

**DOCUMENT WITHDRAWAL RECORD (NIXON PROJECT)**

| DOCUMENT NUMBER | DOCUMENT TYPE | SUBJECT/TITLE OR CORRESPONDENTS   | DATE          | RESTRICTION |
|-----------------|---------------|---|---------------|-------------|
| 1               | Note          | The Situation Room to Haig<br><br><b>DECLASSIFIED</b> PER RAL 6/13/2008 | 15 March 1969 | B           |

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| FILE GROUP TITLE<br>National Security Council, Vietnam Subject Files | BOX NUMBER<br>89 |
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| FOLDER TITLE<br>BREAKFAST PLAN |
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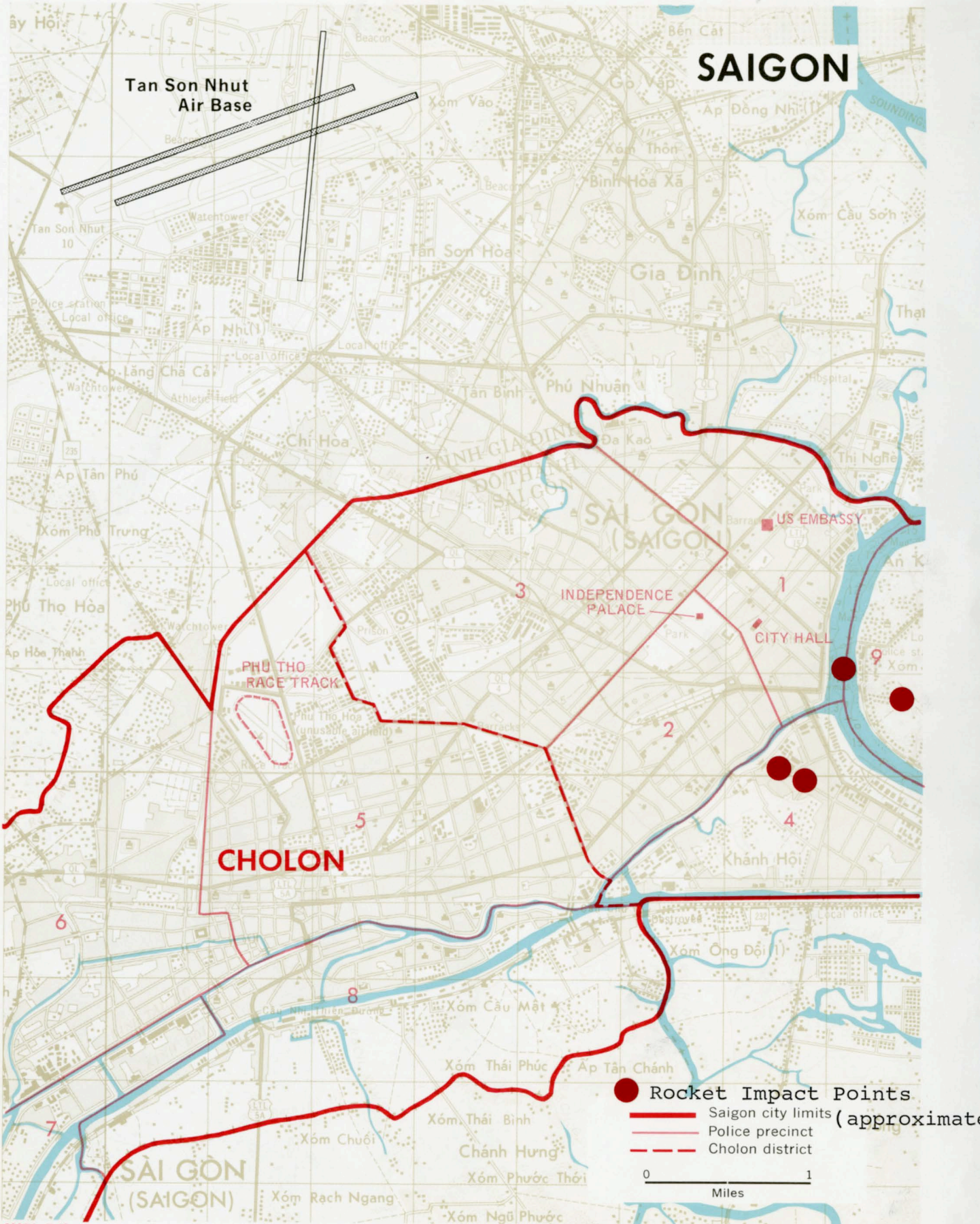
**RESTRICTION CODES**

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|---|--|
| A. Release would violate a Federal statute or Agency Policy.<br>B. National security classified information.<br>C. Pending or approved claim that release would violate an individual's rights.<br>D. Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy or a libel of a living person. | E. Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information.<br>F. Release would disclose investigatory information compiled for law enforcement purposes.<br>G. Withdrawn and return private and personal material.<br>H. Withdrawn and returned non-historical material. |
|---|--|

PRESIDENT'S COPY

Return to Col Haig  
of Mr. Eastburn

Approximate Rocket Impact Points  
 Enemy Attack on Saigon-15 March 1969



91254 7-68

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 16, 1969

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *HK*

SUBJECT: Breakfast Plan

I. Major Political/Psychological Reasons for Action

A. Failure to take action in response to Saigon/Hue shellings -- especially after repeated Presidential warnings -- would appear to Hanoi as a demonstration of weakness.

B. Failure to act would encourage Hanoi to use shellings and other military pressures in an effort to force major concessions at the Paris negotiations.

C. The GVN will be more willing to agree to private talks, and less suspicious about our statements on the conditions for a bombing halt. Indeed, the Thieu/Bunker conversation is likely to be sticky if we respond to the latest shelling of Saigon with a request to initiate private talks.

D. Retaliatory action, if combined with a proposal for private talks, will serve as a signal to the Soviets of the Administration's determination to end the war. It would be a signal that things may get out of hand.

II. Arguments Against

A. Domestic critics of the Vietnam war could seize on this to renew attacks on war and pressure for quick U. S. withdrawal.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

B. Hanoi could try to buttress domestic critics with attacks aimed at gaining large U.S. casualties.

C. Could start escalatory cycle.

III. Some Possible Consequences of Breakfast PlanA. Minimum Possible Consequences

1. Pro-forma Cambodian protest.

B. Larger Possible Consequences

1. If attack on COSVN is formally announced as "appropriate response" major protest by Cambodia is probable, cutting off prospect of resuming diplomatic relations for the present. (NVN will probably try to pressure Sihanouk on this point.)

2. Soviets could feel compelled, probably under Hanoi pressure, to register strong protest which might affect our other talks with them.

3. Hanoi will feel compelled to retaliate, should our public statements indicate action is retaliatory.

IV. ScenarioA. Basic Plan of Action

1. NVN military concentrations in the DMZ will be attacked 12 hours prior to Breakfast Plan. This attack, in response to currently well publicized NVN buildup in the DMZ, will be acknowledged as the "appropriate response" to the shelling of Saigon and Hue. This would have the following advantages: (a) it would indicate a response; (b) it would divert public attention; (c) it would therefore enable Cambodia to play down the Breakfast Plan and; (d) it would still show restraint.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

2. Breakfast Plan will be treated as a routine military operation within the framework of our current military actions in Cambodian territory and not publicly or in any messages identified as a retaliatory action against the shelling of Saigon and Hue. Hanoi is likely to recognize the action as our response, without a public statement. Any public statement identifying it as a retaliatory action, on the other hand, would be more likely to induce retaliatory actions by Hanoi, a major protest by Cambodia, a Soviet protest, and major domestic criticism in the press.

3. The military action will be combined with an effort in Paris to initiate private talks.

B. Press Scenario

1. The attacks on the DMZ will be publicly announced with no additional comment. If the press asks whether these attacks are the "appropriate response" mentioned by the President, the spokesman will state that the press can draw its own conclusions.

2. Breakfast Plan would be announced routinely by Saigon as a normal B-52 operation against targets along the Cambodian border. The targets would not be specifically identified.

3. Press briefing and backgrounders would in no way directly identify the action as the "appropriate response" to the Saigon/Hue shellings.

4. All press queries should be referred to the Saigon spokesman who will neither affirm nor deny reports of attacks on Cambodia but state that this is under investigation. With respect to any attacks against Cambodia, we will take the same public position of "no comment" as in the case of bombing attacks on Laos, with the additional statement that reports of such attacks are under investigation.

5. If the Cambodians protest publicly, we will state publicly that we are investigating the Cambodian protest.

6. At no point will attacks against Cambodia be officially denied. When we reply to a Cambodian protest, we will state that we have apologized and have offered compensation.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

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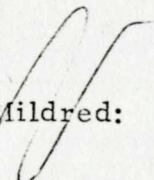
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1. On March 18, Ambassador Bunker will inform President Thieu privately about DMZ strike and Breakfast Plan and seek Thieu's immediate agreement to the initiation of private talks on this basis.
2. On March 18, following Thieu's agreement, Ambassador Lodge will be authorized to initiate a request immediately for private talks with the North Vietnamese.
3. If Cambodia makes its normal routine protest, we will agree to investigate and subsequently confirm that the raid took place in Cambodian territory, apologize, and offer compensation.
4. If Cambodia makes a major protest, we will acknowledge responsibility, offer compensation, explain that incidents along the Cambodian border occur due to the extensive VC use of military exploitation of Cambodian territory in this area, and request an ICC investigation of the area.
5. If the Soviet Union privately makes a major protest against our action, we will point out the military reasons for the action, the fact that both Saigon and Hue were shelled after bombing, that more provocative options were available but not undertaken, and that we would now like to get down to serious negotiations and have initiated a request for private talks as suggested by them.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

3/17/69

  
Mildred:

There were limited numbers of  
copies on these. I have given you  
a set of everything we did yesterday.

Sally

P

INFORMATION

March 17, 1969

STOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger

SUBJECT: Breakfast Plan

At Tab A is a report received yesterday concerning the diversion of a Soviet ship from Haiphong Harbor.

At Tab B is an analysis I had made of the status of Soviet ships in Haiphong Harbor as a result of the report at Tab A.

At Tab C is a copy of a message sent last night through back channels to General Abrams for Ambassador Bunker.

At Tab D is a press guidance worked out yesterday afternoon in conjunction with the Breakfast Plan.

*A + B see together in 1 file*

*black book  
didn't get copied*

*night*

*Typed by: S. Oehler*

Press Guidance in Conjunction with Implementation  
of Breakfast Plan and Allied Attacks by Fire in DMZ

In conjunction with implementation of the Breakfast Plan on March 18 and concurrent military operations in northern and southern portions of the DMZ, the following press guidance will be strictly adhered to.

Part I covers DMZ attacks and Part II the Breakfast Plan.

Part I

1. There will be absolutely no reference to strikes provided for in the Breakfast Plan.
2. Announcement will be made on March 18 in Saigon along the following lines: "U. S. forces are attacking enemy troop concentrations and supply caches in the northern and southern portions of the DMZ today (Tuesday, March 18) through combined B-52 and tactical air strikes, as well as, artillery and naval bombardment. This action was undertaken in view of continuing violations in the de-militarized zone by North Vietnamese forces which are threatening U. S. and allied positions in the I Corps Tactical Zone." If the press asks whether these attacks are the "appropriate response" mentioned by the President, spokesmen will state the press can draw its own conclusion.

2. In addition to the basic press coverage, the Department of Defense should prepare press backgrounders to be given both in Saigon and Washington which outline in detail the nature of the recent abuses of the DMZ by North Vietnam forces as well as a list of the Saigon and Hue shellings. Backgrounders are to be prepared and available at the time of the release of Tuesday, March 18 announcing the attacks.

Part II  
Breakfast Plan

1. In conjunction with the routine release made by MACV covering B-52 operations in South Vietnam on March 18, MACV spokesman will issue a statement along the lines of the attached draft.

2. In the event press inquiries are received following the execution of the Breakfast Plan as to whether or not U.S. B-52's have struck in Cambodia, U.S. spokesman will confirm that B-52's did strike on routine missions adjacent to the Cambodian border but state that he has no details and will look into this question.

3. Should the press persist in its inquiries or in the event of a Cambodian protest concerning the possibility of U.S. strikes in Cambodia, U.S. spokesman will neither confirm nor deny reports of

attacks on Cambodia but state this is under investigation. With respect to any attacks against Cambodia, we would take the same public position of "no comment" as in the case of bombing attacks on Laos with the additional statement that reports of such attacks are under investigation.

4. After delivering a reply to any Cambodian protest, we will inform the press that we have apologized and offered compensation.

Checklist for Meeting with President

March 16, 1969

1. Two substantive points should be covered at meeting:
  - a. All messages to the field on Breakfast Plan should emphasize that (a) there will be no publicity given specifically to the attacks on Cambodia, (b) the public announcement will be provided separately, and (c) Breakfast Plan should in no way be linked in classified messages or publicly with the "appropriate response."
  - b. Breakfast Plan is not a precedent for other similar operations in Cambodia.
2. Checklist of necessary actions after Breakfast Plan and DMZ attack are decided upon
  - a. March 16, 1969
    - (1) Eyes only message to Bunker informing him to inform Thieu about DMZ attack (but not Breakfast Plan) and urge him to get Thieu on board immediately regarding private talks -- State.
  - b. March 17, 1969
    - (1) Text of press announcement on Breakfast Plan -- NSC. (Attached)
    - (2) Press guidance on DMZ attack -- OSD
    - (3) Preparation of press backgrounder on enemy utilization of DMZ -- OSD
    - (4) Instructions to Lodge to make initial call for private talks on receipt of report from Bunker of agreement by Thieu -- State.
    - (5) Inform Lodge of DMZ attack -- State.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

Draft Press Announcement for MACV Spokesman

B-52 missions in 6 strikes early this morning bombed these targets:

"Enemy activity base camps and bunker and tunnel complexes 45 kilometers northeast of Tay Ninh city; Enemy troop concentrations and supply caches in the DMZ."

## Sihanouk on Cambodian Border Incidents

### Sihanouk's Recent Actions

In recent months, Prince Sihanouk has modified his position on border incidents and on NVN/VC use of Cambodian territory as a sanctuary. The modified Sihanouk position has been indicated by the following steps, principally:

1. A more moderate reaction to recent border incidents, with the protests taking a pro-forma character even when Cambodian lives were lost.
2. The relatively early release of four American pilots recently.
3. Increasingly forthright public statements on Viet Cong and Viet Minh infiltration, particularly in his March 6 press conference when he flashed, but did not show, a map of Communist concentrations in Cambodia.
4. Public and private recognition that incidents will occur along the border but inferring the U.S. should attack the Communists in non-populated areas.

-- The Australian Ambassador reported Sihanouk as stating privately: "As for frontier incidents, he was fully aware that so long as fighting went on in Vietnam, and so close to the border, it would not be possible to prevent such incidents completely or the loss of life on the Cambodian side that they involved. But as things stood at the moment, Cambodia could not even get compensation."

-- In his March 6 press conference, Sihanouk said: "I told Mr. (name indistinct) that there are Vietnamese infiltrating Cambodia. I am deeply worried about it, but the Americans have never bombed them. Instead, they bomb only the areas where there are, so to speak, neither isolated Vietnamese nor Vietnamese units which have infiltrated."

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

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"Dear friends, do you realize the importance of what I have said? This is very important to international opinion. This means that people will ask whether there are Viet Cong and Viet Minh infiltrating the country of the Prince. Yes, there are. But the Americans have not bombed the areas where there are Viet Cong and Viet Minh; they bomb only the areas where there are Cambodians."

5. A receptivity to an early resumption of relations with us, despite recent incidents.

Nevertheless, Sihanouk has made it clear that he cannot publicly condone these incidents and that he must protest them and seek compensation in order to preserve his neutrality.

Implications of Sihanouk's Actions

Sihanouk is genuinely concerned by Communist infiltration through his territory and use of it as a sanctuary. He recognizes that there is little he can do militarily to stop it and is apparently not adverse to very limited actions against the Communists in Cambodia. On the other hand, to condone publicly U.S. action would vitiate his neutral stance and invite even more serious difficulties for him with the Communists.

Sihanouk, therefore, appears to be seeking a set of tacit ground rules which preserve his neutrality and yet allow for an occasional incident inside Cambodian territory. In this, he may be moving toward a position somewhat analogous to Laos' Souvanna Phouma, who permits us to bomb the Communists, acknowledges the attacks privately, but insists that we not publicly state that we are taking these actions.

From what Sihanouk has indicated, the following ground rules may be inferred:

1. Very occasional U.S. attacks just inside the Cambodian border are anticipated, but should be kept to an absolute minimum

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

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2. The U. S. attacks should be in non-populated areas, particularly the tri-border area. Such attacks will not be in the presence of Cambodians or result in Cambodian casualties, and thus less likely to embarrass Sihanouk. In these circumstances, protests by Hanoi are more difficult since they would only acknowledge its use of Cambodian territory.

3. The U.S. should not publicly state that incidents inside Cambodia are deliberate since this would put Sihanouk on the spot. Rather, they should be characterized ambiguously, with a public "no comment" investigation, and an apology and compensation for an implied mistake.

4. Cambodia reserves the right to protest and seek compensation and to take other public steps to demonstrate its indignation and ergo its neutrality.

It is quite likely that such ground rules may never be more than tacit. A key, however, for Sihanouk will always be the public face given to border incidents.

Press Guidance

1. In conjunction with the routine release made by MACV covering B-52 operations in South Vietnam on March 18, MACV spokesman will issue a statement along the following lines: "B-52 missions in 6 strikes early this morning bombed these targets: 'Enemy activity, base camps and bunker and tunnel complexes 45 kilometers northeast of Tay Ninh city. (List two or more other B-52 targets struck as above)' "
2. In the event press inquiries are received following the execution of the Breakfast Plan as to whether or not U.S. B-52's have struck in Cambodia, U.S. spokesman will confirm that B-52's did strike on routine missions adjacent to the Cambodian border but state that he has no details and will look into this question.
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| Tab A | 1500 Report of attack on Saigon  |
| Tab B | 1515 Report of attack on Saigon  |
| Tab C | 1605 Report of attack on Saigon  |
| Tab D | Tabulation of casualties as a result of enemy rocket attacks since start of current offensive; Saigon, Hue and Danang. |
| Tab E | Tabulation of casualties of rocket attacks on Saigon only  |
| Tab F | Summary of telephone conversations between Henry Kissinger and the President; 3:35 p. m. , 3:44 p. m. , 3:45 p. m.     |
| Tab G | Memo signed by the President advising officials that there would be no comment on rocket attacks                       |
| Tab H | Memo for the record signed by the President summarizing actions to be taken in response to rocket attacks              |
| Tab I | Summary of telephone conversations between Henry Kissinger and Secretary Laird 4:00 p. m. and 5:40 p. m.               |

1

15 March 1969  
1500 EST

MEMORANDUM FOR COLONEL HAIG

FROM THE SITUATION ROOM

We have learned from the NMCC and the press that the Viet Cong have fired at least four rockets into downtown Saigon.

Two of the rockets, reportedly 122mm., landed in the 4th Precinct, one in the 1st, and one in the 9th. One Vietnamese civilian has been wounded and one house destroyed. (Press reports seven rockets, one hitting the Newport Bridge over the Saigon River.)

About five miles from Saigon a fuel dump at Nha Be was hit by three rockets and is on fire.

The attacks occurred early Sunday morning local time.



CONFIDENTIAL



THE NATIONAL MILITARY COMMAND CENTER

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

15 March 1969  
1515 EST

THE JOINT STAFF

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subject: Attack on Saigon/Nha Be

1. COMUSMACV informs that at 151332 EST, Saigon was hit by four rocket rounds. Two impacted in the Fourth Precinct, one in the First, and one in the Ninth. Initial fragmentary reports indicate one house was damaged and one civilian was wounded. More casualties are expected.

2. The POL dump at Nha Be, 5 nautical miles southeast of Saigon, was hit by three rocket rounds. One round hit a small POL tank starting a fire. The fire has been put out. The other two rounds caused no damage. There were no casualties reported.

*Robert L. Baughan Jr.*  
ROBERT L. BAUGHAN, JR.  
Rear Admiral, USN  
Deputy Director for  
Operations (NMCC)

Distribution:

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C

[89/5/1]

15 March 1969  
1605 EST

NOTE FOR COLONEL HAIG  
FROM THE SITUATION ROOM

Checks around the local ops ctrs were negative from NMCC and State Dept. CIA has a report from their station in Saigon with the only new information giving the impact points of the rockets:

4th Precinct--Two impacts damaging a residential building and wounding one person (presumably Vietnamese.

9th Precinct--impacted in a rice paddy

1st Precinct--impacted in the Saigon River.

DECLASSIFIED  
E.O. 13526, Section 3.5  
Per RAC  
By JMR NARA Date 6/13/2008  
[p 1 of 1]

D

15 March 1969

NOTE FOR COLONEL HAIG

FROM THE SITUATION ROOM

SUBJECT: Casualties inflicted by Enemy Rocket Attacks  
Since the Start of Current Offensive.

Following figures provided by NMCC/MACV:

|        |           |            |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| Saigon | 45 killed | 82 wounded |
| Hue    | 2 "       | 5 "        |

The casualties in Danang are classified by MACV as being an attack on a military installation but it was in the city.

|        |           |              |
|--------|-----------|--------------|
| Danag  | 1 killed  | 13 wounded   |
| Totals | 48 killed | 100 wounded. |

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SAIGON ATTACKS

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Weapons</u> | <u>Killed</u> | <u>Wounded</u> |
|-------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| MARCH 5     | 7 rockets      | 22            | 29             |
| MARCH 2     | 3 rockets      | 12            | 21             |
| 23 Feb      | 3 rockets      | 6             | 23             |
| 22 Feb      | 7 rockets      | 5             | 10             |

F

Dictated Summary of Telephone Conversations  
Between Secretary Laird and Henry Kissinger

March 15, 1969 4:00 p.m.

I informed Secretary Laird of the President's wishes to go ahead with COSVN. The President also wanted to make sure no one in Defense or State made any comment whatsoever regarding attack. Secretary Laird was to stand by for further instructions from the President.

March 15, 1969 5:40 p.m.

I confirmed the President's earlier wishes to go ahead. In conversations with General Wheeler, two possibilities arose: (1) only a breakfast plan and (2) split forces for target. I instructed Secretary Laird to lay both on and the decision would be made tomorrow (Sunday, March 16) as to which one would be executed. Secretary Laird said this would be done. The President wanted to have a meeting on Sunday to include myself, Secretary Rogers and Secretary Laird. The plan would go into effect Monday afternoon our time which would be Tuesday morning their time.

Dictated Summary of Telephone Conversations  
Between the President and Henry Kissinger

March 15, 1969 3:35 p.m.

The President ordered the immediate implementation of the breakfast plan. State should be notified only after the point of no return. The order is not appealable, therefore, Lodge is to make no complaint and Bunker is to be told there is to be no complaint -- only after the operation is beyond recall.

March 15, 1969 3:44 p.m.

The President indicated that he wanted orders to go to the following: Lodge, Bunker in Vietnam and Defense. The order is that all officials of this Government are not to comment on this attack "without my prior approval" for 72 hours. He indicated no comment, no warnings, no complaints, no protests publicly or privately, on or off the record.

March 15, 1969 3:45 p.m.

The President indicated that he wanted everything that would fly on its way to North Vietnam and indicated that there would be no appeal from that order.

## THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

TOP SECRET

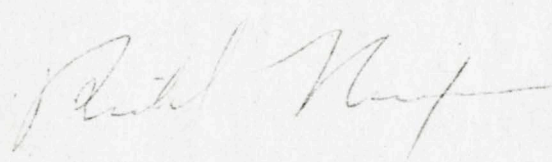
March 15, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: March 16 Rocket Attack on Saigon

The following directives were issued by the President at 1545, March 15, as a result of the most recent rocket attack on Saigon:

1. The President ordered the immediate implementation of the Breakfast Plan. (TOT - Tuesday morning, Saigon time; Monday afternoon, Washington time.)
2. The Department of State (and Ambassadors Lodge and Bunker) to be notified only after the point of no return in the implementation of the Plan.
3. Appropriate Government agencies and their field representatives are to be instructed that they will make no comment on the recent rocket attack on Saigon. (The President wishes to personally sign such a directive.)
4. The President directed the following additional military measures:
  - a. Maximum possible aerial reconnaissance over North Vietnam.
  - b. Increased Naval activity in international waters adjacent to North Vietnam.

TOP SECRET

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

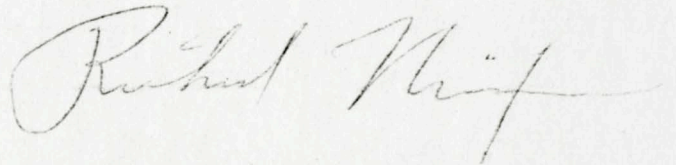
SECRET

March 15, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: March 16 Rocket Attack on Saigon

I want there to be absolutely no comment by any Government official or military commander on the March 16, local time, rocket attack on Saigon. Appropriate officials should be informed immediately.



cc: Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

SECRET

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