MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

- The President
- Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
- James R. Schlesinger, Secretary of Defense
- Donald Rumsfeld
- John O. Marsh
- Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
- Max L. Friedersdorf

DATE & TIME:
Thursday - April 17, 1975
4:30 p.m.

PLACE:
The Cabinet Room
The White House

SUBJECT:
Vietnam Evacuation Transcript

Kissinger: The consensus of the WSAG, Mr. President, was that U.S. personnel would be evacuated at a rapid rate limited only by the number of empty seats and certain assets Jim has. With respect to Vietnamese civilians, we will meet again on Saturday. The plans are not advanced far enough now.

Schlesinger: It is an intractable situation. Probably we will not get a significant amount. The exit place would be Vung Tau.

Kissinger: The only problem is getting people through. If you announce that anyone wanting to evacuate should go to Vung Tau, you will have a Danang. Unless we can identify how to notify the people and get them to the embarkation point — that is the problem. But if we go to evacuation of only Americans, we may trigger a situation which would prevent getting the Americans out.
The President: Weyand mentioned sending in U.S. forces.

Schlesinger: There are two options. One is to insert U.S. forces to secure Tan Son Nhut. The other option would be to use ARVN Marines and airborne to guard the road to Vung Tau, with a promise to get them out.

The President: Where do we stand on the total of Americans?

Schlesinger: 4,100. It went up by 300 by Americans coming in off the street.

The President: You will have a recommendation for me by Saturday evening.

Schlesinger: The number of dependents is increasing rapidly through rapid marriages. So the number of U.S. dependents keeps climbing.

The President: I still feel we can't talk publicly about the evacuation. Burton wanted to see me with a petition to get the Americans out within 48 hours.

Friedersdorf: He gave it to me this afternoon.

The President: They are positioning themselves, but it doesn't serve our purpose to trigger panic.

Rumsfeld: Wouldn't a resolution from Congress or something do the same thing? Shouldn't we have the options by tomorrow?

Schlesinger: The options are for in extremis. We are positioning our forces and it will take three days. What we are talking about now is utilizing the available lift. There is one 707, for example, which we can use to shuttle to Clark.

Kissinger: I agree. The Saturday situations we will discuss can't arise over the weekend.

Rumsfeld: The Congressmen are trying to position themselves and to do that they must go public.

Marsh: The Senate Armed Services Committee will probably vote for $401 million.
Rumsfeld: How do we signal we don't want a vote and still get the legal authority to evacuate them? Nessen and Max will have to be very careful about how we position ourselves on this.

[The meeting ended.]
President Meeting
on VN Economic
United Transcript 17 Aug 75

K, The USPHC predicts that US will be able to work
at a rapid rate permitted by our limited time.

I'm sure you're aware of the Vietnamese's
ability to meet our Saturday plans and not
admit new companies.

You'll have to contact me. But we will not get a
way to do it. The ship will leave as planned.

K, The only problem is getting people there. If you
announce that anyone wanting to work should
go to the USPHC, we will have some difficulty.
I'm sure we can identify those people and get
them to work but we may have to
put a limit on what would probably work with getting around.

P USPHC and mentioned US forces.

Said yes. T.S.N. San very likely would be to move.

H: The best option would be to move from

Vung Tau a day to ground and to U.S. with

a promise to get them onto

Said yes. We met at 2 p.m. by US forces to receive-

P you will have clean forces by Saturday noon.

Said # of objects increasing. They work

Said: # of objects decreasing. They need

I still feel we need more activity about how people

Many people will be coming. 

P They are positioning themselves, but it doesn't seem...
Don't work on a weekend from now creating the same thing. I think don't change anything by tomorrow.

Subblue: Those are in extremes. We are putting an H-0 into the Dallas. What we are doing about now is creating another shift. This is one 222, for example, which we can use to switch to Clark.

K. Douglas: The parking situation we will change can't make much sense.

Don: Congressmen are going to protect themselves and I do think they won't go further.

Mark: S&SC will put vote on 8-2 for 4.5 mil.

Don: How do we find those who are trying to vote and still get legal authority to evict. How can we do that? I see many problems. How do we position ourselves on this.