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S E C R E T 161529Z MAR 76 STAFF

CITE DIRECTOR

TO: TEHRAN.

RYBAT EYES ONLY

FOR AMBASSADOR HELMS FROM WARNER

1. MR. WILLIAM G. MILLER, STAFF DIRECTOR OF THE SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE, FORWARDED TO DICK LEHMAN ON MARCH 11 THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ON THE CAMBODIAN MEMORANDA. IT IS REQUESTED THAT YOU RESPOND AFTER YOU HAVE READ THIS. THE COMMITTEE HAS BEEN INFORMED THAT YOU WILL NOT RETURN TO THE EMBASSY UNTIL 17 MARCH.

2. FOR AMBASSADOR HELMS FROM WILLIAM G. MILLER:

AS YOU KNOW, OUR COMMITTEE HAS BEEN STUDYING HOW THE DCI SEEKS TO CARRY OUT HIS RESPONSIBILITY TO PRODUCE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE FOR SENIOR POLICYMAKERS. THE COMMITTEE HAS SPECIFICALLY SOUGHT TO UNDERSTAND WHY IN THE SPRING OF 1970 TWO SHORT MEMORANDA ON LONG-TERM POLITICAL PROSPECTS IN INDOCHINA WERE NEVER SENT FORWARD TO THE WHITE HOUSE.

WHAT FOLLOWS IS THE CURRENT COMMITTEE DRAFT WHICH DESCRIBES WHAT WE HAVE CONCLUDED TO DATE. WE WOULD VERY MUCH APPRECIATE YOUR PROVIDING THE COMMITTEE WITH YOUR RECOLLECTION OF THESE EVENTS. WE ARE TRYING TO DESCRIBE THE EPISODE AS ACCURATELY AS POSSIBLE.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE.

3. COMMITTEE DRAFT:

IN THE SPRING OF 1970, ANALYSTS IN THE OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES (ONE) PREPARED A SERIES OF SHORT MEMORANDA ON LONG-TERM POLITICAL PROSPECTS IN INDOCHINA. PRINCE SIHANOUK OF CAMBODIA HAD JUST BEEN OVERTHROWN AND THE NORTH VIETNAMESE HAD STEPPED UP THEIR ACTIVITIES INSIDE CAMBODIA. DCI HELMS ENCOURAGED THE ANALYSTS TO PREPARE A LONG MEMORANDUM FOR THE WHITE HOUSE. ON AN EARLY DRAFT, HELMS COMMENTED TO ABBOT SMITH, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES: "O.K. LET'S DEVELOP

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THE PAPER AS YOU SUGGEST AND DO OUR BEST TO COORDINATE IT WITHIN THE AGENCY. BUT IN THE END I WANT A GOOD PAPER ON THIS SUBJECT, EVEN IF I HAVE TO MAKE THE CONTROVERSIAL JUDGMENTS MYSELF. WE OWE IT TO THE POLICYMAKERS, I FEEL." THE RESULT WAS A ONE MEMORANDUM WHICH DISCUSSED THE BROAD QUESTIONS OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS IN CAMBODIA, AND ADDRESSED BRIEFLY THE QUESTION OF POSSIBLE UNITED STATES INTERVENTION;

"IF HANOI COULD BE DENIED THE USE OF BASE AREAS AND SANCTUARIES IN CAMBODIA, ITS STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES IN SOUTH VIETNAM WOULD BE ENDANGERED. HANOI IS CLEARLY CONCERNED OVER SUCH A PROSPECT. CAMBODIA, HOWEVER, HAS NO CHANCE OF BEING ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH THIS BY ITSELF; TO DENY BASE AREAS AND SANCTUARIES IN CAMBODIA WOULD REQUIRE HEAVY AND SUSTAINED BOMBING AND LARGE NUMBERS OF FOOT SOLDIERS WHICH COULD ONLY BE SUPPLIED BY THE U.S. IN SOUTH VIETNAM. SUCH AN EXPANDED ALLIED EFFORT COULD SERIOUSLY HANDICAP THE COMMUNISTS AND RAISE THE COST TO THEM OF PROSECUTING THE WAR, BUT, HOWEVER SUCCESSFUL, IT PROBABLY WOULD NOT PREVENT THEM FROM CONTINUING THE STRUGGLE IN SOME FORM." ("STOCKTAKING IN INDOCHINA: LONGER TERM PROSPECT," ONE MEMORANDUM, APRIL 17, 1970, PARAGRAPH 68)

HELMS RECEIVED THIS MEMORANDUM 13 DAYS BEFORE THE PLANNED UNITED STATES INCURSION INTO CAMBODIA, WHICH HELMS KNEW ABOUT BUT THE ANALYSTS DID NOT. ON APRIL 29, 1970, THE DAY BEFORE THE INCURSION BEGAN, HELMS DECIDED NOT TO SEND THE MEMORANDUM TO THE WHITE HOUSE. A HANDWRITTEN NOTE FROM HELMS TO THE DIRECTOR OF ONE, DATED APRIL 29, 1970, SAYS IN FULL: "LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THIS ON JUNE 1, AND SEE IF WE WOULD KEEP IT OR MAKE CERTAIN REVISIONS." AS ONE SENIOR ANALYST IN ONE RECALLED, HELMS WOULD HAVE JUDGED IT "MOST COUNTERPRODUCTIVE" TO SEND SUCH A NEGATIVE ASSESSMENT TO THE WHITE HOUSE ONCE THE DECISION TO INTERVENE IN CAMBODIA HAD ALREADY BEEN MADE (INTERVIEW WITH JAMES GRAHAM.)

SIX WEEKS LATER, WHILE THE CAMBODIA INCURSION WAS STILL UNDERWAY, THE STATE DEPARTMENT REQUESTED A SPECIAL NIE ON NORTH VIETNAMESE INTENTIONS WHICH WOULD INCLUDE A SECTION ON THE IMPACT OF THE UNITED STATES INTERVENTION IN CAMBODIA. A DRAFT ESTIMATE WAS PREPARED AND COORDINATED WITHIN THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY, JUST AS THE INCURSION WAS ENDING. THE ESTIMATE BEGAN WITH THE CAVEAT THAT "CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTIES" EXIST "IN UNDERTAKING THIS ANALYSIS AT THIS TIME. OPERATIONS IN

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CAMBODIA ARE CONTINUING AND THE DATA ON RESULTS TO DATE IS, IN THE NATURE OF THINGS, INCOMPLETE AND PROVISIONAL." THE DRAFT WENT ON TO SAY THAT ASSESSING HANOI'S INTENTIONS IS ALWAYS A DIFFICULT EXERCISE BUT "EVEN MORE COMPLICATED IN A RAPIDLY MOVING SITUATION, IN WHICH THERE ARE A NUMBER OF UNKNOWN ELEMENTS, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO U.S. AND ALLIED COURSES OF ACTION." WITH RESPECT TO THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA, THE ESTIMATE CONCLUDED: "ALTHOUGH CAREFUL ANALYSIS OF THESE LOSSES SUGGESTS THAT THE COMMUNIST SITUATION IS BY NO MEANS CRITICAL, IT IS NECESSARY TO RETAIN A GOOD DEAL OF CAUTION IN JUDGING THE LASTING IMPACT OF THE CAMBODIA AFFAIR ON THE COMMUNIST POSITION IN INDOCHINA." (DRAFT SNIE, 14-3-70)

DESPITE ALL THESE QUALIFICATIONS, HELMS AGAIN DECIDED NOT TO SEND THE ESTIMATE TO THE WHITE HOUSE. ACCORDING TO JAMES GRAHAM, WHO WAS THE BOARD MEMBER CHAIRING THE USIB REPRESENTATIVES MEETING ON THIS DRAFT ESTIMATE, HELMS CALLED GRAHAM FROM THE MEETING AND ASKED THAT THE PAPER BE WITHDRAWN. GRAHAM RECALLS THAT HELMS SUGGESTED THAT IT WAS NOT GOING TO GO OVER TOO WELL IN THE WHITE HOUSE AND THAT IT CLEARLY WAS TOO EARLY TO MAKE FINAL JUDGMENTS. HELMS SAID HE WOULD RATHER PRESENT THESE VIEWS INFORMALLY TO THE WHITE HOUSE. E2 IMPDET.

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