Bill

General

--Although the Senate Appropriations Committee version of H.R. 4592 is \$2,082,123,927 less than the President's budget estimate--a reduction of 35%--the Executive Branch strongly urges support of the bill and a favorable vote on passage.

--Projects will have to be cut, and other programs reduced, but the Executive Branch welcomes the return to operations under full legislation rather than a continuing resolution.

--Nevertheless, two critical areas require amendment.

Food and Nutrition

--The Food and Nutrition cut of \$150,000,000--a reduction of 30%--is one the United States, and the World, cannot afford. Our efforts to assist in this first priority of the developing world will be severely retarded.

--We must deliver on the commitment of the American people made at the World Food Conference.

--An amendment of \$100,000,000 is required--to raise the Food and Nutrition level to \$450,000,000.

Military Assistance (MAP)

--\$408 million is already obligated or reserved under the continuing resolution, which provides funding at a rate of \$550 million.

--The Administration's efforts to achieve a settlement in the Middle East will be seriously hampered since the planned \$100 million program for Jordan cannot be met.

--It will not be possible to re-establish a program for Turkey which would provide a possible incentive for the resolution of the Cyprus conflict.

--All planning for remaining programs, based upon the \$550 million current rate under the continuing resolution and the \$600 million authorized by the Congress, would be severely disrupted. The level of \$450 million would require a one-third reduction in programs in support of foreign policy and security objectives. The injury to these important U.S. interests would far outweigh any benefit from the proposed cut.

--An amendment of \$100,000,000 is required--to raise the Military Assistance level to \$550,000,000.