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RG	ENTRY	BOX
84	Bangkok General Records 1956-1963	16

RG 84 Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State

Thailand

U.S. Consulate, Legation and Embassy, Bangkok

General Records, 1936-1942, 1945-1963

1959-1961: 361.3

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1959-1961: 500

Box 119 [Old Box 16] Entry UD 3267

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OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

UNITED STATES OPERATIONS MISSION TO THAILAND

AMERICAN EMBASSY
BANGKOK, THAILAND.

16 NOV 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Ambassador
American Embassy

SUBJECT: Speech Delivered by Nai Suwan Ruanyot, Director-General of the Penitentiary Department, to Officials of the Penitentiary Department

I am sending to you, attached to this memorandum, an English translation of a speech delivered by Nai Suwan Ruanyot, Director-General of the Penitentiary Department.

I think you will find its contents extremely interesting, as they deal with the question of free democracy vs. communism, as well as certain communist propaganda allegations against the United States in its work in the underdeveloped countries.

Governor Suwan only in the last few months was made Director-General of the Department, having been a very capable and highly responsible governor in the Korat Changwad.

I recently received a personal letter from James V. Bennett, Director of the U.S. Federal Prisons, in which he indicated that he had submitted his detailed report on the penitentiary system of Thailand to Mr. Art Kimberling, Chief of the Public Safety Division, ICA/Washington. I am sure we will be receiving a copy of the report shortly.

It seems likely that we will receive a request from the Thai Government for further assistance in this field. You have already been apprised of the meeting Mr. Bennett and I had with the Australian Ambassador concerning possible Colombo Plan interest. I will keep you informed of any developments.

Thomas E. Naughten
Director

Attachments: As Stated

cc: Mr. Douglas Batson

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A Lecture on "Communist Propaganda and Public Administration"

By Nai Suwan Ruanyot, Director-General of the Penitentiary Department

Before a Meeting of the Department Officials

at the Assembly Hall of the Ministry of Interior

October 7th, 1960

Mr. Deputy Director-General, Directors, Chiefs and my Fellow Officials:

Today I have the great pleasure to meet all of you for the first time since my appointment as Director-General of the Penitentiary Department. Admittedly, I have met some of you, but only the senior officials. I have never met all of you together, as today. Although we have not met personally, I know of everybody through his work in the division.

However, I shall take this opportunity to say that I am very glad to collaborate with you in this Department, which is one of the important Departments in our Ministry of Interior. You have been invited to this meeting today in order to hear mainly about the danger of communism, and secondly about the present and the future functions of the Penitentiary Department.

In the first place, about the danger of communism, I understand that you have more or less received instructions, read documents and listened to the radio. Since you are serving the administration in the metropolitan area and are well aware how injurious this danger can be to the interests of our country, I need only to be brief in my remarks.

Our present world is divided into two camps; free democracy and the communists. The free world camp places great importance on the people, respects life and opinions and the freedom to live a complete and meaningful life. It is a system which upholds human dignity as well as the private property institution. It is a political system which entrusts to individuals their own salvation. The free democracy system allows the people to have their own say in their own affairs and self-government. This system has for its leader the United States, as well as Great Britain, France and many other Western countries. I reckon there must be at least 60 countries, including Thailand.

On the other hand, communism is diametrically opposite to what I have said above. It is an ideology which gives paramount importance to the State. Individuals are mere accessories to the State and the community. It is a highly materialistic ideology which pays little regard to the feeling of the individual; while, at the same time, its propaganda always propounds equality of men. The USSR and Red China are its protagonists, now dictating some 20 satellite countries.

It may easily be said that communism is socialism in the extreme. It is an ideology which gives preponderance to planned economic activities in the day-to-day life of the people, always placing the State foremost and disregarding the individuals, as I have said above. The individual's place in such a system

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is but an atomistic part of the whole. For that reason, the dictator of a communist country can do as he pleases without heeding the voice of the people. The general run of the population has no place in the execution of policy. Besides, in accordance with the above principle, the people in communist countries have no property rights, no political rights and receive less acclaim for their knowledge and ability than in countries of the free democracy camp.

The teaching of our Lord Buddha lends its weight to free democracy. In His teaching there are many instances which confirm my statement; for example, our religion declares "Good deeds bring good results; while bad deeds bring bad results". This clearly shows that the individuals are free to act and free from hindrances; the more is done, the more is received. Riches and poverty, happiness and suffering are results of one's own doing, not of anybody else's action. It is not influenced from outside but from within the person concerned.

According to tradition, our Lord Buddha was born into this world and received the name of Sithata Kumar. He was a thinker, a student who could not stand unreasoned ideology or religion which believes in influence from outside the self. That was why he escaped the mundane life to enter priesthood and search for the truth.

I used to talk with Hindus in India while I went there to study the Indian community development program. I learned that Hinduism teaches the belief that happiness and suffering, prosperity or downfall, riches or poverty were influenced by the gods, i.e., influences from outside the self. Brahma, Siva and Vishnu, the gods, are thought of as the creator, preserver and destroyer. Those who desire riches must worship the god-creator; those who wish to destroy their enemy or get rid of diseases and sickness must worship the god-destroyer; while those mortals who are content with the existing state of affairs must worship the god-preserver. Such is the traditional belief.

As for Sithata Kumar, he studied the dogma and disagreed with it entirely. Consequently he could not worship the religion he was born into. He was resolved to escape in order to study the Pure Dhamma, as you all know. He went in search of knowledge and stayed with yogis and fakirs but failed to find the truth. They were even more erroneous than the Hindus because they believed in punishing the body in order to go to heaven alone. It was like fleeing from Scylla only to meet Charibdis. Sithata Kumar decided to leave the schools and search for the Pure Truth. Finally he found it and knew that happiness, suffering good or ill, riches or poverty and other things happening to oneself do not emanate from outside but from within the self. It was the quest for the truth which caused him to leave his Hindu family, to live alone as a priest, to rouse his family's anger, be ostracised by them and to suffer all kinds of hardship. He bore all these for the sake of the right path. He teaches, "It is we who must help ourselves."

The Hindus told me that nowadays they have come around to a belief in the above viewpoint. It is regrettable that since Buddha's enlightenment his teaching, his religion has not prospered in India but elsewhere instead, especially in Ceylon, Burma and Thailand. This is partly due to the fact that Buddhism and Hinduism differ from each other about the source of happiness and

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suffering, poverty and riches, prosperity and downfall, and other consequences of man's action.

Another thing which Buddha was utterly opposed to was the caste system. When you are in India you are keenly aware of the 4 castes: the brahmins, the warriors, the pashya and the sutras who must not intermarry. A breach of this rule causes their offspring to become chandals (outcasts) who cannot be given employment. The caste system is rigid and functionally inflexible. Buddha did not see why one cannot become what one wishes, be it a priest or a warrior. For this reason he prescribed that any human being may become a priest in his religion and will not be discriminated against on the ground of his caste. The rest of Buddha's ordination rules are but requirements of secondary importance.

It is my view that the ideal of Buddhism is similar to that of free democracy; while other faiths or religions including communism are different. I understand that if we find ourselves in the USSR or Red China our freedom would be circumscribed to a small part of the freedom granted to everybody in Thailand. I want to say this, that there are people who cannot bear the life under the communist rule and have had to escape in large numbers. Had these people been caught, they would have been executed. Even diplomats from the USSR or Red China cannot help finding life in the free world pleasant. On receiving instructions for home return, some of them have resigned their post, as in the case of communist diplomats accredited to Burma. But their former colleagues who tried to seek credit for themselves surreptitiously captured and put them in a plane bound for Moscow. If communism were really good, such things would not have happened.

One of the unshakeable ideals of communism is work domination in order to insure its own safety. But there is a large number of people like the present Director-General of the Penitentiary Department, who will always impede and foil the communist attempt at self aggrandizement. It is not only in our Department, but in other Departments, other Ministries, other countries in the free world that the facts I am stating before you are being explained to government officials and to the public. Therefore, communism cannot relent of its expansive efforts lest its own existence be endangered. It must exert every effort to destroy beliefs of supporters of free democracy as quickly as possible. If opportunity permits, the communists will overtly disseminate their propaganda, a sort of on-the-ground tactic. But if the government strictly forbids such propaganda, the communist will work underground without anybody's knowledge. They never cease working.

With regard to communist collaborators, some of them genuinely believe in the dogma. This is a case of personal belief. But there are those communist collaborators who work for money, for regular monthly payments, and must work for the organization according to schedule. There are many work-units: propaganda, destruction, sabotage and espionage. Every unit works round the clock. They have organization and work methods and they work continuously. Thus in the USA and in other completely free democratic countries where there is great concern for life, property and the way of life, counter efforts must be ceaselessly pushed. For the present, this is a heavy struggle between the two camps.

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With regard to Thailand, communism is directing its propaganda through three main media: spoken words, publications, and broadcasting from Moscow, Peking and Hanoi. The intention is to popularize the ideology, and to create misunderstanding. Whatever appears to be weaknesses of individuals, of the country or of organization, will be picked upon and used in a smearing campaign. But before referring to the weaknesses, the communists will start with their ideals and principles along the following lines:

1. Selling the Idea of Peaceful Co-existence. Examples will be cited of the USSR's bilateral treaties of peaceful cooperation with India, Burma, Cambodia and in the near future with Laos. The communists take this line of approach: Let's sign a co-existence treaty; we must not attack each other; Laos should not attack Red China; Cambodia must not attack Vietminh and Vietminh must refrain from attacking Red China. All these forbidden attacks are so obviously impossible. Whom will Cambodia, Laos and others attack? Whom will Burma attack? The treaties are so designed that the populations are led to believe that they will not be attacked by the great powers. But this is not true. India and Burma have already been done in.

2. Advocating the Principle of Neutrality. The communists will advise against joining the free democracy camp, saying: it is no good, it represents the interests of capitalists and plutocrats; we poor people should not get excited about them; if we remain neutral, we shall receive aid both from the West and from the so-called socialist states (i.e., the communists).

Right now, Laos is already so inclined in favor of communism like many others that it announces a policy of neutrality for its foreign affairs. Cambodia has already declared the same. Such a communist tactic is an alternative to an outright persuasion for their countries to join the communist bloc like Vietminh. Initially the communists would advocate neutrality to insure access to the countries concerned and later to press them to join the bloc. In our country, there are occasional complaints that we unjustly receive too little aid from such foreign countries as the United States. There are occasional demands that we become neutral so as to get more foreign aid from the USA and possibly from other countries as well. Yes, the communists are worming their way in.

3. Accusing the United States of Imperialism and Oppression against Under-developed Countries. If you examine this accusation impartially, you will find it to be false because the US attitude and behavior are not like that. On the contrary, one of her outstanding traits is that, like Great Britain, she will fight to the death when provoked. As you know, the majority of Americans are similar to the Thai people with respect to the love of freedom. A thousand years ago, our Thai ancestors fled from the tyranny in South China. The modern Americans are descendants of Europeans who could not bear oppression in their European motherland and sailed for the American continent 200 years ago. Like our Thai ancestors from China, these emigrants could not continue to live in Europe because of religious, economic and political oppression. For this reason, I maintain that the American national character belies the communist accusation. Moreover, the civil war or any upheavals in the American history were attempts to get rid of nothing else but oppression and slavery. I dare say, as far as I know, that the accusation against the USA, be it of imperialism or any other crime, is untrue. The Americans are not like that. But they are unlucky in that

people do not recognize the kindness received from them. It seems as if in every country which receives American aid there must always be vicious gossip against the USA, alleging that the aids are meagre, insincere or unjustly distributed. The Americans are the sort of people whose good deeds are never recognized. However, I would advise you not to believe in the accusation that the USA will annex and colonize other countries. It is simply not true.

4. Libelling America's Allied Governments as War-Mongers. Thailand is also stigmatised as a warmongering regime. This you all know is not true. The communists make use only of this 4-point propaganda. Whatever we do, they will always interpret us in the light of the 4 points. For instance, the Americans helped us build the Friendship Highway from Saraburi to Korat, and will extend it to Kornkaen and Udorn. The communists say that the road was built for aggression against countries beyond the North of Thailand. Yes, they are capable of commenting on every subject to their advantage. At Chiengmai, Udorn, Udol and Korat we are building big airports capable of landing four-engine aircraft for commercial and defense purposes. The communists say that the airports are built for jet aircraft like big jet bombers which will bomb southeast Asian countries. Yes, they can say that. But I think it is irrelevant. You all know that the Friendship Highway has given us considerable economic benefits. Formerly the areas now traversed by the highway were mountains and jungles. What are they now? The land has been cleared for upland cultivation, for such crops as maize, nuts and beans, bananas, casava and others. Our farm products have increased considerably. It is true that during a war whatever we have must convert to war purposes. But such is not the original intention for development. When a war breaks out, even a dilapidated old crock will have to be used, at least to deliver rice or water. During the last war, I was a sheriff and had to requisition even a broken cart which hadto be tied into one piece with rattan and hide straps. The cart was used for all-purpose transport. But originally that cart was not built for war purposes. Thus I do not see the point in the communists' unreasoned accusation.

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