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16/19 Aug 38

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

THE AMERICA[illegible]

21, 1938.

LEGAL ADVISER
DEC 5 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OFFICE OF THE ADVISER ON
INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS
NOV 16 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

October 20, 1938.

RCM
JWB
MMH

Reference Bangkok's political report for August, despatch no. 259 of September 21.

The following items may be of interest:

(1) Mr. Frederick R. Dolbeare, American Adviser to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, had conferred upon him by the Council of Regency prior to his departure on leave in July the insignia of the Knight Grand Cross of the Most Noble Order of the Crown of Siam.

(2) The staff of the Italian Legation has been augmented by a first secretary.

(3) Mr. Takeo Tazawa, the first Commercial Secretary of the Japanese Legation in Bangkok, arrived there in August to take up his duties.

(4) Preparations for the visit to Siam during November of the King, Ananda Mahidol, continue. The sum of baht 150,000 (about $70,000) has been appropriated for the affair, according to the press.

(5) During the Assembly session in August a first category or elected member who queried the Government on an anti-Chinese speech made the previous month was ducked in a nearby pond by a group of second category

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OFP
Treasury
Commerce
Budget
Labor

OCT 31 1938

OF THE FOREIGN
IONAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS
OV 15 1938
ARTMENT OF STATE

892.00 P.R./113

FROM: Edwin L. Neville

1/ I have the honor to transmit herewith the Political Report of the Legation for the month of August 1938.

American Legation
Bangkok, Siam.

Respectfully yours,
Edwin L. Neville
Edwin L. Neville
American Minister

Date of completion: September 1, 1938.
Date of mailing: September 24, 1938.

Enclosure:

1. Political Report.

800-Saim

JHC/tse

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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By GMD NARA Date 5/1/96

REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

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THE

AMERICA

21, 1938.

LEGAL ADVISER
DEC 6 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OFFICE OF THE ADVISER ON
INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS
NOV 16 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

or appointed members. Subsequently the elected members absented themselves from one session in protest. The Legation draws the conclusion from the "ducking" and similar incidents that the Government will not tolerate obstructive action on the part of the elected members. A bill to protect Siamese labor (that is, to prevent Chinese immigrants from occupying positions which might be held by Siamese), introduced by a private member, was referred back to the Government for revision and reintroduction at a later date.

(6) The net increase of Chinese immigrants into Siam during 1937-38 was 22,000 as compared with 11,000 during 1936-37. The problem has become acute recently because of the large influx from the disturbed areas in China, but no positive steps have been taken to check the entry of Chinese immigrants.

FE
Treasury
Commerce
Budget
Labor

OCT 31 1938

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OFFICE OF THE ADVISER ON
INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS
NOV 15 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

892.00 P.R./113

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FE:Schuler:HES

From:

1/ I have the honor to transmit herewith the Political Edwin L. Neville

Report of the Legation for the month of August 1938.

American Legation

Bangkok, Siam.

Respectfully yours,

Edwin L. Neville

Date of completion: Edwin L. Neville, 1938.

American Minister

Date of mailing: September 24, 1938.

Enclosure:

1. Political Report.

800-Saim

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Authority State Ltr 11/72
By MBD NARA Date 5/1/96

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GR

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Bangkok, September 21, 1938.

LEGAL ADVISER
DEC 5 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OFFICE OF THE ADVISER ON
INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS
NOV 16 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

No. 259

Subject: Political Report for August.

BY AIR MAIL.

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DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

Excerpts to OKT-MID Treasury Commerce Bureau of Mines Labor

OCT 31 1938

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RECORDING DESK
FILE - C.

OFFICE OF THE ADVISER ON
INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS
NOV 15 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OCT 24 1938
ASSISTANT SECRETARY
OF STATE

892.00 P.R./113

FILED

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

1/ I have the honor to transmit herewith the Political Report of the Legation for the month of August 1938.

Respectfully yours,

Edwin L. Neville

Edwin L. Neville,
American Minister

Enclosure:

1. Political Report.

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By MJP NARA Date 5/1/96

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No. 88

POLITICAL REPORT

AUGUST 1938

From: Edwin L. Neville
American Minister

American Legation
Bangkok, Siam.

Date of completion: September 21, 1938.

Date of mailing:
(air mail) September 24, 1938.

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Authority State Ltr 11/72
By MBD NARA Date 5/1/96

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Bangkok Monthly Political Report, August 1938.

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I. POLITICAL RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES.

Reactions to Speeches of the President and Secretary of State

Secretary Hull's speech on August 16th, and the President's speech of August 18th at Kingston, Ontario, were very favorably commented upon in the local press. (The texts in English were made available to the two local English language newspapers by the Legation, since they were not available promptly from other sources.)

Mr. Frederick R. Dolbeare decorated

On the occasion of his departure for the United States on leave of absence, Mr. Frederick R. Dolbeare, American Adviser to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on July 29th had conferred upon him by the Council of Regency the insignia of Knight Grand Cross of the Most Noble Order of the Crown of Siam. Mr. Dolbeare departed from Bangkok on July 30th for the United States via Europe.

II.

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II. POLITICAL RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES.

First Secretary to Italian Legation

Mr. Ettore Guglielmo Grande, First Secretary of the Italian Legation, arrived in Bangkok to take up his duties on August 27th. Heretofore the staff of the Italian Legation has consisted only of the Minister, and Consul General who acted in the dual capacity of Secretary of Legation.

Japanese Commercial Secretary

Mr. Takeo Tazawa, who has been appointed to the post of Commercial Secretary of the Japanese Legation at Bangkok, arrived to take up his duties on August 1st. The position is a newly created one, there having been no previous officer attached to the Japanese Legation in that capacity.

Departing Japanese Military Attaché decorated

Shortly before his departure on August 3rd, Lieut. Colonel Hiroshi Tamura, retiring Japanese Military Attaché, had conferred upon him by the Council of Regency the insignia of Commander of the Most Illustrious Order of the White Elephant.

III.

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III. INTERNAL POLITICAL ACTIVITIES.

Visit of the King to Siam

Preparations looking to the visit of the King to Siam in November 1938 continued during August. The reception committee is reported to be busy with the program of events and the sum of Baht 150,000, according to press reports, has been approved by the Ministry of Finance, to pay for the preparations and celebrations during the King's visit.

Sequel to Speech by Luang Vichitr Vadakarn

Mention was made in the Monthly Political Report for July of an anti-Chinese speech made by Luang Vichitr Vadakarn and the adverse reactions to it in the National Assembly. The issue assumed considerable proportions during August. Nai Liang Jayakal, a first category (elected) member of the Assembly was particularly active in badgering the Government to give further explanations regarding the implications of Luang Vichitr's speech, to the apparent annoyance of the Government and second category (appointed) members. Finally at the session of August 6th Nai Liang propounded a list of questions in which he demanded to know just what the Government proposed to do about the speech and to Luang Vichitr for making it. The Acting Premier, Luang Pibul Songgram, Minister of Defense, answered briefly that Luang Vichitr had expressed his personal opinions and not those of the Government, and that the Government would take good care that the policies of the Government were to the best interests of the country. The questioner accepted these assurances and the issue appeared to be closed. The sequel followed quickly.

The Assembly then rose for the usual afternoon "tea interval". During the recess a group of second category members

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members hoisted Nai Liang on their shoulders, carried him calmly but firmly to a nearby pond and tossed him bodily into the water.

There was much local excitement over the incident but nothing of an untoward nature occurred. As a measure of protest the first category members of the Assembly refrained from participation in succeeding sessions of the Assembly but, in the usual Siamese manner, injured feelings seemed to have been quickly soothed and by the middle of the month the incident appeared, on the surface at least, to have been forgotten.

Following the Nai Liang "ducking" incident a small flood of ananymous pamphlets and letters were circulated around Bangkok. One of the pamphlets which enlarged on the theme that the Chinese in Siam are usurping the places of the Siamese people and depriving many of them of their means of livelihood, was alleged to have been circulated by Luang Vichitr and a police investigation was instituted. The investigations of the police failed however to implicate Luang Vichitr as the person responsible for the circulation of the pamphlet in question.

The moral, if any, that can be drawn from this series of incidents is that the Government really feels that it will tolerate the participation in and help of the elected representatives in legislative matters so long as no obstruction to government policies and government measures is attempted, but that the Government will not tolerate obstructive action on the part of the elected members.

Repeal of Act for Safeguarding the Constitution.

The Act to Repeal the law for Safeguarding the Constitution, passed by the Assembly in July (please see Monthly

Political

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Political Report for July), took effect on August 22, 1938, the date of publication in the Official Gazette.

Anti-Boycott Activities of Police

The police are reported to have been active during August in the suppression of Chinese secret societies which have been engaged for many months past in promoting a boycott of Japanese goods in Siam. Acts of terrorism have been not infrequent such as the stabbing, with fatal results, of Chinese merchants who persisted in dealing in Japanese goods. The general impression prevails that the efforts of the police have been successful in lessening at least the extent of the boycott although not in suppressing it entirely.

Release of Political Prisoners.

Press reports during August stated that five more political offenders against the present regime had been freed from restricted residence in far-away provinces as from August 5th.

The last batch of political prisoners, said to number 47, who are still confined in prison, will be granted amnesty at an early date according to reports in the Siamese press.

Activities of Phya Song Suratej

Phya Song Suratej granted a press interview published in translation in the Bangkok Times of August 12th in which he emphatically stated that the original aims of the promoters of the coup d'etat were opposed to dictatorship. Shortly afterwards he resigned from the Board of Advisers in Affairs of State Defense, to which he had been appointed

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in July, after attending the first meeting of the Board. The text of the interview accompanies despatch No. 256 of September 20, 1938. (For previous statements please refer to despatch No. 215 of July 30, 1938, and the Monthly Political Report for July).

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IV. COURSE OF LEGISLATION.

The Assembly

The National Assembly held nine sessions during August but completed little business of importance, The Nai Liang "ducking" incident took place on August 6th as commented upon under Section III. Most of the elective members of the Assembly absented themselves from the session of August 9th as a protest against the "insult" to Nai Liang, which was interpreted as an expression of disrespect and contempt for the elected representatives of the people, which in fact it was. Attendance was normal at the session held on August 13th. The new treaty between Siam and Portugal was ratified at that session without debate. A Government bill to amend the Poll Tax Act by extending the period of grace and changing the fines to be paid by delinquents was introduced and, after considerable debate, was passed through all three readings. Part of that session and all of the following one on August 16th were taken up with a discussion of a private member's bill to protect Siamese labor against the encroachments of foreign labor, in other words the problem of preventing Chinese immigrants from occupying positions which might be held by Siamese. After lengthy discussion the bill was finally turned over to the Government for revision and reintroduction at a later date.

The last three sessions in August were held "in camera" and were taken up with discussion of matters pertaining to the administration of the Buddhist Church, details of which have not yet been made public.

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Commerce

V. GOVERNMENT FINANCE.

New Assembly Hall

According to press reports during August a decision was reached by the Council of Ministers to undertake the construction within the next two or three years of a new building to house the Assembly of People's Representatives, at an estimated cost of Baht 3,000,000. The project, according to the reports, is to be brought before the Assembly for consideration at an early date.

The Assembly at present holds its sessions in the Royal Throne Hall known as the Dusit Palace, which is not particularly well adapted for the purposes of the Assembly.

Abroad	55,371,350	Plus	32,805
Total	53,044,975	Net decrease	1,540,685

V.

VI.

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V. GOVERNMENT FINANCE.
VI. GENERAL ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CONDITIONS.

Currency Reserve

The Rice Market

The Siamese Currency Reserve and currency notes in circulation at the end of August remained the same as reported in the Monthly Political Report for June.

According to a statement of the Department of Commerce on August 24th (Bangkok Times, August 29th), a total of 937,573 metric tons of rice were exported from Siam during January 1 to July 31, 1938, compared with 574,304 metric tons during the same period in 1937. The shipments were the following:

	Compared with the end of June 1938	
	1938	1937
	Minus 12,053,238 metric tons	
	Plus 62,605	
	373,544	255,819
	Net decrease 7,084	127,597
	211,990,633	33,633
	25,334	15,209
	2,513	1,554
	64,971	VI,213
	7,956	6,600
	14,577	3,859
	12,942	13,687
	76,629	27,072
	16,253	15,133
	37,224	3,547
	12,039	32,807
	28,385	5,816

Treasury Balances

The Treasury Balances on July 31st, as given in the Government Gazette of August 29th, stood as follows:

	Baht
In Siam	18,373,623
Abroad	36,871,352
Total	55,244,975

The above figures are approximate.

Siam Chamber of Mines

The Siam Chamber of Mines held its eleventh annual general meeting at Bangkok on August 15th. The report presented to the meeting was principally concerned with the maintenance of tin production during the year 1938-39 at the same level as that of the year ended March 31, 1938, and recommendations that the Siamese Government should sanction participation by Siam in the so-called "buffer pool scheme" designed to maintain the price of tin at a higher price level.

By a unanimous vote the name of the "Siam Chamber of Mines" was altered to read "Siam Mining Chamber".

Trade

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VI. GENERAL ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CONDITIONS.

The Rice Market

According to a statement of the Department of Commerce on August 24th (Bangkok Times, August 29th), a total of 937,373 metric tons of rice were exported from Siam during the period January 1 to July 31, 1938, compared with 574,304 metric tons for the same period of 1937, or an increase of 363,069 metric tons. The destinations of these shipments were the following:

	1938 Metric tons	1937 Metric tons
July	373,544	253,819
August	277,884	3,393
	3,213	15,202
	25,334	1,559
	2,512	66,213
	64,971	6,600
	7,956	3,859
	14,377	13,687
	12,948	27,072
	76,629	15,133
	16,233	3,547
	27,208	32,807
	12,039	3,816
	22,525	

The above figures are approximate.

Siam Chamber of Mines

The Siam Chamber of Mines held its eleventh annual general meeting at Bangkok on August 15th. The report presented to the meeting was principally concerned with the maintenance of tin production during the year 1938-39 at the same level as that of the year ended March 31, 1938, and recommendations that the Siamese Government should sanction participation by Siam in the so-called "buffer pool scheme" designed to maintain the price of tin at a higher price level.

By a unanimous vote the name of the "Siam Chamber of Mines" was altered to read "Siam Mining Chamber".

Trade

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Commerce

Trade of the Port of Bangkok

The trade of the port of Bangkok showed a favorable balance both in July and August, and the total trade was much larger than that of the same months of 1937. The continued high level of rice exports is responsible for this good showing. The value of other commodities exported during the two months' period was less in 1938 than in 1937. Comparative statistics follow:

	Exports - by value		Increase or decrease over 1937
	1938 Baht	1937 Baht	
July	9,552,128	7,803,107	+ 1,749,021
August	9,551,219	7,549,150	+ 2,002,069
	Imports - by value		
July	8,920,326	8,340,509	+ 579,817
August	7,817,904	7,522,155	+ 295,749
	Total trade - by value		
July	18,472,454	16,143,616	+ 2,328,838
August	17,369,123	15,071,305	+ 2,297,818

VII.

X.

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VII. ACTIVITIES OF AMERICAN COMMERCIAL INTERESTS.

Nothing to report.

VIII. ACTIVITES OF FOREIGN COMMERCIAL INTERESTS.

Nothing to report.

IX. EMIGRATION AND LABOR MATTERS.

Immigration during B.E. 2480 (1937-38)

According to statistics of the Immigration Division of the Bangkok Police Department (Bangkok Times, August 3rd, and Siam Chronicle August 5th and 9th), 50,857 aliens entered Siam during the Siamese year B.E. 2480 (April 1, 1937, to March 31, 1938), of which 44,123 were Chinese. Of the remainder 1,718 were British, 1,517 were Americans, 783 Indians, 545 French, 388 Dutch, 326 Germans, 169 Burmese, 147 Danish, and 135 Japanese. Aliens of nationalities other than Chinese are chiefly transients.

In the previous year, B.E. 2479, (April 1, 1936 to March 31, 1937), a total of 43,901 aliens were recorded as entering Siam, of which 37,252 were Chinese. The net increase of Chinese immigrants who settled in Siam during B.E. 2479 (1936-37) was approximately 11,000, and in B.E. 2480 (1937-38) in the neighborhood of 22,000.

In recent months the problem of Chinese immigration has become acute because of the large influx of immigrants on account of the disturbance in China. Thus far, however, no postive steps have been taken to check the entry of Chinese immigrants.

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By MJP NARA Date 7/1/96

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Despatches forwarded by the American Legation at Bangkok to the Department of State during August 1938.

X. MISCELLANEOUS.

Subject

Opium

(Please see despatch No. 255 of September 20, 1938).

Nothing further to report.

The Bangkok Times Directory 1938-39 (B.E. 2481)

The Directory for Bangkok and Siam 1938-39, printed by the Bangkok Times Press, was issued on August 9th. This directory, the forty-ninth, is similar in form and contents to those published in recent years. It is the principal up-to-date reference work on Siam. It contains, in addition to the usual directory sections, the texts of several of Siam's recently concluded treaties with foreign countries.

Floods

Heavy floods occurred in the Chiengmai and Lampang districts in northern Siam during August causing a large amount of damage as well as loss of life although coherent reports of the actual amount of loss caused by the floods have not been announced. Towns, roads and fields were inundated and it is certain that much land devoted to the raising of rice and other crops will show a total crop loss.

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Note: The present value of the baht (or tical), the Siamese unit of currency, is approximately $0.45.

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By MJP NARA Date 5/1/96

Despatches forwarded by the American Legation at Bangkok to the Department of State during August 1938.

Number	Date	Subject
218*	Aug. 1	Nonimmigrant 3(1) visas issued week of July 24-30, 1938.
219	Aug. 5	Treaty between Siam and Great Britain.
220*	" 8	Nonimmigrant 3(1) visas issued week of July 31 - Aug. 6, 1938.
221	" 9	Siamese Customs Notices.
222	" 11	June 24th decreed as Siamese "National Day".
223	" 11	Dangerous drugs.
224*	" 11	Disposition of Aircraft Year Book for 1938.
225	" 11	Additions to Council of Ministers.
226	" 11	Maps of Siam.
227*	" 12	Submission of bids directly to State Railways.
228	" 15	July Political Report.
229	" 17	Invoice of official supplies.
230*	" 18	Siamese Customs Notices.
231	" 19	Transmitting Mineral Report for 1937.
232	" 20	Publications for the Library of the Department.
233	" 23	Publications for the United States Tariff Commission.
234	" 23	Architects in Siam.
235	" 25	Semi-annual report of office organization.
236*	" 29	Nonimmigrant 3(1) visas issued week of Aug. 21-27, 1938.
237*	" 29	Siamese Customs Notices.
238	" 30	Codes and ciphers. (Strictly Confidential).

*Combined Office despatch.

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No telegrams were forwarded by the American Legation at Bangkok to the Department of State during August 1938.

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