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pw

THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

15811

September 15, 1967

9/15/67

SECRET - EXDIS

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Meeting with Pote Sarasin, Thai Minister of National Development, and Thanat Khoman, Thai Minister of Foreign Affairs

Recommendation:

That you meet with Ministers Pote Sarasin and Thanat Khoman at your convenience some time between October 2 - 5.

Approve _____ Disapprove _____

Discussion:

In Bangkok's 2794 Ambassador Martin has commented on reports (summarized in TDCS DB-315/03454-67) that General Praphat and other military leaders may seek to oust Prime Minister Thanom and Minister Pote Sarasin, the leading civilian figures in the Thai Government, for their alleged ineffectiveness. Such a move could delay or nullify steps currently under way to move toward constitutional rule and elections.

Ambassador Martin believes that such a move, which could take the extreme form of a coup or possibly be presented as an "agreed" reshuffle, might succeed under certain circumstances, and that its chances of success would be increased if it were considered that the United States did not respect those incumbent Thai leaders. In assessing United States interest in this situation, he feels that our objective should be the

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S/S: B.H. Jondek: ejj

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continuation in authority of the regime as presently constituted through the likely promulgation of the Constitution this December and the elections which would probably follow in October 1968. He believes that through limited actions on our part, this can be done with reasonable prospect for success. One of the steps which he recommends is supporting the position of Minister Pote through high-level attention to him during his forthcoming visit to the United States next month.

Pote is scheduled to be in New York from October 2 to 5 in connection with a speech to the Far East Council on October 4. He would like to meet with me and if possible pay a brief call on you (see Bangkok's 2334 and 3016, enclosed). Minister Pote called on you last year (October 7) in the company of Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman, so that there is a precedent for such a visit. Since Foreign Minister Thanat will be in the United States at the same time, it would be appropriate to repeat last year's arrangements and have him call in company with Minister Pote. In addition, Deputy Prime Minister Praphat saw you during a visit in July 1964, so that we can point to that call if there is any question that we are favoring one leader or faction as compared with another. At the same time, our regard for Minister Pote will be noted in Bangkok.

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Dean Rusk

Enclosures:

1. Bangkok's 2334, August 27, 1967
2. Bangkok's 3016, September 11, 1967

Aft. - EA/Thai: MJSpear:
Retyped in S/S:BHoudek:ej:9/13/67

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O R 270502Z AUG 67 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 592
INFO USMISSION USUN 241

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 2334

REF: (A) STATE 23601; (B) BANGKOK 2304

1. WHILE NOT DIRECTLY CONNECTED WITH UNGA, I WOULD LIKE TO ADD THAT POTE SARASIN, MINISTER FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WILL BE IN NEW YORK OCTOBER 4 TO SPEAK BEFORE THE FAR EAST COUNCIL. HE WILL PROBABLY ARRIVE OCTOBER 2 AND DEPART OCTOBER 5. FOR REASONS WHICH WILL BE ELABORATED SEPARATELY IN COMMENT ON INFORMATION CONVEYED OTHER CHANNELS ON POTENTIAL INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS, I HOPE VERY MUCH SECRETARY WILL BE ABLE TO RECEIVE HIM EITHER IN NEW YORK OR WASHINGTON. MARTIN

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RSC 01,CIA 04,NSAE 00,INR 07,RSR 01,/107 W

R 110913Z SEP 67
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 3016

REF: BANGKOK 2334

1. MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT POTE SARASIN TELEPHONED ME LAST NIGHT AND, REFERRING TO HIS EARLIER CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR MARTIN, REMINDED ME THAT HE WILL BE LEAVING BANGKOK ON SEPTEMBER 23 FOR THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY'S CONFERENCE IN VIENNA SEPTEMBER 26 AND WILL BE ARRIVING IN NEW YORK ON OCTOBER 2. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD LIKE VERY MUCH TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH THE SECRETARY IN NEW YORK OR WASHINGTON, AND IF POSSIBLE, WITH THE PRESIDENT. HE RECOGNIZED THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS AN EXCEEDINGLY HEAVY SCHEDULE BUT HOPED THAT THE SCHEDULE WOULD PERMIT AN OPPORTUNITY FOR A BRIEF CALL. HE ASKED ME TO LET HIM KNOW IF POSSIBLE WHAT COULD BE

PAGE 2 RUMTBK 3016K C O N F I D E N T I A L
ARRANGED. I SAID I WOULD. AS THE JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THESE APPOINTMENTS, I CAN ONLY ALLUDE TO THE SAME REASONS MENTIONED IN AMBASSADOR MARTIN'S REFTEL WHICH HAVE BEEN REENFORCED SUBSEQUENTLY BY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING POTENTIAL INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS CONVEYED THROUGH OTHER CHANNELS.

2. EMBASSY WILL CABLE POTE'S DETAILED ITINERARY AS SOON AS WE RECEIVE IT LATER THIS WEEK.
HANNAH

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