

**BY WIRE (BACK CHANNEL VIA CAS)**State Dept. review  
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December 10, 1970

**FOR: LADD**ON FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS  
APPLY**FROM: HAIG**

We continue to be most grateful for your perceptive and responsive reporting. As you may know through official channels, I am leaving here Friday with small party and will arrive Saigon at 6:30 a. m. on the 13th, and then proceed directly to Phnom Penh. Estimated ETA 7:30 a. m. local at Phnom Penh. I have asked State to suggest to Ambassador Swank that I stay with you on night of 13th providing this does not pose complications at your end and based on our long-standing friendship.

My visit is primarily designed to assess military situation and add emphasis to President's desire to encourage pre-emptive operations by VNAF, designed to relieve pressure on Cambodians during forthcoming dry season. Obviously, enemy offensive is already well under way. The probability of local setbacks, the controversy surrounding the supplemental now in full swing here in Washington and the pessimistic Moose-Lowenstein report which surfaced here last night will all converge to test our nerves over the coming weeks. Like you, I am confident that systematic and carefully managed

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operations will enable us to weather the storm providing we are all well plugged in and synchronized in our approaches.

You and Ambassador should consider carefully who I should see on Cambodian side and what lines you would wish me to take that would be helpful in augmenting efforts you are making to influence Cambodians.

President suggested yesterday that he wants you to return to Washington with me at the conclusion of our visit. We plan to depart Saigon later afternoon December 17th. I am giving you this strictly for your planning as decision is not yet firm. I have some doubts about the wisdom of plucking you from Embassy team at this busy time and will suggest that decision be made only after my arrival in Phnom Penh and following consultation with you and Ambassador. Hold this strictly to yourself for now.

During my visit in Saigon, I intend to review dry season contingency planning which I will discuss with you in greater detail upon arrival. I would greatly appreciate your views on GVN attitudes with respect to their operations in Cambodia and hope, if necessary, to be able to influence GVN along lines which you and Ambassador consider desirable and situation requires.

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Keep up the fine work and do not hesitate to bring problem areas to our attention through this channel. I look forward to seeing you and Betty on Sunday.

Best regards.

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AMH: mlw: 12-10-70