

February 9, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR:

BILL TIMMONS

FROM:

DICK COOK

Regarding the attached memorandum of February 9 from Bob Haldeman, the following actions were taken.

1. I called Russ Blandford and asked for his help with members of the Armed Services Committee. Russ said Mel Laird's briefing before the Committee this afternoon "went very well". Blandford pointed out, however, that public reaction statements supporting the Laos operation by Hebert and other "news Makers" on the committee were pretty much foreclosed by the instructions from Laird and the committee staff that members were not to publicly discuss the operation in any detail following the briefing. Further, Blandford pointed out that his committee was disappointed that Laird chose to brief the Senate Armed Services Committee before the House committee. (This is an old problem and one that never will be resolved satisfactorily.) In any event, Blandford felt that we could have generated public reaction from key members of his committee had the briefings been handled somewhat differently.
2. Ev Bierman has been asked to get as many members as possible of the House Foreign Affairs Committee on record in support of the operation. Bill Mailliard is out of town as are several other Minority members. Nevertheless, I'll try to do whatever I can this afternoon and tomorrow morning.

Although there have been several individual members of the House briefed by Abshire and DOD, together with committee briefings today, it seems clear that one of the reasons few members have spoken out in support of Laos move is that most of the information they have received is of a confidential and highly privileged nature.



MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 8, 1971

By \_\_\_\_\_  
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
HIGH PRIORITY

MEMORANDUM FOR: MR. MACGREGOR  
FROM: H. R. HALDEMAN *HL*

As time goes on this week, background stories and even some statements by friendly Senators should be made to the effect that this movement in Laos, like the movement in Cambodia, is actually good news from the standpoint of the future in South-east Asia -- it means that we guarantee not only our withdrawal but that by such a move we gain insurance for attaining our long-range objectives -- that South Vietnam be able to survive and defend itself.

In other words, it is well for people throughout the country to feel hopeful about this operation rather than to be concerned about its negative aspect. The opposition will try to make it appear that this expands the war and gets the U.S. more deeply involved. Our line should be that this limits the war and is a blow like the landing in Europe on D-Day which gives everybody hope that the war will now be coming to an end.

Please line up the appropriate members of the House and Senate to make this point.

cc: Mr. Colson