

April 22, 1975

**From the Journal of A.F. Dobrynin, 'Memorandum of
the Conversation with Secretary of State of the
United States, H. Kissinger, 22 April 1975'**

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Summary:

In an April 22, 1975 conversation, Henry Kissinger conveyed President Ford's concern to the Soviet Union about North Vietnamese troop movements near Saigon's airport, warning that any attempt to trap Americans could force US military intervention, while General Scowcroft clarified that Marines were positioned offshore for potential deployment but Ford preferred to avoid their use if possible.

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MEMORANDUM OF THE CONVERSATION

with the Secretary of State of the United States, H. Kissinger

22 April 1975

Kissinger requested to convey to Moscow President Ford's concern that North Vietnamese forces are reportedly gathering around the Saigon airport, according to American intelligence.

He stated that the White House, of course, cannot have any objections regarding the general movement of various military units in South Vietnam due to the ongoing war. The President's primary concern is whether the reported troop concentration around the Saigon airport signals North Vietnamese intentions to capture it and potentially trap any Americans not yet evacuated from Saigon before Hanoi formally responds to Washington's appeal conveyed through the good offices of the Soviet side.

We, Kissinger continued, currently do not have definitive evidence indicating that this is Hanoi's intention. However, officials in Washington cannot entirely dismiss the possibility of such a perilous development. In such a scenario, the President would be compelled to take actions that would not yield political advantages for any party involved.

General Scowcroft, with whom I had a separate discussion a few minutes later, after my conversation with Kissinger, regarding another issue, clarified that currently, there are no American Marines stationed at the Saigon airport. However, they are [currently] being amassed in the numbers previously shared with the Soviet side and positioned near the South Vietnamese coastline for potential deployment, i.e. if the South Vietnamese [sic.] interfere with the evacuation process at the last moment.

Scowcroft emphasized that President Ford is reluctant to order the deployment of the Marines unless absolutely necessary. Overall, he advocates for avoiding the deployment of American troops to South Vietnam at this juncture, opting instead to complete the evacuation without their presence if possible.

AMBASSADOR OF THE USSR TO THE USA

(A. DOBRYNIN)

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