

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

APRIL 12, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

In view of the seriously deteriorating military situation around the Cambodian Capital of Phnom Penh, and on the basis of the recommendations of the American Ambassador to the Khmer Republic, I have instructed the personnel of the U.S. Mission to leave Phnom Penh.

In accordance with those instructions, American personnel have been evacuated. I also authorized that a number of Cambodians whose lives would have been jeopardized if they had remained in Cambodia be evacuated with the American Mission.

I sincerely regret that there was not timely action on my request to the Congress to enable the United States to continue to provide the assistance necessary to the survival of the Government of the Khmer Republic. That Government had asked for this assistance and had clearly proven itself worthy of our help.

The United States wishes Cambodia to find its place in the world as an independent, neutral and united country, living in peace. Our assistance was sought for that purpose. We also made numerous and vigorous diplomatic efforts, from the first to the last, to find a compromise settlement.

I decided with a heavy heart on the evacuation of American personnel from Cambodia because of my responsibility for the safety of the Americans who have served there so valiantly. Despite that evacuation we will continue to do whatever possible to support an independent, peaceful, neutral and unified Cambodia.

We can all take deep pride in the United States armed forces that were engaged in this evacuation operation. It was carried out with great skill, and in a manner that reflects the highest credit on all of those American servicemen who participated. I am deeply grateful to them for a job well done.

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