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RESTRICTION CODES

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*File
Vietnam*

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TO THE KL SEGMENT OF HIS TRIP. [REDACTED] SAID THAT IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT SINGAPORE PLAYS THE HARD-LINER WHILE MALAYSIA TENDS TO TAKE A MORE ACCOMMODATING POSITION. POLCOUNS SAID THAT THE "GOOD-GUY, BAD-GUY" ROUTINE IS SOMETIMES A VERY EFFECTIVE NEGOTIATING TACTIC. [REDACTED] LAUGHINGLY REPLIED "YOU KNOW US TOO WELL". PALMER
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E.O. 12065: GDS 07/30/88 (PALMER, R.D.) DR-M
TAGS: PEPR, ASEAN, CB, VM, MY
SUBJECT: GOM VIEW OF VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT
REF: KUALA LUMPUR 5497

1. [REDACTED] ENTIRE TEXT.
2. [REDACTED] JULY 30 SHARED WITH POLCOUNS ELEMENTS OF GOM BRIEFING ON THACH'S VISIT PROVIDED TO ASEAN AMBASSADORS ON JULY 28. ALTHOUGH GOM CONFIRMED THAT NO MAJOR BREAKTHROUGHS WERE MADE DURING THE DISCUSSIONS, THEY POINTED TO THE FOLLOWING THREE SLIGHT MODIFICATIONS IN HANOI'S POSITION WHICH THEY INTERPRET AS POSITIVE:
 - A. THACH SOMEWHAT BACKED OFF FROM HANOI'S PREVIOUS POSITION THAT SITUATION IN KAMPUCHEA WAS IRREVERSIBLE. HE INDICATED THAT ONLY IRREVERSIBLE ELEMENT WAS THAT POL POT GROUP COULD NOT RETURN TO POWER.
 - B. THACH INDICATED THAT HANOI WAS NOW WILLING TO CONSIDER WITHDRAWAL OF VIETNAMESE TROOPS AS ONE ISSUE TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE PURSUIT OF ESTABLISHING PEACE AND SECURITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. HE CONTINUED TO MAINTAIN, HOWEVER, THAT COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF VIETNAMESE FORCES IS DEPENDENT UPON A RESOLUTION OF THE CHINESE THREAT TO VIETNAM.
 - C. THACH APPEARED TO BACK AWAY FROM HANOI'S PREVIOUS POSITION THAT THERE COULD BE NO DEALINGS WITH THE KHMER RESISTANCE GROUPS. HE INDICATED THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DEALINGS IF THEY COULD BE WORKED OUT WITH THE HENG SAMRIN GOVERNMENT.

3. [REDACTED] SAID THAT THE MALAYSIANS NOTED AN AIR OF "DESPERATION" IN THACH'S BEHAVIOR, WHICH THEY ATTRIBUTED TO THE INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT SITUATION IN WHICH VIETNAM FINDS ITSELF. 563 -85 5#8 3,3 OF DESPERATION WAS NOTED DURING THACH'S TALKS IN SINGAPORE.
(XUOU1A.

[REDACTED] REPLIED THAT PERHAPS THACH WAS STUNNED BY THE HARSH PRESS PLAY OF HIS VISIT IN SINGAPORE, AND THEREFORE ATTEMPTED TO ASSURE A MORE UPEBEAT CAST

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD
E.O. 1203#: GDS 07/21/82 (PALMER, R.D.) OR-M
TAGS: PEPR, ASEAN, CB, MY
SUBJECT: MALAYSIA TO RECEIVE THACH WITH "OPEN MIND"
REF: KUALA LUMPUR 5073

1. (U) IN A PRESS INTERVIEW JULY 20, MFA OFFICIAL (MOST LIKELY FOREIGN MINISTER GHAZALI SHAFIE OR SECRETARY GENERAL ZAKARIA) COMMENTING ON THE JULY 25-27 VISIT OF VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN CO THACH STATED "WE WILL RECEIVE HIM WITH AN OPEN MIND". "WE ARE PREPARING," HE CONTINUED, "TO LISTEN TO VIETNAMESE VIEWS OF EFFORTS TO FIND A SOLUTION TO THE KAMPUCHEAN PROBLEM". HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH MALAYSIA AND ITS OTHER ASEAN PARTNERS HAD REPEATEDLY STRESSED THAT THE POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THE KAMPUCHEAN PROBLEM COULD ONLY BE ACHIEVED AFTER A COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF FOREIGN TROOPS FROM CAMBODIA, MALAYSIA WAS PREPARED TO LISTEN TO WHAT HANOI HAD TO OFFER AND IS INTERESTED TO KNOW ABOUT VIETNAMESE PLANS TO WITHDRAW ITS TROOPS FROM KAMPUCHEA.

2. (U) IN RESPONSE TO A QUERY ABOUT THACH'S IMPLIED THREAT IN SINGAPORE AGAINST THE ASEAN STATES, THE OFFICIAL SAID "WE CANNOT ASSESS FROM WHAT HAS APPEARED IN THE PRESS," AND SPECULATED THAT THACH'S SINGAPORE STATEMENT COULD REFLECT HIS NEW STYLE OF DIPLOMACY.

3. (U) THE ARTICLE ASSERTED THAT MALAYSIA WOULD ASSURE THE VIETNAMESE THAT BY HELPING TO CREATE AN INDEPENDENT AND NONALIGNED KAMPUCHEA, HANOI WOULD SOLVE SOME OF ITS PROBLEMS. NONALIGNED KAMPUCHEA WOULD NOT HARBOR ACTIVITIES OF ANY FOREIGN POWER TO SUBVERT VIETNAM AND WITH THIS ASSURANCE VIETNAM COULD REDIRECT ITS HUGE FUNDS NOW BEING SPENT IN KAMPUCHEA FOR ITS MUCH NEEDED DEVELOPMENT. THIS WOULD ALSO HELP HANOI, THE ARTICLE CONTINUED, TO CUT DOWN ON ITS DEPENDENCE ON MOSCOW.

4. (U) THE VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTER IS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE IN KUALA LUMPUR ON JULY 25 TO HOLD DISCUSSIONS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER GHAZALI SHAFIE AND PAY A CALL ON PRIME MINISTER MAHATHIR ON JULY 26 AND MEET WITH TRADE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER TENGGU AHMAD RITHAUDDEEN THE FOLLOWING DAY. APPARENTLY A PREVIOUSLY PLANNED VISIT TO PENANG HAS BEEN CANCELLED. ASIDE FROM THE POLITICAL ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED, OTHER AREAS OF BILATERAL COOPERATION WOULD BE TAKEN UP WITH THE VIETNAMESE LEADER.

5. (U) COMMENT: TWO MFA OFFICIALS IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS WITH POLCOUNS ON JULY 20 CONFIRMED MALAYSIA'S OPEN-MINDED OFFICIAL POSTURE AT THIS POINT. THEY EXPLAINED THAT WHILE THE GOM SAW LITTLE PROMISE IN HANOI'S RECENT PROPOSALS, IT DID NOT WISH TO APPEAR TO PRECLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF BENEFICIAL RESULTS EMERGING FROM THE THACH VISIT. ONE OF THE OFFICIALS REPEATED THE VIEWS WHICH WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY HEARD FROM MFA THAT THE VIETNAMESE PROPOSALS DO NOT ADDRESS THE MAJOR PROBLEM IN KAMPUCHEA AND ARE DESIGNED TO FORCE ASEAN TO ACCEPT A VIETNAMESE FAIT ACCOMPLI. THE OFFICIALS SAID THAT MALAYSIA HAD NOT YET RECEIVED A READOUT ON THE TALKS IN SINGAPORE, BUT AGREED THAT THE PRESS REPORTS DID NOT APPEAR HOPEFUL. PALMER BT

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E.O. 12065: GDS 07/29/88 (PALMER, R.D.) OR-M
TAGS: PEPR, ASEAN, CB, MY
SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTER'S DISCUSSIONS
WITH GOM
REF: KUALA LUMPUR 5454

1. ~~TO~~ ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY. AT A BRIEFING FOR THE AMBASSADORS OF THE ASEAN DIALOGUE COUNTRIES JULY 29 ON THE VISIT OF VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN CO THACH, [REDACTED] SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THERE WERE NO BREAKTHROUGHS OR INDICATIONS OF CONCESSIONS ON HANOI'S PART, THE GOM THOUGHT THE DISCUSSIONS WERE USEFUL IN IMPROVING APPRECIATION OF THE RESPECTIVE POSITIONS ON KAMPUCHEA. SOME IDEAS OF THE POSSIBILITY OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE WERE RAISED AND THACH INDICATED THAT THE COMPOSITION, KAMPUCHEAN REPRESENTATION AND AGENDA OF SUCH A CONFERENCE ARE NEGOTIABLE. [REDACTED] STATED THAT WHILE MALAYSIA HAS AGREED TO STUDY THE POSSIBILITIES OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, THE CONFERENCE WOULD NOT BE THE SAME AS THAT PROPOSED IN THE HO CHI MINH CITY INDOCHINESE DECLARATION AND THAT MALAYSIA WOULD NOT IN ANY WAY DEPART FROM THE ICK. THE GOM FELT THAT THE FACT THAT THACH TRAVELED TO ASEAN STATES AND INDICATED AN INTEREST IN CONTINUING A DIALOGUE WAS A GOOD SIGN. END SUMMARY.

3. [REDACTED] PROVIDED THE ASEAN-DIALOGUE AMBASSADORS PLUS SEVERAL OTHERS INCLUDING YUGOSLAVIA, AN EXTENSIVE BRIEFING ON THE DISCUSSIONS WHICH WERE HELD BETWEEN MALAYSIAN LEADERS AND VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN CO THACH JULY 26-28. THACH MET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER GHAZALI THREE

TIMES INCLUDING A BREAKFAST MEETING ON JULY 28 AND HAD ONE SESSION WITH THE PRIME MINISTER ON JULY 26. THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THE DISCUSSIONS WAS ALMOST ENTIRELY ON KAMPUCHEA, AND [REDACTED] DESCRIBED THE ATMOSPHERE AS "FRIENDLY AND CORDIAL BUT SERIOUS AND EARNEST". BOTH SIDES WERE CANDID AND FRANK IN PRESENTING THEIR VIEWS, HE SAID.

4. THACH EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR MALAYSIA'S PAST POLICIES PARTICULARLY ITS PROMOTION OF THE ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, AND RECALLED THAT THE GOM WAS THE FIRST COUNTRY TO INITIATE A DIALOGUE BETWEEN ASEAN AND THE INDOCHINESE STATES. AS A RESULT, HE SAID, MALAYSIA IS IN A GOOD POSITION TO ACT AS A "BRIDGE" BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES. HE EXPRESSED SURPRISE, HOWEVER, THAT MALAYSIA WAS SO ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KHMER COALITION GOVERNMENT (CGDK). HE SAID THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THIS NEW ENTITY WOULD HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE CURRENT SITUATION AND COULD VERY WELL WORSEN ASEAN/INDOCHINESE RELATIONS. THACH IDENTIFIED THREE AREAS WHERE THE PERCEPTIONS AND APPROACHES OF ASEAN AND INDOCHINESE STATES DIFFER:

1. ASEAN IS CONCERNED WITH THE VIETNAMESE OCCUPATION OF KAMPUCHEA AND THE WITHDRAWAL OF VIETNAMESE TROOPS. VIETNAM WAS CONCERNED WITH THE CHINESE THREAT AND SO LONG AS THAT THREAT REMAINS VIETNAM COULD NOT TOTALLY WITHDRAW FROM KAMPUCHEA.
2. ASEAN WAS CONCERNED WITH THE SECURITY, SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THAILAND, WHEREAS THE INDOCHINESE STATES WERE INTERESTED IN THE SECURITY, SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF KAMPUCHEA. THAILAND, HE SAID, MUST STOP SUPPORT FOR THE KHMER ROUGE AND OTHER REACTIONARY GROUPS. HE ASKED WHETHER ASEAN'S REAL INTEREST WAS SECURITY OF THAILAND OR TO CHANGE THE SITUATION IN KAMPUCHEA?

3. ASEAN PROPOSED THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON KAMPUCHEA, WHICH WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO INDOCHINA. THE INDOCHINESE STATES PROPOSED A REGIONAL CON- BT

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REFERENCE WHICH WAS IN TURN REJECTED BY ASEAN. THE INDOCHINESE STATES HAVE NOW PROPOSED AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND WERE PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE ON ITS COMPOSITION, KAMPUCHEAN REPRESENTATION AND AGENDA.

5. THACH SAID THAT ASEAN HARBORED TWO ILLUSIONS: ONE WAS THAT THE KHMER COALITION CAN WORK AND SECOND THAT VIETNAM WOULD COLLAPSE UNDER PRESSURE. HE POINTED OUT THAT SINCE 1979, DESPITE GUERRILLA ACTIVITY AND OTHER PRESSURES, VIETNAM AND KAMPUCHEA HAD SURVIVED.

6. GHAZALI ASKED HOW THE FEAR OF THE CHINESE THREAT RELATED TO THE VIETNAM OCCUPATION OF KAMPUCHEA. THACH SAID THAT FROM 1965 ON, MANY SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES TOOK PLACE THROUGH KAMPUCHEA AND SINCE 1975 THE CHINESE SUPPORTED THE POL POT GROUP IN COMMITTING AGGRESSION AGAINST VIETNAM INCLUDING DELIVERING SUPPLIES BY BOAT AND AIR TO DISSIDENT GROUPS IN VIETNAM. FINALLY, IN 1979, CHINA ATTACKED VIETNAM.

7. THE VIETNAMESE OCCUPATION, ACCORDING TO THACH, WAS AN EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT OF SELF-DEFENSE AGAINST A CHINESE THREAT AND WAS NOT DIRECTED PRIMARILY AGAINST THE POL POT GENOCIDAL REGIME. ALTHOUGH, HE SAID, THE PEOPLE OF KAMPUCHEA WELCOMED THE VIETNAMESE FORCES FOR LIBERATING THEM FROM THAT OPPRESSIVE REGIME. HE COMPARED VIETNAMESE ACTION IN KAMPUCHEA WITH THE U.S. GOING INTO BERLIN IN EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT OF SELF-DEFENSE. THACH SAID THE VIETNAMESE HAVE ALREADY MADE A NUMBER OF WITHDRAWALS, BUT HAVE NOT PUBLICIZED THEM BECAUSE THE KAMPUCHEANS FEAR BEING LEFT TO THE MERCIES OF POL POT. THE KAMPUCHEANS ARE NOT AFRAID OF VIETNAMESE TROOPS, WHAT THEY ARE AFRAID OF ARE THE VIETNAMESE TROOPS LEAVING, ACCORDING TO THACH.

8. GHAZALI TOLD THACH THAT THERE ARE THREE TYPES OF THREATS WHICH HE COULD SEE THE CHINESE PRESENTING TO VIETNAM. THE FIRST IS A DIRECT MILITARY THREAT FROM THE NORTH THROUGH LAOS OR THEIR COMMON BORDER AREA. ON THIS THREAT ASEAN CAN DO NOTHING TO HELP, IT IS UP TO VIETNAM TO NEGOTIATE THIS DIRECTLY WITH CHINA. THE SECOND THREAT WOULD BE A MEDIUM-RANGE NUCLEAR ATTACK ON MISSILE BASES IN VIETNAM. THIS WOULD ONLY ARISE IF VIETNAM PROVIDED THE SOVIETS WITH STRATEGIC BASES IN VIETNAM, AND GHAZALI DOUBTED THAT VIETNAM WOULD ALLOW THESE INSTALLATIONS. HE RECALLED THAT DURING THEIR LAST MEETING IN 1980 THACH HAD SAID THAT THIS WOULD NOT HAPPEN, AND THEREFORE THIS THREAT SHOULD NOT ARISE. THE THIRD THREAT WOULD INVOLVE SUBVERSION THROUGH KAMPUCHEA. ASEAN UNDERSTANDS THIS TYPE OF THREAT WELL SINCE ALL OF THE ASEAN COUNTRIES HAVE AND ARE EXPERIENCING THIS TYPE OF SUBVERSION. HOWEVER, GHAZALI WARNED THAT THE OCCUPATION OF KAMPUCHEA AND THE SETTING UP OF A VIETNAM-SPONSORED REGIME IN THAT COUNTRY WILL NOT RELIEVE THAT THREAT BUT WILL ACTUALLY AGGRAVATE IT. THE WAY TO SOLVE THIS THREAT IS TO RESTORE AND RESPECT THE INDEPENDENCE OF KAMPUCHEA BY ALLOWING THE KAMPUCHEANS TO SELECT THEIR OWN GOVERNMENT. A NEUTRAL KAMPUCHEA, ONE WHOSE NEUTRALITY IS GUARANTEED BY THE BIG POWERS, THE POLICY THAT ASEAN IS ADVOCATING THROUGH THE ICK, CAN BE HELPFUL TO VIETNAM IN ELIMINATING THIS THREAT. GHAZALI EMPHASIZED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE COALITION GOVERNMENT IS TO FACILITATE A POLITICAL SOLUTION, NOT TO PURSUE A MILITARY COURSE. AT THIS POINT THACH OBSERVED THAT SOME COUNTRIES ADVISED SUPPLYING ARMS TO THE COALITION. GHAZALI REPLIED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE ARMS WAS TO ALLOW SIHANOUK

AND SON SANN TO ACHIEVE PARITY WITH THE KHMER ROUGE AND THEREBY PREVENT THE KHMER ROUGE FROM RETURNING TO POWER. SUCH A RETURN, HE SAID, IS NOT IN VIETNAM'S INTEREST. GHAZALI TOLD THACH THAT WHILE VIETNAM MAY THINK THE CGDK IS AN ILLUSION, ONCE VIETNAM UNDERSTANDS THAT IT IS NOT AN ILLUSION, IT SHOULD SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR A REASONABLE SETTLEMENT IN KAMPUCHEA.
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9. THACH SAID THAT VIETNAM BELIEVED THAT ALL PARTIES SHOULD WORK FOR AN OVERALL SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF PEACE AND SECURITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, BUT IF THAT WERE NOT POSSIBLE NOW, VIETNAM WAS WILLING TO GO STEP BY STEP, SUCH AS WORKING OUT A MODUS VIVENDI WITH CHINA, THEN THAILAND, PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL OF VIETNAMESE TROOPS, ETC.


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11.  THEN DESCRIBED THE MEETING OF JULY 27 BETWEEN GHAZALI AND THACH AS ONE IN WHICH BOTH SIDES "THOUGHT ALOUD". A NUMBER OF IDEAS AND INITIATIVES WERE DISCUSSED INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF "ANOTHER" INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE (NOT THE ICK). IN TERMS OF SUCH A CONFERENCE GHAZALI ASKED WHO WOULD REPRESENT KAMPUCHEA. HE ASKED HOW VIETNAM WOULD REACT TO ALL KHMER FACTIONS ATTENDING AS OBSERVERS. THACH DID

NOT RESPOND.  SAID THAT IT WOULD BE PREMATURE TO DESCRIBE SOME OF THE OTHER IDEAS WHICH CAME UP DURING THIS SESSION SINCE IT COULD LEAD TO CONFUSION OR UNWARRANTED EXPECTATIONS. HE SAID THAT THEY WOULD BE STUDYING THESE IDEAS AND DISCUSSING THEM WITH THEIR ASEAN PARTNERS.

12. IN REPLY TO A QUERY AS TO THE RELATION BETWEEN THE ICK AND THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE WHICH WAS BEING DISCUSSED WITH THACH,  EMPHASIZED THAT MALAYSIA WILL NOT IN ANY WAY DEPART FROM THE ICK. HE SAID IT IS TOO EARLY TO SAY WHAT THE IDEA OF "ANOTHER" CONFERENCE MAY LEAD TO, PERHAPS NOTHING, BUT IT IS INTERESTING TO STUDY. HE REPEATED AGAIN DEFENSIVELY "I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT WE WILL NOT DEPART FROM THE ICK". HE REITERATED THAT THIS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IS CERTAINLY NOT THE ONE PROPOSED IN THE RECENT HO CHI MINH CITY COMMUNIQUE.

13.  SAID THAT GHAZALI TOLD THACH THAT ASEAN'S ZOPFAN CONCEPT IS NOT DIRECTED AT EXCLUDING GREAT POWER PRESENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA BUT RATHER GREAT POWER INTERFERENCE AND DOMINANCE. THE GREAT POWERS, GHAZALI ADDED, HAVE A LEGITIMATE RIGHT TO BE INVOLVED IN THE AREA, BUT NOT TO DOMINATE IT.  WAS LOOKING AT AMBASSADOR AT THIS POINT AND WINKING IN AN ALMOST CONSPIRATORIAL MANNER.)

14.  CONCLUDED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER GHAZALI WAS HAPPY WITH THE THACH VISIT EVEN THOUGH THERE WERE NO BREAKTHROUGHS AND HANOI GAVE NO INDICATION OF COMPROMISE NOR CONCESSIONS. THE FACT THAT THACH MADE THE TRIP INDICATES THAT HANOI VALUES ASEAN FRIENDSHIP AND HOPEFULLY HANOI WILL TAKE THE STEPS NECESSARY TO MAKE THE FRIENDSHIP "EASIER".

15. COMMENT: WHILE BASICALLY AGREEING WITH SINGAPORE'S REACTION THAT THACH BROUGHT NO NEW FLEXIBILITY, THE GOM WAS ANXIOUS TO AVOID THE NEGATIVE CONFRONTATIONAL IMAGE FOR THE KL STOP WHICH CHARACTERIZED THACH'S VISIT TO SINGAPORE. WE ARE NOT COMPLETELY CERTAIN AT THIS POINT AS TO BT

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WHAT GHAZALI HAS IN MIND REGARDING THE IDEA OF
"ANOTHER" INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, BUT THE PLEDGE
TO STUDY THE IDEA MAY BE AN ATTEMPT TO SALVAGE
SOME RESULTS FROM WHAT THE MALAYSIANS THEMSELVES
CANDIDLY VIEW AS AN OTHERWISE BOOTLESS VISIT.

PALMER

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*File
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CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD
EO 12065: RDS-2 07/14/02 (DEAN, JOHN GUNTHER) OR-M
TAGS: PEPR, MILI, VM, US
SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE EXHIBIT OF CAPTURED INFILTRATOR

1. (U) AS DEPARTMENT WILL KNOW FROM WIRE SERVICE REPORTS, THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT ON JULY 13 STAGED A PRESS CONFERENCE IN HANOI, PRODUCING A FORMER SOUTH VIETNAMESE OFFICIAL NAMED VO DAI TON, WHO HAD ALLEGEDLY BEEN CAPTURED WHILE TRYING TO INFILTRATE INTO VIETNAM FROM LAOS LAST NOVEMBER. PRESS REPORTS INDICATE TON CLAIMED THAT HIS MISSION HAD THE SUPPORT OF CHINA, THAILAND AND THE US, SPECIFICALLY INCLUDING US CIA AGENTS.

2. ~~(SECRET/NOFORN)~~ WE KNOW OF NO USG INVOLVEMENT IN ANY WAY WITH TON. THERE MAY, HOWEVER, HAVE BEEN CONTACTS BETWEEN TON AND/OR HIS ASSOCIATES WITH PRIVATE AMERICAN GROUPS WHICH COULD EXPLAIN HIS ASSERTIONS OF US ASSISTANCE.

DEAN
BT

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File Vietnam

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PARIS FOR BIGELOW
CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD
E. O. 12065: GDS 7/20/88 (SPRUCE, WILLIAM E.) OR-P
TAGS: PEPR, VN, CB, SN
SUBJECT: (U) SINGAPORE FOREIGN MINISTER BRIEFS PRESS ON
TALKS WITH SRV FOREIGN MINISTER THACH
REF: A) SINGAPORE 6773, B) SINGAPORE 7243,
C) SINGAPORE 7621

1. (U) SUMMARY: VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN CO THACH MET FOR THREE HOURS JULY 19 WITH HIS SINGAPOREAN COUNTERPARTS. AFTER THE TALKS, FOREIGN MINISTER DHANABALAN HELD A "PRE-EMPTIVE" PRESS BRIEFING AND SAID SINGAPORE AND VIETNAM ARE "JUST AS FAR APART" AS BEFORE. VIETNAM WAS PREPARED TO "SLOG IT OUT FOR THE NEXT FIVE OR EVEN 20 YEARS." THACH, ACCORDING TO DHANABALAN, OUTLINED FIVE SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE OF VIETNAMESE-ASEAN RELATIONS, INCLUDING CONTINUED CONFRONTATION AND A SINO-VIETNAMESE RAPPROCHEMENT. THACH REJECTED THE ASEAN SOLUTION TO THE CAMBODIAN PROBLEM, REITERATING THAT CAMBODIA WAS PART OF THE SINO-VIETNAMESE PROBLEM. DHANABALAN SAID HE DID NOT DISCUSS THE VIETNAMESE PARTIAL TROOP WITHDRAWAL BECAUSE IT WAS "MEANINGLESS" WITHOUT A COMMITMENT TO A COMPLETE PULLOUT. THACH DELIVERED "A VEILED THREAT" BY REFERRING TO POSSIBLE SRV SUPPORT TO INSURGENT MOVEMENTS IN ASEAN, ACCORDING TO DHANABALAN. THACH CALLED THE TALKS "USEFUL AND FRIENDLY" BUT REFUSED TO DISCUSS THEM IN DETAIL. HE WILL HOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE AT 1600 ON JULY 20. HE DEPARTS JULY 21 FOR RANGOON. NO FURTHER MEETINGS ARE SCHEDULED AT MFA. END SUMMARY

2. (U) SINGAPORE SECOND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER (FOREIGN AFFAIRS) RAJARATNAM AND FOREIGN MINISTER DHANABALAN HELD THREE HOURS OF TALKS JULY 19 WITH VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN CO THACH. THACH WAS ACCOMPANIED BY TRAN TIEN VINH, PHAN DOAN NAM, AND TRAN HUY CHEONG. FOLLOWING THE MEETINGS, DHANABALAN GAVE A PRESS BRIEFING IN WHICH

HE SAID "AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, WE'RE JUST AS FAR APART. THERE'S BEEN ABSOLUTELY NO SIGN OF FLEXIBILITY FROM VIETNAM." THACH CALLED THE TALKS "USEFUL AND FRIENDLY" BUT REFUSED TO DISCUSS DETAILS. HE WILL HOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE JULY 20 AT 1600 AND DEPARTS FOR RANGOON JULY 21.

3. (U) IN HIS PRESS BRIEFING, DHANABALAN SAID THAT THACH HAD OUTLINED FIVE POSSIBLE SCENARIOS FOR FUTURE VIETNAMESE-ASEAN RELATIONS: (1) CONTINUED CONFRONTATION FOR FIVE OR EVEN 20 YEARS; (2) NORMALIZATION BASED ON A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION TO THE CAMBODIAN PROBLEM; (3) A MAJOR WAR BETWEEN VIETNAM AND CHINA; (4) SETTLEMENT OF ASEAN-VIETNAMESE DIFFERENCES THROUGH RECOGNITION THAT CHINA IS THE COMMON THREAT; (5) RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN CHINA AND VIETNAM AFTER WHICH THE TWO COMMUNIST POWERS COULD COMBINE AGAINST ASEAN. DHANABALAN SAID THAT THACH EXPRESSED HOPE FOR THE SECOND OPTION BUT VIETNAM WAS PREPARED FOR ANY OF THE FIVE EVENTUALITIES, INCLUDING RAPPROCHEMENT WITH CHINA. DHANABALAN ALSO SAID THAT THACH "WAS VERY UNHAPPY OVER THE COALITION GOVERNMENT" AND "THOUGHT THIS WAS INTERFERENCE BY ASEAN IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE INDOCHINESE STATES." ACCORDING TO DHANABALAN, THACH DREW A PARALLEL WITH COMMUNIST INSURGENT ACTIVITIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND SAID THAT "VIETNAM COULD DO THE SAME (SUPPORT INSURGENTS) ALTHOUGH IT HAD NOT DONE SO YET." DHANABALAN TERMED THIS "A VEILED THREAT" TO ASEAN.

4. (U) DHANABALAN SAID, "IT WAS QUITE CLEAR THAT VIETNAM WAS NOT PREPARED TO SEEK A SOLUTION TO THE CAMBODIAN PROBLEM AS SUCH," AND THAT THACH HAD MADE IT CLEAR THAT THERE WOULD BE NO FINAL VIETNAMESE WITHDRAWAL FROM CAMBODIA UNTIL CHINA SIGNED A NON-AGGRESSION PACT WITH VIETNAM. SINGAPORE'S SUGGESTION THAT THE ASEAN SOLUTION TO THE CAMBODIAN PROBLEM COULD REMOVE THE THREAT TO VIETNAMESE SECURITY FROM CAMBODIA WAS, ACCORDING TO DHANABALAN, COMPLETELY REJECTED BY THACH.

5. (U) DHANABALAN SAID THAT SINGAPORE DID NOT DISCUSS THE VIETNAMESE PARTIAL TROOP WITHDRAWAL BECAUSE "WITHOUT A COMMITMENT TO TOTAL WITHDRAWAL (IT) IS MEANINGLESS."
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HE ALSO SAID THAT VIETNAM WAS ONLY PREPARED TO TALK ABOUT A TROOP WITHDRAWAL AND SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE REMOVAL OF ALL FOREIGN TROOPS FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA. THIS, DHANABALAN SAID, WOULD MEAN THE REMOVAL OF THE U. S. BASES IN THE PHILIPPINES AND THE ENDING OF DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS OF OTHER ASEAN COUNTRIES.

6. ~~(LOU)~~ THACH WILL NOT MEET WITH DHANABALAN TODAY (JULY 20). HE HAS A MEETING SCHEDULED WITH THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD (HDB) TO LEARN ABOUT SINGAPORE'S AMBITIOUS PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAM.
7. (LOU) A REPORT ON OUR BRIEFING BY MFA WILL FOLLOW BY SEPTEL.
8. ~~(C)~~ COMMENT: MFA SOURCES HAVE TOLD US THAT THEY ARE VERY CONCERNED ABOUT THACH'S ABILITY TO USE THE PRESS TO HIS OWN ADVANTAGE. DHANABALAN'S PRESS BRIEFING WAS ARRANGED SO AS TO PREEMPT THACH'S OWN PRESS CONFERENCE. SINGAPORE APPARENTLY HOPES THAT THE BRIEFING WILL DEPRIVE THACH OF THE INITIATIVE AND FORCE HIM TO RESPOND TO DHANABALAN'S STATEMENTS RATHER THAN LAUNCH ANOTHER SMOKE BARRAGE. END COMMENT. SMITH
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E.O. 12065: N/A

TAGS: PEPR, ASEAN, CB, MY

SUBJECT: MAHATHIR WARNS HANOI OF "VERY DANGEROUS
PRECEDENT"

REF: KUALA LUMPUR 5357

1. (LOU) ENTIRE TEXT.

2. IN A PRESS BRIEFING JULY 26 FOLLOWING MEETING BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER MAHATHIR AND VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN CO THACH, MFA SEC GEN ZAKARIA SAID THE PRIME MINISTER TOLD THE HANOI LEADER THAT ITS INVASION OF KAMPUCHEA SETS A "VERY DANGEROUS PRECEDENT" FOR OTHER BIG COUNTRIES TO MARCH INTO NEIGHBORING TERRITORY SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY DO NOT LIKE THE GOVERNMENT IN POWER. SUCH ACTION, MAHATHIR CONTINUED, WILL CAUSE "SMALL COUNTRIES TO FEEL THREATENED BECAUSE ANY BIG NEIGHBOR CAN COME IN IF IT FEELS THREATENED OR DOES NOT LIKE THE GOVERNMENT". MAHATHIR TOLD THACH THAT THE HENG SAMRIN ADMINISTRATION "PUT THERE BY VIETNAM CAN NOT HAVE THE LEGITIMACY OF A GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLES' CHOICE. "WE ARE TRYING TO FIND A POLITICAL SOLUTION FOR KAMPUCHEA BY WHICH IT CAN HAVE A GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLES' CHOICE", HE SAID.

3. THACH EXPLAINED TO THE PRIME MINISTER THAT THE VIETNAMESE FORCES WERE IN KAMPUCHEA AS AN EXERCISE OF SELF-DEFENSE BECAUSE KAMPUCHEA HAD BEEN A THREAT TO THE SECURITY OF VIETNAM. HE SAID THAT THE VIETNAMESE VIEWED THE KAMPUCHEAN ISSUE AS A QUESTION OF THE CHINESE THREAT TO VIETNAM, WHILE ASEAN WAS CONCERNED WITH THE VIETNAMESE OCCUPATION OF KAMPUCHEA AND THE WITHDRAWAL OF ITS TROOPS.

4. ZAKARIA COMMENTED THAT ALTHOUGH "WE HAVE NOT

YET SEEN THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL," THE PRIME MINISTER WELCOMES THE VISIT OF MR. THACH, AND HOPES THAT SUCH DISCUSSIONS WILL RESULT IN A BETTER UNDERSTANDING THAT COULD LEAD TO A SOLUTION. ZAKARIA DESCRIBED THE TALKS AS "FRIENDLY AND SERIOUS," AND SAID THE PRIME MINISTER SAW THE OVERALL OBJECTIVES OF THE TWO COUNTRIES "SIMILAR" EXCEPT FOR THE KAMPUCHEA PROBLEM. ZAKARIA ANNOUNCED THAT THACH EXTENDED AN INVITATION FROM PRIME MINISTER PHAM VAN DANG TO MAHATHIR TO VISIT VIETNAM. MAHATHIR ACCEPTED THE INVITATION, BUT THE DATE WILL BE FIXED LATER.

5. CONCERNING THACH'S MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER GHAZALI SHAFIE EARLIER IN THE DAY, ZAKARIA SAID THAT THE TWO MINISTERS SPENT ALL THEIR TIME ON THE KAMPUCHEAN ISSUE, SETTING FORTH THEIR RESPECTIVE SUGGESTIONS ON HOW THE PROBLEM COULD BEST BE SOLVED. GHAZALI TOLD THACH THAT ASEAN WOULD LIKE A POLITICAL SOLUTION ACCORDING TO THE DECLARATION OF THE UN-SPONSORED INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON KAMPUCHEA (ICK). HE SAID THAT THE DECLARATION TOOK INTO ACCOUNT VIETNAM'S SECURITY INTEREST BY SEEKING A NEUTRAL KAMPUCHEA WHICH ALSO INCLUDED THE WITHDRAWAL OF VIETNAMESE TROOPS FROM THAT COUNTRY. THIS WOULD INSURE, HE ADDED, THAT FOREIGN POWERS WOULD NOT INTERFERE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF KAMPUCHEA. GHAZALI EXPLAINED THAT THE FORMATION OF THE TRIPARTITE COALITION GOVERNMENT OF DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA WAS IN KEEPING WITH A POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM.

6. THACH REPLIED THAT AS LONG AS THE CHINESE THREAT TO VIETNAM REMAINED, IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE TO COMPLETELY WITHDRAW HANOI'S TROOPS FROM KAMPUCHEA. HE SAID HE REGARDED THE COALITION

GOVERNMENT HEADED BY PRINCE SIHANOUK AS AN INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF KAMPUCHEA. THACH DENIED THAT HE HAD MADE A VEILED THREAT OF SUBVERSION AGAINST ASEAN MEMBERS. WHAT WAS MEANT, HE SAID, WAS THAT IF THE ASEAN COUNTRIES SHOULD CONTINUE TO CARRY OUT HOSTILE ACTIVITIES AGAINST VIETNAM AND THE OTHER INDOCHINA STATES THEN THEY DESERVE THE RIGHT OF SELF-DEFENSE.
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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

7. ZAKARIA SAID THAT AT THE MEETING WITH GHAZALI, THACH AGAIN CALLED FOR AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOUTHEAST ASIA TO BE ATTENDED BY THE THREE INDOCHINESE STATES, THE ASEAN MEMBER STATES, BURMA, INDIA AND THE FIVE PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL.

8. THE STORY NOTED THAT THACH MAY BE SPENDING AN EXTRA DAY IN KL, LEAVING JULY 28 INSTEAD OF THE 27TH. ZAKARIA, IN RESPONSE TO A QUERY SAID "IT IS POSSIBLE, BUT YOU HAD BETTER ASK HIM", INDICATING THAT THE VIETNAMESE HAD REQUESTED THE ADDITIONAL DAY TO FIT IN WITH THACH'S ONWARD SCHEDULE.

9. COMMENT: IT APPEARS THE MALAYSIANS TOOK A HARD LINE WITH THACH. HEADLINES IN THE LOCAL PRESS, WHICH USUALLY REFLECT THE OFFICIAL LINE, REFLECT THIS. THE NEW STRAITS TIMES' FRONT PAGE BANNER WAS "HANOI'S DANGEROUS PRECEDENT, DR. M" WHILE THE STAR SAID "MOVE OUT DR. M TELLS HANOI".

10. WHILE GHAZALI SHAFIE GENERALLY TAKES THE PUBLIC LEAD ON KAMPUCHEAN POLICY, THIS IS THE STRONGEST AND CLEAREST PUBLIC MANIFESTATION OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S STAUNCH SUPPORT FOR THE ASEAN LINE ON KAMPUCHEA. PALMER
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File Vietnam

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IN A PROPAGANDA AND POLITICAL PLOY. BY MAKING ITS NORMAL TROOP ROTATIONS APPEAR AS SIGNIFICANT TROOP WITHDRAWALS, IT SEEKS (A) TO APPEAR REASONABLE AND PUT THE ONUS OF CONCILIATION ON CHINA AND THE ASEAN COUNTRIES, (B) DECREASE VIETNAM'S INTERNATIONAL ISOLATION, (C) SPLINTER ASEAN UNITY, AND (D) COUNTER ANTI-VIETNAMESE KHMER RESISTANCE COALITION AND DENY IT ITS SEAT AT THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY. BUT WE MUST WAIT TO DETERMINE PRECISELY VIETNAMESE INTENTIONS. STOESEL
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E.O. 12065: GDS, 7/23/88 (CALDWELL, RAY L)
TAGS: NATO, CB, VM, PEPR, MOPS
SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE TROOP WITHDRAWALS FROM KAMPUCHEA

REF: USNATO 04578

1. PER REFTEL, WE ARE PROVIDING THE FOLLOWING FROM WHICH MISSION MAY DRAW DURING JULY 27 POLADS MEETING.

2. IN A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE SIXTH INDOCHINESE FOREIGN MINISTER'S CONFERENCE (JULY 6-7), VIETNAM ANNOUNCED THAT IT WOULD UNCONDITIONALLY WITHDRAW SOME OF THE VIETNAMESE FORCES OCCUPYING KAMPUCHEA. FOREIGN MINISTER THACH LATER INDICATED THAT THE WITHDRAWAL WOULD TAKE PLACE DURING JULY AND THAT A "SUBSTANTIAL" NUMBER OF TROOPS WOULD BE INVOLVED. THACH ALSO STATED THAT HANOI "QUIETLY" HAD WITHDRAWN 20,000 TROOPS LAST YEAR.

3. WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE THAT HANOI WITHDREW ANY OR THAT IT IS DOING SO NOW. A DEFINITIVE ASSESSMENT OF ANY CURRENT WITHDRAWALS, HOWEVER, IS NOT YET POSSIBLE. THE VIETNAMESE APPEAR TO BE CONDUCTING NORMAL TROOP ROTATIONS BOTH WITHIN KAMPUCHEA AND BETWEEN VIETNAM AND KAMPUCHEA. THAT THESE TROOP MOVEMENTS MAY INCLUDE A LARGER NUMBER OF SOLDIERS THAN IN PAST ROTATIONS IS PROBABLY DUE TO THE NEED TO REPLENISH OCCUPATION FORCES, THINNED BY DISEASE AND CASUALTIES FROM A PARTICULARLY VIGOROUS DRY SEASON CAMPAIGN EARLIER THIS YEAR AND SUFFERING FROM MORALE PROBLEMS (SOME HAVE BEEN IN KAMPUCHEA SINCE 1979 AND BEFORE). FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE VIETNAMESE ARE TRYING, WITHOUT NOTABLE SUCCESS, TO INTEGRATE SOME LOCAL PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KAMPUCHEA UNITS INTO FORWARD POSITIONS.

4. HANOI HAS NOT GIVEN ANY INDICATION THAT IT INTENDS TO REDUCE SIGNIFICANTLY ITS MILITARY CAPABILITIES OR OVERALL CONTROL IN KAMPUCHEA. IN FACT, VIETNAMESE FORCES ARE DEPLOYING AS IF THEY INTEND TO STRENGTHEN HANOI'S GRIP ON KAMPUCHEA AND DELIVER A SIGNIFICANT BLOW AGAINST KHMER RESISTANCE FORCES ON THE THAI BORDER NEXT DRY SEASON BEGINNING IN LATE 1982. THERE ARE ALSO INDICATIONS OF AN UNUSUALLY HIGH LEVEL OF VIETNAMESE COUNTER-INSURGENCY OPERATIONS DURING THE CURRENT RAINY SEASON.

5. OUR ASSESSMENT AT THIS TIME IS THAT HANOI IS ENGAGING

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AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 0000
AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0000
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 0000
USINS WASHDC/CORAP

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FOR REFCORDS AND INS, INS/WASHDC FOR CORAP

E. O. 12065: N/A

TAGS: SREF, VM

SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE "OFFER" TO RELEASE RE-EDUCATION CAMP
DETAINEES

REF: A. STATE 191649; B. GENEVA 7532; C. SINGAPORE 7733;
D. FBS BANGKOK 201112Z JULY 82, (E) STATE 165242 (NOTAL)

1. FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE UPDATES THAT CONTAINED IN REF
A AND RESPONDS TO THACH PRESS CONFERENCE IN SINGAPORE JULY
20 (REFS C. AND D). SUGGEST BANGKOK AND GENEVA PROVIDE
BOTH GUIDANCES (THIS MESSAGE AND REF A) TO UNHCR FOR THEIR
INFORMATION. AS OF JULY 22, SUBJECT HAS NOT BEEN RAISED
AT STATE DEPARTMENT NOON BRIEFING, ALTHOUGH GUIDANCE HAS
BEEN DRAWN ON BACKGROUND TO RESPOND TO PRESS QUESTIONS.

2. FOLLOWING STATEMENT (REF E) WAS READ BY THE DEPUTY
SECRETARY TO USE HIS PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE ASEAN
FOREIGN MINISTER'S MEETING IN SINGAPORE. IT REMAINS THE
U.S. POSITION ON THIS SUBJECT.

BEGIN QUOTE: WE WELCOME FOREIGN MINISTER THACH'S
STATEMENT THAT VIETNAM WOULD RELEASE REEDUCATION CAMP

INMATES FOR EMIGRATION. THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH
COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR) HAS NEGOTIATED AN
ORDERLY DEPARTURE PROGRAM (ODP) WITH VIETNAM. THE UNITED
STATES COOPERATES WITH THAT PROGRAM, BY WHICH QUALIFIED
PERSONS CAN COME TO THE UNITED STATES WITHOUT HAZARDING
ESCAPE BY BOAT AND FURTHER BURDENING FIRST ASYLUM
COUNTRIES WITH REFUGEE POPULATIONS.

MANY VIETNAMESE IN REEDUCATION CAMPS ARE THERE BECAUSE OF
THEIR SPECIAL TIES TO THE UNITED STATES, AND THEREFORE,
WOULD VERY LIKELY QUALIFY FOR ADMISSION TO THE UNITED
STATES UNDER THE ORDERLY DEPARTURE PROGRAM. WE ARE
WORKING WITH THE UNHCR TO DETERMINE IF THE VIETNAMESE ARE
IN FACT PREPARED TO RELEASE PERSONS FROM REEDUCATION CAMPS
FOR RESETTLEMENT ABROAD.

THIS IS A PROBLEM WHICH IS NOT SOLELY BETWEEN THE UNITED
STATES AND VIETNAM. IT IS A MAJOR HUMAN RIGHTS TRAGEDY
INVOLVING POLITICAL PRISONERS WHICH SHOULD ENGAGE THE
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE. END QUOTE.

FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS MAY BE USED ON AN IF ASKED
BASIS.

3. Q. WHAT IS THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S POSITION REGARDING
THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT'S ALLEGED "OFFER" TO RELEASE
PRISONERS FROM "RE-EDUCATION CAMPS" FOR RESETTLEMENT IN
THE U.S. AND OTHER COUNTRIES?

A. FIRST: THE U.S. BELIEVES THAT THE CONTINUED DETENTION
OF THESE VIETNAMESE POLITICAL PRISONERS IN SUCH
CONCENTRATION AND FORCED LABOR CAMPS IS A GRAVE VIOLATION
OF HUMAN RIGHTS. VIETNAM ACKNOWLEDGES THAT THE PRISONERS
ARE DETAINED FOR POLITICAL REASONS, YET HAS REFUSED TO
AGREE TO HUMANITARIAN VISITS TO THE PRISONERS BY THE
INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS OR ANY OTHER
RESPONSIBLE ORGANIZATION. THE DETENTION OF THESE
POLITICAL PRISONERS HAS BEEN CONDEMNED BY AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNED ABOUT
VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS. VIETNAM'S APPARENT SUGGESTION
THAT THESE PRISONERS COULD BE RELEASED FOR RESETTLEMENT

ABROAD DOES NOT ADDRESS THE BASIC ASPECT OF THIS GRAVE
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION, NAMELY THAT SUCH PERSONS CONTINUE
TO BE HELD FOR POLITICAL REASONS IN PRISON FACILITIES THAT
VIOLATE FUNDAMENTAL STANDARDS OF HUMANE TREATMENT AND
HUMAN RIGHTS.

SECOND: THE U.S. IS PLEASED THAT AT LONG LAST VIETNAM MAY
NOW BE PREPARED TO RELEASE THESE POLITICAL PRISONERS FOR
EMIGRATION. THE ORDERLY DEPARTURE PROGRAM (ODP), AGREED
TO IN 1980 BY THE UNHCR AND THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM TO
ENABLE VIETNAMESE TO LEAVE THEIR COUNTRY WITHOUT RISKING
THE PERILOUS ESCAPE OF A BOAT REFUGEE, PROVIDES AN
ESTABLISHED MEANS FOR VIETNAMESE TO BE CONSIDERED FOR
ADMISSION TO THE U.S. AND OTHER COUNTRIES. VIETNAMESE
RELEASED FROM RE-EDUCATION CAMPS MAY APPLY FOR ADMISSION
TO THE U.S. OR ANOTHER COUNTRY THROUGH THE UNHCR-SRV
ORDERLY DEPARTURE PROGRAM. BECAUSE SOME, POSSIBLY MANY
VIETNAMESE IN RE-EDUCATION CAMPS ARE HELD BECAUSE OF PAST
TIES TO THE U.S., SUCH PERSONS COULD WELL QUALIFY FOR
ADMISSION TO THE U.S. UNDER OUR ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES,
WHICH GIVE PREFERENCE TO VIETNAMESE PREVIOUSLY ASSOCIATED
WITH THE U.S. EFFORT IN VIETNAM. VIETNAMESE CAN ALSO
APPLY ON THE BASIS OF FAMILY REUNIFICATION WITH RELATIVES
IN THE U.S. OR OTHER COUNTRIES. APPROXIMATELY HALF OF THE
PEOPLE CURRENTLY LEAVING VIETNAM VIA THE ODP ARE GOING TO
OTHER COUNTRIES.

4. Q. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE IN SINGAPORE JULY 20,
VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN CO THACH REPORTEDLY
REPEATED HIS JUNE 13 "OFFER" TO RELEASE "ALL" RE-EDUCATION
CAMP INMATES FOR RESETTLEMENT ABROAD, AND SAID VIETNAM IS
STILL WAITING FOR A RESPONSE FROM THE U.S. HAS THE U.S.
RESPONDED TO THIS REPORTED VIETNAMESE "OFFER?"

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A. AS MR. THACH KNOWS, THE AGREED ESTABLISHED CHANNEL FOR LEGAL DEPARTURE OF VIETNAMESE FROM VIETNAM IS THE ORDERLY DEPARTURE PROGRAM, WHICH OPERATED BY AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES AND THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM. THE U.S. AND OTHER CONCERNED GOVERNMENTS COOPERATE WITH THE UNHCR IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PROGRAM. THERE HAVE BEEN CONTINUING EFFORTS TO EXPAND THE PROGRAM, TO MAKE CLEAR THAT IT OFFERS A SAFE, LEGAL ALTERNATIVE TO THE RISKS OF CLANDESTINE FLIGHT FROM VIETNAM, BUT THE PROGRAM HAS BEEN LIMITED BY PROCESSING AND OTHER DELAYS IN VIETNAM. IF THE VIETNAMESE ARE SERIOUS ABOUT THE OFFER TO RELEASE POLITICAL PRISONERS, THEY CAN BEGIN FACILITATING INTERVIEWS BY UNHCR REPRESENTATIVES IN VIETNAM WITH INMATES OF THE SO-CALLED

RE-EDUCATION CAMPS. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, SUCH INTERVIEWS HAVE NEVER BEEN PERMITTED.

5. Q. HAS THE U.S. DISCUSSED THIS "OFFER" WITH UNHCR?

A. YES. THE U.S. AND OTHER CONCERNED GOVERNMENTS HAVE REVIEWED THIS SUBJECT WITH UNHCR IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR CONTINUING DISCUSSIONS OF THE ORDERLY DEPARTURE PROGRAM.

6. Q. THE VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTER ALSO REPORTEDLY SAID (JULY 20 IN SINGAPORE) THAT THE U.S. ONLY ACCEPTS ODP APPLICANTS AS "IMMIGRANTS" RATHER THAN AS REFUGEES. IS THIS CORRECT?

A. NO. ABOUT HALF OF THE VIETNAMESE RESETTLED IN THE U.S. UNDER THE ORDERLY DEPARTURE PROGRAM COME AS REFUGEES, AND, AS SUCH, RECEIVE THE SAME ASSISTANCE FROM AMERICAN VOLUNTARY AGENCIES AND THE SAME BENEFITS IN THE U.S. AS OTHER REFUGEES. AS IN ALL REFUGEE SITUATIONS WORLDWIDE, IF AN INDIVIDUAL QUALIFIES FOR AN IMMIGRANT VISA, HE IS ADMITTED AS AN IMMIGRANT, AND AS SUCH WOULD NOT QUALIFY FOR REFUGEE BENEFITS, ALTHOUGH SUCH ODP INDIVIDUALS FROM VIETNAM OFTEN ARE ASSISTED BY AMERICAN AGENCIES AND MAY RECEIVE TRAVEL ASSISTANCE FROM THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR MIGRATION.

7. Q. OTHER SOURCES HAVE REPORTED THAT THE VIETNAMESE ARE REFUSING TO ALLOW THE LEGAL DEPARTURE OF RELATIVES OF VIETNAMESE WHO PREVIOUSLY LEFT AS BOAT REFUGEES. IS THIS CORRECT?

A. ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION OF SUCH A POLICY, THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT IT IS BEING FOLLOWED IN SOME CASES BY THE VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES IN DECIDING WHICH ODP APPLICANTS SHOULD BE APPROVED FOR EXIT VISAS. SUCH A POLICY OF COURSE VIOLATES THE BASIC HUMANITARIAN PURPOSE OF THE ORDERLY DEPARTURE PROGRAM, WHICH IS TO FACILITATE THE LEGAL DEPARTURE OF THOSE SEEKING TO LEAVE VIETNAM TO BE REUNITED WITH RELATIVES ABROAD. (RP/PA: 3498B) STOESEL

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