

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MANILA 20779 291141Z  
ACTION SS-30

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S E C R E T MANILA 20779

EXDIS

E.O. 12065: RDS 10/29/99 (MURPHY, RICHARD. W.) OR-M  
TAGS: RP, MPOL  
SUBJECT: MARCOS/HOLBROOKE MEETING OCTOBER 25: HARPOON  
- MISSILE SYSTEM

1. SECRET ENTIRE TEXT.
2. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF MEMCON, NOT YET CLEARED BY HOLBROOKE, ON HARPOON MISSILE SYSTEM PORTION OF HIS DISCUSSION WITH MARCOS:
3. IN THE PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION, DEFENSE MINISTER ENRILE LISTED THE VARIOUS PHILIPPINE SECURITY REASONS FOR REQUESTING THE HARPOON MISSILE SYSTEM INCLUDING THEIR FEAR THAT THE VIETNAMESE AND THE RUSSIANS MIGHT POSE A THREAT TO THE PHILIPPINES IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA AREA INCLUDING THE SPRATLY ISLAND AREA AND PALAWAN. DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY ARMACOST RECITED TO ENRILE THE VERY HIGH COSTS OF A COMPLETE HARPOON MISSILE SYSTEM TODAY, NOTED THE FACT THAT THE SYSTEM WAS PROBABLY NOT COST EFFECTIVE NOR APPROPRIATE RELATIVE TO THE KIND OF THREAT THAT THE PHILIPPINES MIGHT HAVE TO FACE IN THAT AREA AND REFERRED TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S POLICY RESTRICTING TRANSFER OF ADVANCED WEAPONS INTO OTHER AREAS.

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4. ENRILE EXPRESSED SURPRISE AT THE HIGH COST OF THE MISSILE SYSTEM AND ASKED WHETHER IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO FIND A WAY TO REDUCE THE COST OF THE SYSTEM BY SIMPLIFYING, FOR EXAMPLE, FINDING A SUBSTITUTE FIRE CONTROL SYSTEM. IF THAT WERE NOT POSSIBLE, COULD FMS BE APPLIED TO THE PURCHASE OF THE GABRIEL SYSTEM. (THE FOLLOWING DAY ENRILE

MADE CLEAR THAT THE PHILIPPINES WISHED TO PURCHASE THE MISSILE SYSTEM WITH FMS FUNDS BECAUSE THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT WAS SHORT OF FUNDS. IF THEY COULD NOT USE FMS TO ACQUIRE THE HARPOON SYSTEM, THEY WOULD LIKE TO USE IT FOR THE PURCHASE OF A FOREIGN SYSTEM.) AMBASSADOR MURPHY SAID THAT WAS NOT POSSIBLE. MOREOVER, ENRILE SAID, THE HARPOON SYSTEM WAS NOT A NOVEL SYSTEM IN THE AREA, THERE WERE OTHER SIMILAR SYSTEMS.

5. WHEN THE PRESIDENT AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE JOINED THE DISCUSSION, ARMACOST SUGGESTED THAT THE U.S. SEND OUT A TEAM TO FIND THE ANSWERS FOR THE PHILIPPINES COASTAL DEFENSE PROBLEM. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT HE WOULD RATHER HAVE AN INTEGRATED STUDY COMBINING NAVY AND AIR INPUTS. ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE SAID THAT HE RECOGNIZED THE SITUATION IN ASIA WAS EVOLVING AND WE WERE NOT FROZEN IN OUR POSITION ON THE HARPOON MISSILE SYSTEM. THE COST OF THE SYSTEM WAS INCREDIBLY HIGH, HOWEVER, AND HE URGED THE PRESIDENT TO HAVE THE TEAM ATTEMPT TO FIGURE OUT WHETHER IT WAS WORTH MAKING SO LARGE A COMMITMENT. IF THE PHILIPPINES SHOULD DECIDE, AFTER THAT REVIEW, TO PURSUE THE HARPOON MISSILE SYSTEM, ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE SAID HE WOULD DISCUSS IT AGAIN IN WASHINGTON. IN ANY EVENT IT WOULD BE VERY USEFUL TO HAVE THE TEAM COME. THE PRESIDENT ASKED HOW SOON THE TEAM COULD COME. ARMACOST REPLIED THAT IT WAS A MATTER OF WEEKS.

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6. ENRILE NOTED THAT THE PHILIPPINES DID NOT WISH THE HARPOON MISSILE SYSTEM FOR AGGRESSIVE PURPOSES, THE PHILIPPINES NEEDED A NAVAL-AIR SYSTEM TO RESIST ATTACK. THE PRESIDENT NOTED MALAYSIA HAS A GABRIEL SYSTEM, SINGAPORE HAS MARK II SYSTEM AND TAIWAN HAS A MISSILE SYSTEM. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT AT ANY EVENT IT WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL TO THE PHILIPPINE DEFENSES IF GOP DID NOT GET SOME KIND OF MISSILE SYSTEM. GOP DOES NOT EXPECT OUTRIGHT AGGRESSION BUT IT WANTS TO BE READY. ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE ASKED WHETHER THE PHILIPPINES WAS ALSO INTERESTED IN THE GABRIEL. THE PRESIDENT SAID THEY MIGHT PURCHASE IT FROM SINGAPORE. THE PHILIPPINES WAS INTERESTED IN THE GABRIEL BECAUSE IT HAD BEEN BATTLE TRIED IN THE MIDDLE EAST. ARMACOST SAID THAT HE RECALLED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD TOLD MRS. MARCOS IN 1977 THAT THE U.S. WAS PREPARED TO STUDY PHILIPPINE DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS. OUR REVIEW OF THE PHILIPPINE REQUEST FOR STUDY OF ITS COASTAL DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS WAS CONSISTENT WITH THAT STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT CARTER. AT THIS POINT, THE PRESIDENT ASKED THAT DEFENSE MINISTER ENRILE SUSPEND FURTHER PHILIPPINE ACTION ON THE PURCHASE OF PATROL BOATS FOR THE MISSILE SYSTEM.

7. DEFENSE MINISTER ENRILE ASKED WHETHER THE US WOULD INITIATE THE FORMATION OF THE TEAM TO HELP THE PHILIPPINES TO STUDY ITS COASTAL DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS OR WHETHER A LETTER WAS REQUIRED. ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE SAID THAT WE WOULD REGARD THIS CONVERSATION AS A REQUEST AND THAT WE WOULD FORM A TEAM. MURPHY

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