DECLASSIFIED
Authority NWD 76-1014

POL 7 THAI

Department of State **TELEGRAM**

RFD 4 CHICOM-THAI

Bangkok 13384 Pol-2

SECRET 70Z

PAGE 01 BANGKO 13384 01 OF 02 201247Z

44
ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 EUR-10 NSC-10 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00
NSAE-00 L-02 DODE-00 OMB-01 GAC-01 ACDA-10 PRS-01
RSR-01 RSC-01 T-01 USIA-04 E-03 IO-03 /081 W
022538

P 201402Z SEP 72
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6742

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 BANGKOK 13384

LIMDIS

SUBJ: PRASIT KANCHANAVAT'S ACCOUNT AND ASSESSMENT OF HIS TRIP TO PEKING

REF: BANGKOK 11923

SUMMARY: PRASIT WAS EXTREMELY WELL PLEASED WITH RECEPTION HE RECEIVED IN PEKING. HIS IMPRESSIONS IS THAT RTG CAN SET THE PACE AND DIRECTION OF DEVELOPMENT OF ITS RELATIONS WITH PEKING, BOTH AS REGARDS TRADE AND OTHER TYPES OF RELATIONS, INCLUDING POSSIBLE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. HE ATTRIBUTES PEKING'S FORTHCOMING ATTITUDE TO ITS DESIRE TO FORECLOSE POSSIBLE RUSSIAN MOVE TO GAIN MORE FAVORABLE POSITION IN THAILAND. WE HAVE STRONG IMPRESSION FROM HIM AND OTHER LEADERSHIP THAT THEY WILL MOVE POSTIVELY BUT PRUDENTLY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES THIS FIRST CONTACT OPENS UP.

1. AS HE AHD AGREED TO DO, PRASIT CONTACTED ME SHORTLY AFTER HIS RETURN TO ARRANGE TO GET TOGETHER. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF LENGTHY LUNCHEON CONVERSATION WITH HIM HELD ON SERTEMBER 19. AS IN THE CASE OF OUR PRE-TRIP MEETING, OSOT KOSIN WAS WITH PRASIT; I WAS ACCOMPANIED BY POL COUNSELOR.

2. PRASIT WAS EXTEMELY WELL IMPRESSED WITH THE WARM WELCONE HE RECEIVED IN PEKING. (HE NOTED THAT HE WAS ASSIGNED THE SAME CAR USED BY PRESIDENT NIXON THERE.) THE WAY WAS SMOOTHERED FOR HIM MAKING HIS MISSION AS HE PUT IT EASY BEYOND HIS DREAMS.

(2)

SECRET
28

DECLASSIFIED
Authority

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NWD 98044

Department of State **TELEGRAM**

SECRET

PAGE 02 BANGKO 13384 01 OF 02 201247Z

3. HIS FIRST MEETING, WITH LIAO CHENG-CHIH, LASTED TWO HOURS. THE FIRST HOUR OF THIS MEETING PRASIT SAID WAS TAKEN UP BY HIS HOST TAKING THE "BIG POWER" STANCE, STRESSING HOW PRESIDENT NIXON HAD COME TO PEKING, THE JAPANESE WOULD SOON COME, ETC. WHEN THIS POSTURING WAS OVER THE CONVERSATION GOT AROUND TO THE QUESTION OF WHAT PRASIT WAS EXPECTING AND WHAT THE WANTED TO DISCUSS, PRASIT TOLD LIAO HE SOUGHT NOTHING SPECIFIC, JUST A CHANCE TO OBSERVE AND TO TALK TO PEOPLE. AS TO SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION, PRASIT SAID THERE WERE TOW SUBJECTS THAT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO DISCUSS -- ONE WAS THAI RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES, THE OTHER THAI RELATIONS WITH TAIPEI. THAILAND'S POSTION ON THESE MATTERS WAS WELL KNOWN AND WAS NOT GOING TO CHANGE. ANY OTHER SUBJECTS WAS OPEN TO DISCUSSION. HE WAS NEVER REALLY PRESSED ON THE TWO "FORBIDDEN" SUBJECTS AFTER-WARDS, HE SAID, THE CHINESE TAKING THE ATTITUDE "WE HAVE TIME" TO GET AROUND TO THOSE ISSUES. FORM THEN ON, HE SAID THINGS WENT SURPRISINGLY SMOOTHLY.

4. ON THE SUBJECT OF TRADE, PRASIT CAME AWAY WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT THE PRC IS PREPARED TO MOVE ON THIS, AND IN VIRTUALLY ANY DIRECTION THE THAI WISH -- GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT TRADE NOT RPT NOT EXCLUDED. HE CONFIRMED PRC MOTIVATION AS CLARLY POLITICAL. HE DID NOT COMMENT SPECIFICALLY ON COMMODITIES THAT MIGHT ENTER THE TRADE, BUT OBSERVED THAT CHINA DOES NOT NEED TO BUY MUCH FROM THAILAND THAT THEY CAN'T GET ALREADY (PRESUMABLY THROUGH HONG KONG AND SINGAPORE) AND DON'T HAVE MUCH TO SELL THAT THAILAND NEEDS. HE SAID NO SPECIFIC ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE FOR FURTHER CONTACTS ON TRADE. HOWEVER, HE EXPECTS THE NEXT MOVE WILL COME IN CONNECTION WITH THE CANTON TRADE FAIR TO WHICH GENERAL INVITATION WAS EXTENDED.

5. CHINESE SEEMED WILLING TO LET THE RTG SET THE PACE ON OTHER ASPECTS OF DEVELOPING THE RELATIONSHIP AS WELL, INCLUDING FURTHER EXCHANGES OF VISITS AND MOVES TOWARD MORE FORMAL RELATIONSHIPS. ON THIS FRONT, AS IN ALL OTHERS, PRASIT INDICATED THAT THE RTG WILL BE MOVING SLOWLY AND PRUDENTLY. HE SAID HE HAD TALKED TO POTE SARASIN, WHO WILL HEAD THAILAND'S DELEGATION TO UNGA, ASKING POTE TO THANK THE CHINESE REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE FINE RECEPTION HE WAS ACCORD ED.

6. PRASIT'S CONCLUSION IS THAT CHINA IS MOTIVATED PRIMARILY BY ITS FEAR OF RUSSIA AND RUSSIAN ENCIRCLEMENT AND THE POSSIBILITY THAT

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
Authority

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 969014

Department of State **TELEGRAM**

SECRET

PAGE 03 BANGKO 13384 01 OF 02 201247Z

THAILAND MIGHT TURN TOWARD RUSSIA. AS HE PUT IT, THE PRC IS "LOOKING FOR FRIENDS". HE SAID FEAR OF RUSSIA SHOWED UP IN INNUMERABLE WAYS: IN EVERY DISCUSSION WITH OFFICIALS; IN OBSERVABLE PREPARATIONS SUCH AS CONSTRUCTION OF AIR RAID SHELTERS AND EXTENSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF SUBWAYS WHEN TRAFFIC SITUATION WOULD NOT REQUIRE THEM AND IN THE ATTITUDE OF STUDENTS AT THE SCHOOL HE VISITED IN SHANGHAI IN REACTION TO A QUESTION THEY WERE ASKED BY THEIR TEACHER ABOUT "SOCIALIST IMPERIALISM". HE SAID THE CHINESE OBVIOUSLY AND OPENLY FEAR RUSSIAN ENCIRCLEMENT AND ATTACK.

7. THE STRONGEST DIRECT EVIDENCE FOR HIS CONCLUSION ABOUT RUSSIAN MOTIVATION WAS THE FACT THAT CHOU EN-LAI ASKED HIM ABOUT THE KRA CANAL PROJECT, AND SPECIFICALLY WHETER THE RUSSIANS WERE SEEKING TO GET INVOLVED IN IT. WHEN PRASIT REPLIED IN THE NEGATIVE, CHOU WARNED THAT THE RUSSIANS WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE AN ULTERIOR MOTIVE IF THEY DID COME IN, AND THEY WOULD BE LOOKING FOR SOME EXCUSE FOR A MILITARY PRESENCE. (PRASIT WAS PARTICULARLY INSISTENT THAT WE TREAT THIS INFORMATION AS HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL AND SENSITIVE -- PLEASE OBSERVE.)

8. ON THE INSURGENCY, PRASIT SAID THAT TO PRESERVE THE FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE HE MADE NO ACCUSATIONS, BUT HE TOLD HIS HOSTS THAT IT WAS COMMONLY BELIEVED AND SAID THAT THE CINIESE WERE SUPPORTING THE INSURGENTS. THEIR RESPONSE WAS (AS HAS BEEN REPORTED IN THE PRESS) THAT THEY DO NOT INTERFERE IN THE ARRAIRS OF OTHER COUNTRIES. HOWEVER, THEY ADDED THAT THEY ARE SYMPATHETIC TOWARD AND ASSISTS PEOPLE WHO ARE FIGHTING FOR THEIR FREEDOM. ACCORDING TO PRASIT, THE SUBJECT WAS LEFT AT THAT POINT. (ON HIS RETURN TO BANGKOK, HOWEVER, PRASIT POINTED OUT TO THE PRESS THAT THE THAIS ALREADY HAVE THEIR FREEDOM; WHEN I RECALLED THIS HE EXPLAINED HE WAS SEEKING TO AVOID CONTROVERSY IN PEKING.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
Authority

...AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES