

File

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, as amended, Sect 3.5
NLNO7 + 10/13 per ltr. 3/25/2010
By JMR NARA Date 6/2/2010
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Received by EA/LC
from *Mr. Smith*
date *March 15, 1969*
time *10:45 A*

ADDRESSED WASHINGTON 156, REPEATED CANBERRA 412

U.S./CAMBODIAN RELATIONS

Action
Info copies to:

1. I HAVE JUST RECEIVED WASHINGTONS TELEGRAM 66 AND BELIEVE I AM IN A POSITION TO CLARIFY THE CAMBODIAN POSITION.

2. THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT IS QUITE AWARE OF THE INTENTION OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO MAKE A SIMPLE DECLARATION IN TERMS OF THE TEXT IN PARA 2 OF WASHINGTONS 52 WITH NO ADDITIONS NOR SUBSEQUENT COMMENT.

THE PROPOSED TEXT IS QUITE ACCEPTABLE IN THIS CONTEXT AND THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD BE QUITE HAPPY FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO MAKE SUCH A DECLARATION AT THE TIME OF ITS OWN CHOOSING, PREFERABLY SOON.

3. THE AMERICAN ATTITUDE ON BORDER INCIDENTS IS UNDERSTOOD AND DESPITE WHAT APPEARS TO IT TO A RECENT INTENSIFICATION OF SUCH INCIDENTS CALLED FOR NO FORMAL COMMENT FROM THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT.

THE ONLY POINT IN THE UNITED STATES MESSAGE WHICH RKG FELT THE NEED TO COMMENT ON WAS THE QUESTION OF FRONTIER DENARCATION AND THIS ONLY BECAUSE IT HAD BEEN REFERRED TO (NEEDLESSLY IN THE CAMBODIAN VIEW) IN THE MESSAGE I CONVEYED.

I THEREFORE REGARD THE CAMBODIAN ANSWER AS A POSITIVE ONE

AND WOULD PERSONALLY RECOMMEND IN FAVOUR OF ISSUING A
DECLARATION AT AN EARLY DATE.

4. I AM THE MORE CONFIDENT OF THIS INTERPRETATION SINCE I
HAD THE BENEFIT OF PRINCE SIHANOUK'S OWN VIEWS ON THIS
SUBJECT IN A CONVERSATION YESTERDAY, 14TH MARCH, AT A FAREWELL
LUNCHEON FOR THE DEPARTING DANISH AMBASSADOR AT KIRIROM AFTER
I HAD SEEN FOREIGN MINISTER PHURISSARA.

IN AN OFF THE RECORD TOUR D'ORIENTATION IN THE PRESENCE OF THE
BRITISH, DANISH AND ISRAELI AMBASSADORS, GENERALS NHIK
TIOULONG AND NGO HOU AND MYSELF, SIHANOUK SAID THAT HE FELT THAT
THE PROSPECTS FOR IMPROVED CAMBODIAN/AMERICAN RELATIONS WERE
GOOD AND HE BELIEVED THAT UNITED STATES WAS NOW VERY CLOSE TO
MAKING A DECLARATION OF RECOGNITION AND RESPECT FOR CAMBODIA'S
BORDERS.

5. UNDER PROBING FROM DANISH AND ISRAELI AMBASSADORS HE THEN
SAID THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAD ALREADY SUBMITTED
THROUGH THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY DRAFT DECLARATION WHICH WAS
QUITE ACCEPTABLE.

THEY HAD MADE TWO RESERVATIONS - NO, NOT RESERVATIONS -
CLARIFICATIONS, ONE IN REGARD TO FRONTIER DEMARCATION AND
AND ONE IN REGARD TO FRONTIER INCIDENTS.

DEMARCATION WAS IN HIS VIEW AN ESSENTIALLY TECHNICAL MATTER
WHICH CONCERNED ONLY THE TWO COUNTRIES DIRECTLY CONCERNED AND
WAS NOT A MATTER WHICH CONCERNED THIRD PARTIES OR ON WHICH CAMBODIA
WOULD EXPECT THEM TO FORMULATE ATTITUDES.

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 THIS RESPECT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE AN AMERICAN
EMBASSY IN PHNOM PENH, AS IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO TAKE ITS MILITARY
REPRESENTATIVES TO THE SCENE OF INCIDENTS AND THEIR REPORTS
WOULD CARRY GREATER WEIGHT WITH THE U.S. AUTHORITIES THAN THOSE
OF ICC OR THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY.

HE WOULD HOWEVER PREFER THAT U.S. EMBASSY SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED UNDER A CHARGE AND THEN WHILE RELATIONS WERE IMPROVING AND BECOMING STABILIZED, MODALITIES COULD BE WORKED OUT FOR THE SUBSEQUENT APPOINTMENT OF AN AMBASSADOR.

HE CLAIMED THAT HE HAD MADE THESE POINTS RECENTLY TO FRENCH AMBASSADOR.

6. THE ESSENTIAL POINT IN A U.S. DECLARATION WAS NOT WHETHER U.S. WOULD BE ABLE AT ALL TIMES TO RESPECT (UNDERLINE ONE) CAMBODIAN FRONTIERS.

IT WAS TO GET AN ASSURANCE THAT THE UNITED STATES RECOGNISED THE EXISTENCE OF DEFINED FRONTIERS AT ALL.

ONE COULD NOT RESPECT WHAT ONE DID NOT RECOGNISE, AND RESPECT WAS THE LESSER THING.

THE NLF AND THE DRVN HAD RECOGNISED CAMBODIA'S FRONTIERS, BUT WERE NOT RESPECTING THEM AT ALL.

THEY WERE NOT ONLY PRESENT IN THE EASTERN BORDER AREAS, BUT SOME OF THEM WERE LEADING KHMER ROUGE REBEL BANDS AS FAR AWAY AS PURSAT PROVINCE.

THEY WERE STAGING INCIDENTS ON THE FRONTIER.

THEY WERE CAUGHT OUT THE OTHER DAY AT BAVET, WHERE FIRE FROM ACROSS THE FRONTIER HAD COME NOT FROM US/ARVN TROOPS BUT FROM VIETCONG, ONE OF WHOM WAS ARRESTED.

HE ADMITTED THAT THE AIM HAD BEEN TO FABRICATE AN INCIDENT BETWEEN CAMBODIANS AND US/ARVN.

THE NLF REPRESENTATIVE HAD BEEN SUMMONED BY TILOULONG AND HAD ADMITTED THIS.

7. ONE OF THE REASONS FOR MAKING FRIENDS WITH THE UNITED STATES IN THE FRAME OF A POLICY OF BALANCE WAS THAT COMMUNISTS RESPECTED YOU AND WERE FRIENDLY ONLY SO LONG AS YOU HAD OTHER FRIENDS.

IF THEY THOUGHT YOU WERE ISOLATED THEY STARTED TO PUT THE SCREWS ON.

THE CHINESE HAD DONE THIS TO CAMBODIA A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO.

HE HAD NOT ONLY TAKEN SHARP MEASURES AGAINST THE LOCAL CHINESE EMBASSY AND CHINESE COMMUNITY BUT REALISED THAT HE MUST IMPROVE HIS RELATIONS FIRST WITH THE SOVIET UNION, AND SUBSEQUENTLY WITH THE

8. IT MAY BE OF INTEREST THAT IN THE SAME TOUR DHORIZON SIHANOUK REFERRED TO HIS DESIRE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THAILAND. HE EXONERATED THANOM AND THANAT FROM THE ACCUSATION OF BEING ANTI CAMBODIAN, AND SAID THAT THE REAL STUMBLING BLOCK WAS PRAPHAS. HE THEN ADDED THAT HE WOULD SHORTLY BE SENDING PENN NOUTH TO BANGKOK TO SEE WHETHER AGREEMENT COULD BE REACHED WITH THAILAND.

DESCHAMPS