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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

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MEMORANDUM

14165
AUG 15 1967

TO: The Secretary

THROUGH: S/S

FROM: EA - Mr. Bundy

SUBJECT: Request for Appointment by Thai Ambassador Sukich Nimmanhemínda - ACTION MEMORANDUM

DISCUSSION:

Ambassador Sukich has requested an opportunity to pay a farewell call on you before terminating his mission here in late August. He has also asked to pay his respects to the President, and although Ambassador Sukich has not quite completed the five years in Washington normally required before a departing Ambassador is given the opportunity for a farewell call on the President, S/CPR has at our request recommended to the White House that the President receive Ambassador Sukich. In view of our close relationship with the Thai in the defense of Southeast Asia, and our desire that they increase their present support for the war in Vietnam, I believe it is desirable that you receive Ambassador Sukich and reiterate our interest in continued close relations with his country and appreciation for the support Thailand has already given us.

The Thai Embassy has suggested any date after August 20 as acceptable for the Ambassador to call on you; he is leaving on August 27. Upon confirmation of the appointment, we will prepare briefing materials.

RECOMMENDATION:

That you receive Ambassador Sukich.

AUG 17 1967

Approve KR

Date Friday, Aug 25

Time 11 am

Disapprove

EA/THAI:JHCunningham:lwb
Ext. 3679, 8/15/67

Mr. Cunningham notified 8/17/67

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August 15, 1967
(Meeting August 16, 1967)

CONFIDENTIAL

BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

AMBASSADOR SUKICH NIMMANHEMINDA OF THAILAND

Ambassador Sukich (pronounced Soo-Kit) is making his farewell call before returning to Thailand after almost four years in Washington. During his term as Ambassador, our relationship with Thailand has developed into one of close cooperation in the defense of Free World interests in Southeast Asia. The Thai are providing extensive base facilities for U. S. Air Force operations over Laos and Vietnam, and are sending a 2,300-man detachment to fight in South Vietnam; during the recent visit of the Clifford-Taylor mission, the Thai leaders were among the most receptive Asian political and military figures to the points made by the mission. For our part, we have given and are continuing to give Thailand considerable economic and military aid; the FY 68 program provides some $60 million of grant military assistance and $~~49.8~~ 62.7 million in technical and support assistance.

One of Thailand's leading intellectuals, Ambassador Sukich has been prominent in education, politics, and government service, and is influential in Buddhist affairs. He was born in 1906 and received his higher education in England, after which he taught at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok until his entry into government service in 1942. He has served in Parliament and held various Ministerial posts, including that of Deputy Prime Minister under Prime Minister Thanom. A Fulbright scholar in 1953-54, Ambassador Sukich is interested in and well-informed on American history. He has travelled widely throughout the country during his term as Ambassador to address university and other audiences and participate in seminars. Ambassador Sukich is regarded as a leading candidate for the post of Secretary General of the Southeast Asia Ministers of Education Secretariat (SEAMES), one of the more promising regional organizations in the field of social development.

You may wish to emphasize to the Ambassador our appreciation for his country's significant support in connection with the war in Vietnam, and our continuing interest in the Thai Government's efforts to suppress insurgency in the Northeast and elsewhere and to eliminate conditions which facilitate its growth.

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