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October 15, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: CLARK MACGREGOR  
FROM: AL HAIG  
SUBJECT: Presidential letter to Chairman Hebert  
on Mansfield Amendment

Attached is a draft letter for the President's signature to Chairman Hebert on Mansfield Amendment. The theme in this letter should be the one on which we all draw during the legislative battles that we will face. You will note that it is general rather than specific and, therefore, will not be troublesome in the context of the sensitive negotiations that are underway.

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Attachment

AMH:mlh:typed 10/15/71

DRAFT

Presidential letter to Chairman Hebert on Mansfield Amendment

Dear Eddie:

In response to your inquiry I should like to give you my thoughts on the Mansfield Amendment as passed by the Senate in the Procurement Bill. As you know, the effects of passage of that amendment upon the Vietnam war would be to diminish seriously the prospects for a negotiated settlement and an early release of all prisoners of war.

As disturbing however, would be the broader impact if the present language were ultimately passed. If that essential element of my policy is repudiated by Congress, this vote of no-confidence will signal abroad a disarray and a weakness of purpose in the American Government.

Dean Acheson has pointed out that in fundamental negotiations, world powers are not to be persuaded by eloquence or convinced by reasoned arguments. They rely on what Stalin used to call the proper basis of international policy, the calculation of forces; military capability on the one hand and governmental unity of purpose on the other.

We are now preparing to undertake new initiatives for peace in two great capitol of the world. If these initiatives are to gain positive results in the months and years ahead, I must be able to rely on the firm support and the substantial and creative contribution of a bipartisan Congress. I believe that the Mansfield language should be eliminated, and the whole acrimonious chapter of debate put behind us. We have truly great challenges and opportunities before us. Let us begin.