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[letter from Depts of State to Sen. Helms]

Rec'd 3/2/2000

United States Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

MAR-2 2000 [stamped]

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Dear Mr. Chairman:

Pursuant to Section 203 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, FY 2000 and 2001, as enacted in the FY 2000 Consolidated Appropriations Act, I am transmitting to you a report, in classified and unclassified forms, containing the most current information available on the status of the FBI's investigation of the March 30, 1997 grenade attack in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

The Department of State continues to raise this case, as well as the numerous other unsolved cases of violent crime resulting from political violence in Cambodia, with the highest levels of the Cambodian government. We have repeatedly urged that this case and all similar cases be investigated and resolved expeditiously. To date, however, the Royal Government of Cambodia has made no arrests in connection with the grenade attack case nor any of the other cases we follow.

The U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh has assisted official visitors from the FBI on at least three occasions since the grenade attack occurred; only one FBI visit has taken place since the last report. The Embassy has also arranged appointments or interviews with potential witnesses sought by the FBI in Bangkok and Cambodia, most recently in May 1999. Embassy representatives did not participate in most of these interviews unless requested to do so by the FBI. During the May 1999 visit, no U.S. Embassy staff participated in any interviews conducted by the FBI.

The Honorable
Jesse Helms, Chairman,
Committee on Foreign Relations,
United States Senate.

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The Department of State has provided the FBI with all reporting from Embassy Phnom Penh regarding this case, and has otherwise cooperated fully with the FBI in the conduct of its investigation. The Department of State remains ready and willing to extend further cooperation to the FBI should it decide to pursue its investigation further. The Royal Government of Cambodia has stated that the FBI is welcome to return to Cambodia if additional leads develop.

As you know, under E.O. 12958, the Department may not disseminate classified information outside the Executive Branch except under conditions that ensure that the information will be given protection at least as stringent as E.O. 12958 in handling this information.

Please let me know if we can provide any further assistance in this or any other matter.

Sincerely,
[signed]
Barbara Larkin
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs

Enclosure:

Report on the FBI's Investigation of
the March 30, 1997, Bombing in
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

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[FBI to Dept of Justice]

Memorandum

[on FBI letterhead]

To: Mr. Ronald D. Lee Date: 12/23/1999
Associate Deputy Attorney General
Office of the Deputy Attorney General

From: Dale L. Watson
Assistant Director
Counterterrorism Division

Subject: REPORT ON THE FBI INVESTIGATION INTO THE
MARCH 30, 1997, BOMBING IN PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA.

In response to the Consolidation Appropriation Act of Fiscal Year 2000, Public Law # 106-113, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Attorney General, shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committee, no later than 30 days after the date of enactment. The enactment occurred on November 29, 1999.

The report will be in classified and unclassified form, containing the most current information on the investigation into the March 30, 1997, grenade attack in Cambodia.

Enclosed is a classified and an unclassified report on the Phnom Penh bombing.

The FBI requests that the Department of Justice review this report for any inappropriate items. If the attached reports are suitable for dissemination, please forward to Ms. Marie Damour, Cambodia Desk Officer, Department of State, who is responsible for the final report to Congress. Ms. Damour can be reached at (202) 647-0036.

Enclosures (2)

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Classified By: 4877, ITOS, CTD
Reason: 1.5(C)
Declassify On: X1
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(U) On May 4, 1999, the FBI returned to Phnom Penh, Cambodia to complete outstanding leads. With the concurrence of the U.S. Ambassador, the FBI continued the investigation.

(U) Two polygraphs were administered, with one demonstrating deception and the other inconclusive.

(U) A total of 5 interviews were conducted during the FBI's travel to Cambodia, as follows:

(U) Two interviewees believed Sam Rainsy was the target of the attack, not the American, Ron Abney.

(U) One interviewee knew the identity of a person who had knowledge of the helicopter landing near the Independence Monument. The other interviewee indicated that he could not arrange for an interview of this individual due to security reasons.

(U) One interviewee stated that the soldiers that were deployed to the park to provide security did not see the grenade throwers.

(U) One interviewee believed that a helicopter could not land near the Independence Monument because it was prohibited by law.

(U) Subsequent to the FBI's travel to Cambodia in May 1999, one additional interview was conducted on October 8, 1999, in Washington, D.C. The interviewee provided information regarding a possible suspect. The FBI's interview of the possible suspect has not occurred as the possible suspect was never made available by the CNP for the FBI interview.

(U) Based on the above, logical investigation has been completed. FBI investigation to date shows that the victim was not the target of the grenade attack. In addition, on the FBI's last trip to Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 5/4/99, no significant progress has been made by the Cambodian National Police (CNP) to either further identify the perpetrators or seek additional evidence in support of a criminal prosecution.

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