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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: August 11, 1948

SUBJECT: DRF Paper on Revival of Siam's Trade with Japan

PARTICIPANTS: Mr. Charles C. Stelle, Chief, DRF
Mr. John M. Allison, Chief, NA
Mr. Kenneth P. Landon, Assistant Chief, SEA
Mr. Robert A. Fearey, NA
Miss Virginia Webbert, DRF
Mr. Konrad Bekker, DRF

COPIES TO: Mr. Ellsworth Carlson, CP
NA, DRF, FE, CP

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Officers of FE and DRF met to discuss informally a paper prepared in DRF on the revival of Siam's trade with Japan. The conclusion of the paper seemed to be that revival of Siam's trade with Japan might be inimical to US trade with Siam. Officers in FE had gained the impression from reading the paper that it passed out of the field of intelligence and entered the field of policy in conflict with accepted policy in the Department. It was feared that if there were distribution outside of the Department there might be some misunderstanding, especially in the Department of Commerce or any other agency directly interested in US trade with Siam and Japan.

The difficulty of describing the fine line where intelligence ended and policy began was considered. The concensus of opinion among FE officers was that apart from the merits of this particular paper, it would have remained within the scope of intelligence if there had been an introductory statement indicating its distribution, purpose and frame of reference. There was some discussion whether such papers should necessarily agree with policy which was being carried on in the Department. It was the unanimous

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opinion that an intelligence paper should set forth the facts as DRF sees it regardless of what current policy might be, so that policy officers might be aided in making any necessary policy adjustments. At the same time the desire was expressed that an intelligence report make clear its own bias or slant.

Mr. Stelle was asked to provide information as to the distribution of this particular paper so that if there were outside distribution some informal comment on the paper might be made to recipients by telephone, if that seemed desirable.

SEA:KPLandon:abs