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TO MR. HOOD

T O P S E C R E T / SENSITIVE / EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

JANUARY 24, 1973

TO: HOOD
FROM: DR. KISSINGER

THE U.S. SIDE APPRECIATES THE CHINESE MESSAGE OF JANUARY 23, 1973 INVITING DR. KISSINGER TO VISIT CHINA FROM FEBRUARY 13 TO 17, 1973. IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM HAS NOW REQUESTED THAT DR. KISSINGER VISIT HANOI TWO DAYS LATER THAN ENVISAGED, THE U.S. SIDE WOULD LIKE TO PROPOSE THAT DR. KISSINGER'S TRIP TO CHINA BE DELAYED TO FEBRUARY 15 TO 19, 1973. SPECIFIC PROPOSALS ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT AND OTHER ASPECTS OF THE VISIT WILL BE MADE UPON CONFIRMATION ON THE CHINESE SIDE THAT THE NEW DATES ARE AGREEABLE. DR. KISSINGER REGRETS THAT, DUE TO HIS IMMEDIATE DEPARTURE FROM PARIS AFTER INITIALLING THE AGREEMENT, HE WAS UNABLE TO ACCEPT THE KIND INVITATION TO DINNER BY AMBASSADOR HUANG CHEN. THE CHINESE MESSAGE THAT AMBASSADOR HUANG WAS TO CONVEY TO DR. KISSINGER HAS NOW BEEN DELIVERED THROUGH THE CHANNEL OF THE TWO EMBASSIES IN PARIS.

THE PRESIDENT WISHES TO STRESS THAT ALL CONTACTS ON ISSUES OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE SHOULD BE MAINTAINED IN THE FIRST INSTANCE IN THE ESTABLISHED CHANNEL IN NEW YORK SO THAT THE U.S. SIDE CAN DETERMINE THE BEST MEANS OF COMMUNICATION IN LIGHT OF ITS OWN REQUIREMENTS. IN THIS PARTICULAR CASE THESE CONSIDERATIONS ARE THE MORE RELEVANT WHEN THERE IS ALREADY THE PEKING MEETING ENVISAGED IN THE SAME TIME PERIOD AS THE PROPOSED MEETING BETWEEN THE FOREIGN MINISTERS. FURTHERMORE, THE NEW YORK CHANNEL AND THE PROPOSED VISIT BY DR. KISSINGER HAVE BEEN KEPT CONFIDENTIAL WITHIN THE U.S. GOVERNMENT. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES THE U.S. SIDE BELIEVES THAT THE MEETING BETWEEN THE FOREIGN MINISTERS SHOULD NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL THE END OF MARCH.

THE USE OF THE PARIS CHANNEL FOR THIS MATTER HAS CREATED GREAT DIFFICULTIES FOR THE U.S. SIDE WITH RESPECT TO PLANNING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR DR. KISSINGER'S TRIP. THE U.S. SIDE WOULD APPRECIATE AN EARLY REPLY TO THIS MESSAGE. END OF TEXT

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