

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE [TK-HK-AS/21]
EYES ONLY

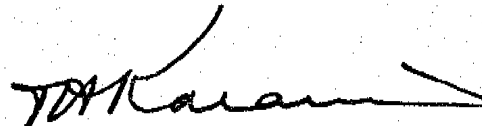
No Objection to Declassification in Full 2012/10/03 : LOC-HAK-477-18-6-7

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

26 January 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: Brigadier General Alexander M. Haig
Deputy Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs

Attached are two messages received early this morning
addressed to you from Ambassador Godley.



Thomas H. Karamessines
Deputy Director for Plans

2 Attachments

DOS review completed

MORI/CDF C05076876

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS
APPLY

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE
EYES ONLY

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

No Objection to Declassification in Full 2012/10/03 : LOC-HAK-477-18-6-7

TO BE DELIVERED TO GENERAL HAIG FROM AMBASSADOR GODLEY

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE/EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

FROM: AMBASSADOR

FOR: GENERAL HAIG

I HAVE JUST TRANSMITTED TOP SECRET EMBTELL 470
NODIS/ASHAU WHICH FOLLOWS:

FOR THE SECRETARY

1. PURSUANT TO STATE 013312 I DELIVERED LETTER QUOTED
THEREIN AT 1640 TO PRIME MINISTER. I EMPHASIZED ITS
SECURITY AND CLASSIFIED IT TOP SECRET/EYES ONLY,
DESCRIBING TO HIM WHAT THIS MEANT FOR OUR SECURITY
REGULATIONS.

2. HE READ THE LETTER WITH GREAT CARE.
HIS FIRST QUESTION WAS "WHY DON'T YOU HIT THE TRI-
BORDER AREA (I.E., DOWN ROUTE 110) AND OCCUPY THE
HIGHLANDS SOUTH OF ROUTE 110?" I TOLD THE PRIME
MINISTER THAT AS FAR AS WE WERE AWARE THERE WERE
NO REPEAT NO ENEMY STORAGE AREAS IN THAT AREA
AND THAT ALREADY THERE WAS AN SGU CAMP LOCATED
SOUTH OF ROUTE 110 WHICH WAS OCCASIONALLY RAIDING

THAT ROAD.

3. WE THEN RETIRED TO HIS MAP ROOM AND HE EXAMINED MINUTELY THE TÔHEPONE AREA. HIS NEXT QUESTION WAS "HOW LONG WILL THE OPERATION LAST?/ I SAID THAT I DID NOT KNOW BUT WOULD QUERY WASHINGTON POINTING OUT THAT IT HAD TO TAKE SOME TIME REALLY TO CLEAN OUT THE ENEMY INSTALLATIONS THERE. HE ASKED SPECIFICALLY THAT WASHINGTON'S THINKING BE CLARIFIED ON THIS POINT.

4. HE THEN ASKED THE SIZE OF THE FORCES INVOLVED. I TOLD HIM I COULD NOT RESPOND DIRECTLY BUT I THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE SIZABLE FOR WE KNEW THAT THE ENEMY HAD AT LEAST TWO DIVISIONS IN THAT GENERAL AREA AND THAT IT WOULD BE FATAL TO SEND A WEAK FORCE IN AGAINST THEM. THIS DID NOT CAUSE TOO MUCH TROUBLE TO THE PRIME MINISTER BUT HE DID POINT OUT THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR HIM POLITICALLY WITHIN LAOS DUE TO THE PRESS REPORTS OF THE EXCESSES OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS IN CAMBODIA. I TOLD HIM I UNDERSTOOD THIS PREOCCUPATION BUT THAT AS FAR

AS I WAS AWARE THERE WERE NO LOYAL LAO ALONG ROUTE 9 WHICH HAD BEEN SUBJECTED TO HEAVY BOMBARDMENT, INCLUDING B-52'S AND THAT THE PICTURES I HAD SEEN OF THIS GENERAL AREA INDICATED NO CIVILIANS. I ALSO RECALLED TO HIM THAT WHEN HIS TROOPS OCCUPIED MUONG PHINE IN FALL OF 1969 AND GOT WITHIN EIGHT KILOMETERS OF TCHEPONE THAT ONLY SOME THREE THOUSAND CIVILIANS CAME OUT. THE PRIME MINISTER NODDED IN ASSENT.

5. I THEN DREW UPON PARAS 4A, 4B, 4C, AND 4D OF STATE 012344. THE ONLY LIBERTIES I TOOK WITH THIS TEXT WAS TO ADD SOUTHERN LAOS WHENEVER IT SPOKE OF THE SAFETY OF FRIENDLY FORCES IN PARAS 4A AND 4B. THROUGHOUT THE CONVERSATION I MENTIONED MY CONCERN OVER THE SITUATION IN THE BOLOVENS AND STRESSED THAT A RAID AGAINST TCHEPONE WOULD BE OF DIRECT BENEFIT TO RLG FORCES IN MR IV.

6. WE THEN DISCUSSED THE PUBLIC POSITION HE SHOULD TAKE ON THIS OPERATION. HE SAID HE WOULD OF COURSE HAVE TO PROTEST AND ASKED THAT THE SOUTH

VIETNAMESE TROOPS WITHDRAW. I THEN SUGGESTED THAT HE MERELY EXPRESS HIS REGRET, INDICATING AN UNDERSTANDING WHY SUCH AN OPERATION WAS NECESSARY AND CITING THE PRESENCE OF NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS IN LAOS AS A REASON FOR THE OPERATION. HE DEMURRED AND ASKED IF THE OPERATION COULD NOT BE KEPT SECRET. I TOLD HIM THAT IN ALL HONESTY I DID NOT SEE HOW AN OPERATION OF THIS SIZE COULD BE KEPT FROM THE PUBLIC. HE THEN ASKED IF IT COULDN'T BE KEPT SECRET FOR A WEEK OR SO. HE POINTED OUT THAT AFTER HE PROTESTED HE DID NOT EXPECT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE TO LEAVE IMMEDIATELY BUT THAT THEY SHOULD LEAVE WITHIN A WEEK, TEN DAYS OR MAYBE EVEN TWO WEEKS. HE WAS SPECIFICALLY THINKING ALONG THE LINES THAT IF THE OPERATION COULD BE KEPT SECRET FOR A WEEK HE WOULD THEN BE ABLE TO LIVE WITH THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS REMAINING IN LAOS FOR, SHALL WE SAY, A TOTAL OF THREE AND POSSIBLY FOUR WEEKS. HE KEPT SHAKING HIS HEAD AND SAYING THIS RAISED SERIOUS INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS FOR HIM AND THERE-

FORE HE MUST PROTEST. I EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING FOR HIS POSITION AND SAID IT WAS PRECISELY DUE TO THIS UNDERSTANDING THAT I HAD BEEN DIRECTED TO CONSULT WITH HIM.

7. HE WAS OBVIOUSLY THINKING ABOUT A POSSIBLE ATTACK ON SOME OTHER AREA, FOR STILL AT THE MAP HE ASKED IF THE ATTACK COULD NOT BE MADE IN NORTHEAST CAMBODIA. I TOLD HIM THAT I DID NOT THINK THIS WAS WISE BECUASE (1) THERE WERE NO KNOWN SIZABLE ENEMY TROOPS OR CONCENTRATIONS OF MATERIEL AND EQUIPMENT IN THAT AREA AND (2) AN ATTACK THERE WOULD NOT HELP HIS FORCES IN MR IV. HE SEEMED TO ACCEPT THIS AND WE WENT BACK TO LOOKING OVER ROUTE 9 ON HIS MAP.

8. RETURNING TO WHERE HE HAD RECEIVED ME, HE KEPT REPEATING THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO PROTEST. I KEPT INJECTING THE IDEA THAT WHILE I ACCEPTED HE HAD TO PROTEST, HE SHOULD ALSO CITE THE PRESENCE OF SIZABLE NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES ON LAO TERRITORY AS THE REASON FOR THE OPERATION.

AT ONE TIME HE SAID THAT IF HE DID NOT PROTEST VIGOROUSLY THE CHINESE WOULD ACT IN THE NORTH. I DODGED THIS ONE.

9. WE FINALLY LEFT IT THAT

(1) I WOULD QUERY WASHINGTON ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A TRI-BORDER OPERATION, (2) I WOULD QUERY WASHINGTON ABOUT THE DURATION OF THE OPERATION AND (3) I WOULD INFORM WASHINGTON THAT ONCE THE OPERATION WAS PUBLIC THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD PROTEST SOUTH VIETNAMESE ACTION IN LAO TERRITORY AND ASK THAT ALL REPEAT ALL FOREIGN TROOPS BE WITHDRAWN FROM LAO TERRITORY.

10. THE ONLY PORTION OF MY INSTRUCTIONS THAT I DID NOT COVER WAS TO ASK HIM TO REPLY IN WRITING TO MY LETTER. I FELT THAT SUCH A REQUEST WOULD BE EXTREMELY UNWISE. AS THE CONVERSATION DEVELOPED TO DO SO WOULD INDICATE A LACK OF CONFIDENCE BETWEEN US AND IF HE PUT HIS THOUGHTS ON PAPER IT MIGHT RAISE GREATER OBSTACLES. I NEVER ONCE IN THE CONVERSATION MENTIONED OUR PRESIDENT FOR IT MIGHT BE DESIRABLE TO USE OUR PRESIDENT'S NAME IN FUTURE

DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER.

11. AS I WAS WALKING OUT THE DOOR, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WOULD SLEEP ON WHAT I HAD TOLD HIM AND THAT WE SHOULD KEEP IN VERY CLOSE TOUCH ON THIS MATTER. HE OBVIOUSLY WOULD LIKE FURTHER WORD FROM WASHINGTON. IN CONCLUSION I EMPHASIZED ONCE AGAIN THE SECRECY, POINTING OUT THAT MY SECRETARY AND I WERE THE ONLY ONES KNOWLEDGEABLE HERE.

HE GRINNED AND SAID HE COULD ASSURE ME THAT HE WOULD HANDLE THIS PROBLEM IN THE SAME MANNER.

GP-1

T O P S E C R E T