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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AUG 17 8 25 AM 1970
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ANALYSIS BRANCH

TO : Department of State

FROM : Amembassy MANILA

DATE: 14 AUG 70

SUBJECT : Thai-US Relations

REF :

In an example of open diplomacy, the views of the Thai Foreign Minister on the "State of Thai-US Relations and Prospects of their Future Development" have been passed on to the Philippine public in a Thai Embassy press release. A copy of the release, which consists of the text of Thanat Khoman's speech of July 15 to the American Chamber of Commerce in Bangkok, is attached.

The speech seems to have attracted little attention despite complaints about American treatment of its allies which would seem to have appeal in some circles in Manila.

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Attachment: (4 copies)
Press Release, as noted.

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PRESS RELEASE No. 8/2513

"State of Thai-US Relations and Prospects of Their Future Development"
by
Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman of Thailand
Annual Meeting of the American Chamber of Commerce
Bangkok, July 15, 1970.

Only a few days ago the United States celebrated the 194th anniversary of American Independence. I saw in the local newspapers that the Prime Minister, Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn, joined in the celebrations at the American Embassy here, while I personally congratulated the Secretary of State William Rogers in Saigon on that happy occasion. As can be seen by the two events, Americans and Thais are on speaking terms, or better than that, they are working fairly well together. In fact, they are fighting shoulder to shoulder for what they believe to be a good cause: namely, to repel a predatory aggressor and to help a small nation, South Vietnam, survive as a free and independent State.

That healthy relationship has existed since 1833, only 57 years after the emergence of the United States as a sovereign State, for the

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past 137 years and, in all appearance, there seem to be no reasons why that state of affairs should not continue on the same basis for the future.

In the olden days, things went by placidly as there probably were only a couple of communications a month, at most, between the Embassy of the United States and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and American Ambassadors could then afford a siesta during the heat of the day. I presume that things have somewhat changed at the Wireless Road Embassy. Perhaps because of the discovery of the air-conditioning, an American Ambassador has no longer any justification for taking such a leisurely nap.

However, clouds began to gather over the horizon when circumstances forced the United States to become involved more closely in the happenings of South-East Asia.

The participation of the United States in the Vietnam war created new needs for support of war efforts in the form of military bases and installations. As the United States could not possibly obtain them in Laos, Cambodia, Burma or Malaysia, she had to look to Thailand who obligingly granted her what she wanted. Thus American soldiers poured into Thailand, air bases for aircrafts ranging from reconnaissance and transport planes to fighters and larger bombers like the B52's, were built and used in Thailand with the consent of

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this government. That was the beginning of the trouble for this country and for the long time friend. The relationship which has been up till now serene and uneventful became difficult, not so much between the two governments as between certain elements of the American Society, mass media and politicians, who began to use this country as their favourite practice targets. The situation worsened when the United States feeling lonely in Vietnam began to induce other countries, including Thailand, to get into the quagmire she was to a certain extent responsible for creating it herself. Thailand, at the United States insistence, had to send a full division of 12,000 men to join the American GI's.

Then came the 1968 Tet offensive which cost the North Vietnamese and Vietcong very heavily in human lives and in the destruction of their war potential. But the fact that those black pyjama-clad North Vietnamese could penetrate into the tightly defended stronghold of the American Embassy in Saigon gave them an even greater victory than the one they reaped at Dien Bien Phu over their French masters. The American public opinion, effectively aided by a chorus of TV and radio commentators, by the self-styled liberal pundits of the press, self-seeking politicians and half-baked intellectuals in many campuses, foundered before the co-ordinated onslaughts. At that juncture, the policy of scuttle and run distinctly emerged.

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At this stage, while official relations at government level continue to be satisfactory and even cordial as heretofore, certain quarters in the United States, the press, particularly some elements of the New York - Washington axis mass media group, certain academic and congressional elements look upon Thailand not as a loyal friend and partner which has co-operated with the United States in many important ways at serious risks to herself and her people, but practically as a scapegoat on which to revenge their frustrations and failures.

Many unexpected happenings then began to unreel to the amazement of the non-plussed Thai people. When American gasoline is stolen by Americans the blame fell on Thailand. Or when United States authorities claimed to be swindled by American oil companies because they failed to take into account expansion under warmer climate, Thailand which was not party to the contract was held responsible. But the most baffling case is that of the Thai contingent in Vietnam which was sent into the battlefield at the urging of both United States and Vietnam. At the time when the request was made, Thailand made it abundantly clear that because of the burden she had to carry for the defense of the country against communist encroachments and activities in various parts of the Kingdom as well as the needs for economic and social developments, Thailand could not assume additional expenditures resulting from the despatch of Thai soldiers to help in the defense of Vietnam. The United States, therefore, offered to defray ...

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to defray certain expenses to help alleviate the burden that Thailand already had to bear. It was in reality a bona fide understanding between two sovereign governments. However, the politicians of dubious morality misrepresented this accord for the sharing of responsibilities as a decision by the United States to engage "mercenaries." They also made the ludicrous claim that the United States had to pay a 'bribe' of $ 1,000 Million for persuading Thailand to send her soldiers to Vietnam. A scholarly United States Senator even gave the Thai soldiers a new nationality borrowed from a historic German landgraveate of Hesse. So by the standard of that 'intellectual' and 'liberal' Senator, I myself would be more appropriately known as Hessian rather than Thai Foreign Minister. I suppose this will not sound quite right to many sane and healthy people.

During those hectic years, Thailand was also strongly urged to buy United States Treasury bonds, although our authorities did not think much of that forced investment. However, when the measure became known a hallucinated Congressman, known more for his eccentricity than his intelligence, decried the fact that the United States had to pay interests to Thailand for the bonds.

A greater surprise for the Thai people came from the accusation by congressional and press elements that this country exploited the United States for the building of the $200 million U Tapao air base. In reality, and according to the words of American architects and

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engineers who themselves constructed those bases, the United States recovered the money she spent on building the bases in six months' time by realizing savings on the wear and tear of those huge B52's which would fly from nearby points rather than from distant bases of Guam and Okinawa and they had to do previously. But those ill-intentioned circles, unable or unwilling to show impartiality or good faith, chose to pass over in silence considerable contributions made by Thailand in this instance and in others which, calculated in hard cash, would match or even surpass the assistance rendered to this country by the United States. In fact, one can say without hesitation that of all the countries in Asia, and perhaps in the world, which have co-operated with the United States, few have given in return for American generosity as much as the Thai Government and people.

One may ask in bewilderment why those immature and irresponsible elements in the United States have shown persistence in persecuting and molesting such a loyal friend and partner as Thailand? The answer has been supplied by Dr. Seymour Hallack of the American Psychiatric Association who declared "the number one mental health problem in our society is the Indo-Chinese war." Then Berkeley Political Scientist by the name of Sheldon Wolin explained further "The political life of this country (United States) is exhibiting unmistakable signs of derangement and systematic disorder..... The present crisis is the most profound one in our entire national history....

In contrast...

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In contrast to previous crises, the present one finds the country not only divided but confused, embittered, frustrated, and enraged, but lacking the one vital element of self-confidence." For these reasons it seems to be difficult for those working closely and loyally with the United States to expect a well reasoned and balanced reaction from their disturbed partner. We must recognize, however, that the difficulties and disturbances through which that great country has gone, have borned the mark of 'Made in U. S. A.' and created not by the enemy but by the less worthy elements of the American society for their own countrymen and for the friends of their country. In time of stress and strain the scum comes to the surface. It was those unwholesome elements which poisoned the hearts and minds and adulterated the sound and solid traditions of a great people. They even aimed at bringing about decay and disintegration to an otherwise strong and healthy society. For having co-operated wholeheartedly with the United States, Thailand has had to endure and suffer at the hands of those truly ugly Americans.

I say this not in anger but rather in sympathy and compassion. For, as a friend of the American nation who is impervious to the epithets of pro- or anti-American both of which have been occasionally applied to me, I feel saddened that while the country is mighty and the great majority of the people are resourceful, ingenious and generous, certain unbalanced elements should succeed in beclouding the perception

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of the nation in respect of its actual power and potential. Those elements have particularly shut the vision of the present and future role that such a nation can play for itself and for the rest of the world. In actual facts, what the United States has been doing in many parts of the world, and during the past few years in Asia, should be looked upon as truly momentous deeds worthy of the highest respect and commendation. In any case, and from a strictly practical standpoint, the important services rendered by that country to the cause of freedom should allow the United States to cash in rather than cave in. We in Thailand fully realize the high significance of United States' performance. Unfortunately, some Americans themselves have debased such valuable contributions. It is high time now for the great majority of the American people, be they silent or not, to erase the deleterious and nefarious effects resulting from the actions of the few and restore a saner and healthier consciousness of the purposeful and beneficial mission of the United States in the days to come.

If any soul-searching operation were to be undertaken to find out the cause of present frustrations, one may ask why such an immense material power available to the defenders of Vietnam could not bring the little black pyjama warriors down on their knees. Obviously, something must have been wrong. Would it be the fact that those who are in possession of and are used to work with impressive material

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and mechanical power and equipment lack the necessary understanding of the human hearts and minds? Especially, the motive power animating life in this part of the world is at least as much human will power as mechanical power. That applies particularly to the situation in Vietnam, which may not have been fully understood.

As to Thailand, the experience of the past few years has brought about a few conclusions which will probably guide and govern our future actions and relations with the United States.

In the first place, it seems to be the feelings of people not only in this country but elsewhere along the breadth and length of Asia that certain manifestations currently widespread in the United States are not suitable for Thailand nor for the rest of Asia and therefore must be rejected. I have in mind particularly the hippie and yippie culture as well as the Charlie Manson and the matrimonial community life experiments which are wholely repulsive to our morals and philosophy.

Secondly, while the Thai nation has been, still is and will be willing to entertain cordial relations with the traditionally generous American nation, it is not prepared to see our life and our thoughts dominated by certain segments of the American society. If, for instance, those elements of the New York - Washington mass media group which claim to have the right to shape and mould the thinking

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of their customers and terrorise those who resist the insidious grip on their minds, the Thai people are not ready to recognise either their paramountcy or their jurisdiction. Even though some of them may try to cower us into submission by blackmail or by ludicrous charge of anti-semitism, which is a phenomenon conceived and prevalent in western countries or any other groundless accusations, the Thai people repulse their pernicious attempts at extending their thought control over them. Never will the fact that Thailand is recipient of United States assistance or at the same time a contributor to United States interests validly justify the claim of those elements to extend their ominous shadow over this country and tyranize it or for them to come to throw insults at us in our own home. Likewise, Thailand refuses to recognize the jurisdiction and competence of the United States Foreign Relations Committee over the foreign policy of this country.

Thirdly, Thailand is not agreeable to receive alien political systems, be they known as people's democracy or 'Little Rock democracy' both of which are predicated upon the coloration of the political system or human skin and as such represent the anti-thesis of our casteless, classless humane philosophy of life. Buddhism which is our guiding inspiration and perhaps the most egalitarian system abhors dominance of some over the others. It also rejects

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all forms of discrimination whether on the bases of race, culture or religion.

Fourthly, while Americans are entitled to uphold and glorify the right of dissent as the essence of their political faith, the Thai people must also be allowed to reject those forms of American 'dissentery' or 'dysentery' as dissent is conceived and practised over there. For we have seen how impractical and unavailing for people to express their dissenting views with opinions propagated by certain newspapers. They simply would not publish them. Worse still those who try to differ from political views forcefully thrust forward by militant organizations such as the S. D. S. or the Black Panther are likely to run into serious risks for their persons not to speak of their opinions. Terror which reigns in certain college campuses is sufficient to prove how dissent is tolerated and admitted by those circles.

Fifthly, the Thai people find it very difficult to understand why co-operation with the United States should be conditioned on Thailand, sharing the confusion and convulsions gripping certain sectors of the American national life. One export Thailand is loath to accept is the export of such destructive commodities which risk to tear apart our society. If others find that these are appropriate expressions of their national activities, they should keep them

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preciously for themselves and prevent their exportation to those who have no use for them.

From all the above, it seems inescapable that relations between Thailand and the United States will evolve toward a more selective basis. While the Thai nation is always desirous to maintain, indeed to develop continuing close and cordial relations with the steady and well balanced American people, there is an understandable reluctance to have much, if anything, to do with the deviated and aberrant elements which forsake the time-honoured traditions of their great country. Particularly, we look forward to strengthen contacts and co-operation with the sane and energetic majority of the American people for mutual interests and benefits. As the conflict in Vietnam gradually recedes into the background and the requirements of military and political nature lessen, normality hopefully will return to our relations. The lowering of the profile in the military and political horizons, areas which have caused much friction and irritation, will, I dare hope, open the way for increased practical and constructive co-operation in the economic, technological and cultural fields. Thailand has a great deal to offer and the United States much to contribute. I hope that all of us here who are protected from contagious viruses shall be able to join in common endeavours for the above purpose.

As to ...

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As to Americans living in Thailand, they will continue to enjoy many important rights and privileges as heretofore. They can practise professions such as newspaper editors, attorneys and medical doctors, which are not open to Thai citizens in the United States. American banks can do business here while their Thai counterparts are not allowed to function in certain States like California. Such lack of reciprocity is likely to exist as it had existed in the past when the King or the Prime Minister of Thailand had to apply for a United States visa whereas any American citizen could walk into this country without similar requirement. As regards immigration permit difficulties which were mentioned by Ambassador Unger in his address to this body last year, they are being solved by the Foreign Office which can give extension of stay upon certification of bona fide business. Land ownership restrictions also may find appropriate solutions on the merits of the case. American GI's presence in Thailand is also welcomed while aggression in Vietnam continues for they are performing a worthy task for the peace of this region. All in all, Thailand undoubtedly represents now and in the foreseeable future the most friendly and favourable climate for co-operation the United States can find in the entire area. After the clouds which temporarily darkened the sky have cleared and the asperities smoothed over or removed from the surface, the

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relationship between the two countries will surge forward, for the friendship between the two peoples is genuine and based on natural, sound and solid ground. I have no doubt it will continue to serve and benefit our respective nations.

Royal Thai Embassy
Manila
August 3, B. E. 2513 (1970)