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UNCLAS WK50357 SECTION 1 OF 2  
THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE APPEARS ON PAGE C-1 OF TODAY'S  
NEW YORK TIMES.

KISSINGER REBUFF OF CAMBODIA TALK IN 1974 REPORTED

U.S. ENVOY IS SAID TO HAVE PROPOSED A CONTACT WITH KEY REBEL  
LEADER

SHIFTS IN PHNOM PENH

TWO KEY GENERALS ON OUTER DEFENSES ARE REPLACED BY YOUNGER  
COMMANDERS

BY SIDNEY H. SCHANBERG

SPECIAL TO THE NEW YORK TIMES

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA, MARCH 8 - AMBASSADOR JOHN GUNTHER DEAN  
WAS REBUFFED LAST YEAR WHEN HE PROPOSED TO SECRETARY OF STATE  
KISSINGER THAT AN ATTEMPT BE MADE TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH  
A KEY CAMBODIAN INSURGENT LEADER TO FEEL OUT THE POSSIBILITY  
OF PEACE NEGOTIATIONS, ACCORDING TO SOURCES IN THE UNITED  
STATES EMBASSY HERE.

THE SOURCES SAID THAT MR. DEAN, WHO WAS NEW IN PHNOM PENH  
AT THE TIME BUT HAD ALREADY BEGUN PUSHING FOR PEACE  
INITIATIVES, RECOMMENDED CONTACT WITH ENIEU SAMPHAN, PERHAPS  
THE LEADING FIGURE IN THE INSURGENT MOVEMENT. HE IS A DEPUTY  
PREMIER, DEFENSE MINISTER AND COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE ARMED  
FORCES.

TWO COMMANDERS REPLACED

THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY WOULD NOT COMMENT ON THE MATTER.  
MR. KISSINGER, WHO IS IN EGYPT, COULD NOT BE REACHED FOR

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE  
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

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(CONSENT.)

AS THE DEAN MOVE WAS DISCLOSED, IT WAS LEARNED THAT THE CAMBODIAN COMMAND YESTERDAY DISMISSED THE COMMANDING GENERALS OF TWO KEY UNITS AND REPLACED THEM WITH YOUNGER MEN, IN A MOVE APPARENTLY INSPIRED BY AMERICAN OFFICIALS TO INJECT NEW LIFE INTO THE FALTERING DEFENSES OF PHNOM PENH.

AT THE TIME OF MR. DEAN'S PROPOSAL LAST APRIL, MR. SAMPHAN WAS TOURING EASTERN EUROPE AND AFRICA TO RALLY SUPPORT FOR HIS CAUSE. MR. DEAN, ACCORDING TO THE EMBASSY SOURCES, FELT THIS WAS A PERFECT OPPORTUNITY FOR CONTACT. THE AMBASSADOR WAS QUOTED BY THOSE FAMILIAR WITH THE EPISODE AS HAVING SAID, "EVERY STRAW SHOULD BE GRASPED AT."

#### POSITION OF WEAKNESS

MR. RISSINGER REJECTED THE PROPOSAL, THE SOURCES SAID, ON THE GROUND THAT THE FIGHTING WAS GOING POORLY AT THE TIME AND THE UNITED STATES WOULD HAVE BEEN IN A POSITION OF NEGOTIATING FROM WEAKNESS. LONG-TIME OBSERVERS NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT THE SITUATION HAS NEVER BEEN FAVORABLE FOR THE PHNOM PENH GOVERNMENT SINCE THE WAR BEGAN IN 1970.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT DID NOT MENTION THE DEAN PROPOSAL WHEN IT ANNOUNCED THREE DAYS AGO THAT WASHINGTON HAD MADE NUMEROUS ATTEMPTS AT NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE INSURGENTS, BUT HAD BEEN SCUFFLED.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE AT A NEWS CONFERENCE BY PHILIP C. HABIL, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS, WHO LISTED SEVEN EFFORTS SINCE 1973.

MR. HABIL WAS QUESTIONED BY NEWSMEN AS TO THE SERIOUSNESS OF THESE EFFORTS. HE INSISTED THEY HAD BEEN SINCERE AND HE REJECTED SUGGESTIONS, MADE IN RECENT WELU DISPATCHES, THAT MR. RISSINGER WAS NOT ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS.

MR. RISSINGER'S CRITICS HAVE SAID THAT HE LACKS INTEREST IN PEACE TALKS BECAUSE CAMBODIA IS A SMALL, INCONSEQUENTIAL COUNTRY. IT IS A LOSING SITUATION FOR THE UNITED STATES AND HE DOES NOT WANT TO BE IDENTIFIED WITH DEFEATS. IT IS ALSO SAID THAT HE DOES NOT WANT TO EXPEND THE LIMITED LEVERAGE HE HAS ON PHNOM PENH IN OBTAINING A CAMBODIAN SETTLEMENT THAT WILL BE UNSATISFACTORY FOR WASHINGTON IN ANY CASE.

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THE DEAN EPISODE SHEDS LIGHT ON THE APPARENT GAP BETWEEN THE EMBASSY HERE AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN WASHINGTON.

PRESIDENT FORD AND MR. KISSINGER, IN AN EFFORT TO PERSUADE CONGRESS TO GRANT MORE MILITARY AID, HAVE BEEN SAYING THAT WITHOUT THE AID, THE PHNOM PENH GOVERNMENT WILL FALL WITHIN WEEKS, BUT THAT WITH THE AID THERE IS A CHANCE OF CONVINCING THE INSURGENTS OF THE WISDOM OF A COMPROMISE SETTLEMENT.

#### COMPROMISE RULED OUT

THE EMBASSY, ACCORDING TO SOURCES INSIDE IT, BELIEVES THAT THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF A COMPROMISE AND THAT THE BEST THAT CAN BE HOPED FOR IS LITTLE MORE THAN A NEGOTIATED SURRENDER.

THIS EMBASSY ASSESSMENT, BASED ON CONDITIONS THAT HAVE DEGRADATED SINCE THE INSURGENTS BEGAN THEIR OFFENSIVE TWO MONTHS AGO, IS SHARED BY VIRTUALLY THE ENTIRE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY.

AT THE MOMENT, THIS CITY OF TWO MILLION PEOPLE IS BEING KEPT ALIVE SOLELY BY AN AMERICAN AIRLIFT BECAUSE OTHER SUPPLY ROUTES HAVE BEEN CUT BY THE INSURGENTS. EVEN THE AIRLIFT HAS BEEN DISRUPTED BY ENEMY SHELLING OF THE AIRPORT.

AMBASSADOR DEAN, WHO IS 49 YEARS OLD, PLAYED A LARGE PART IN ARRANGING THE COALITION PEACE SETTLEMENT IN LAOS, AND WHEN HE ARRIVED HERE HE MADE THE SAME EFFORTS TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR A POSSIBLE COMPROMISE IN CAMBODIA. BUT, ACCORDING TO THOSE FAMILIAR WITH HIS THINKING, HE HAS CONCLUDED THAT THE SAME ELEMENTS SIMPLY DO NOT EXIST AND THE BEST THAT CAN BE ARRANGED IS AN ORDERLY TURNOVER OF POWER TO THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENTS.

#### SPECIAL TO THE NEW YORK TIMES

ADVAN. EGYPT, MARCH 7 - MEMBERS OF THE KISSINGER PARTY, WHEN INFORMED HERE OF THE REPORT ON THE REFUSAL OF AMBASSADOR DEAN LAST SPRING NOTED THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD TRIED WITHOUT SUCCESS TO CONTACT THE INSURGENTS IN THE FALL, AS MENTIONED IN A STATE DEPARTMENT LISTING LAST WEEK. THE SOURCE SAID MR. KISSINGER STILL BELIEVED THAT IT WAS HOPELESS TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE INSURGENTS WHEN THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT WAS BEING SO BADLY ON THE BATTLEFIELD.

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