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EXDIS file

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20520

January 28, 1971

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MEMORANDUM FOR MR. HENRY A. KISSINGER
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: Visit by the King of Thailand

In response to our inquiry about a possible state visit to the United States by the King of Thailand, Ambassador Unger has suggested that consideration be given to an "informal" visit, i.e., an official visit to the United States, to take place in San Clemente or elsewhere outside Washington. The Ambassador has pointed out that protocol requirements for a full-fledged state visit by His Majesty would be very extensive on the Thai side, involving a large entourage and an extended period of preparation. The Ambassador's comments are set forth in the enclosed telegram.

The Ambassador also notes that in view of the continuing insurgency in Thailand and threats on the Lao and Cambodian borders, the King might feel himself bound by his position of a year and a half ago against visits abroad while the situation remained troubled.

We believe the King would be pleased to receive an invitation from the President to visit the United States, even if His Majesty decided that he could not accept such an invitation this year. We assume that Her Majesty Queen Sirikit would be included.

As noted by Ambassador Unger, dates in June or September would correspond with Their Majesties' presumed interest in traveling with their oldest daughter, a student at M.I.T., on one part of the

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trip. If a state visit is preferred, September would be the best choice because of the time we assume would be required on the Thai side for preparation of a formal visit. If the visit is to be less formal, it could take place in San Clemente and probably be arranged as early as June, although September would be equally appropriate. It would of course be helpful to preserve flexibility in these matters until an informal approach has been made to the King.

Theodore L. Eliot Jr.

Theodore L. Eliot, Jr.
Executive Secretary

Enclosure:

Bangkok 1167

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EA - Mr. Wilson
S/CPR - Mr. Cpdbe
J - Mr. Peck
C - Mr. Pedersen

EA/TB:AEBergesen:pw:1/27/71

Revised in S/S-S:Alfrons:sal:1/28/71

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Department of State TELEGRAM

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ACTION SS-45

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1851

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 1167

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SUBJ: POSSIBLE VISIT BY THE KING OF THAILAND

REF: STATE 02158

1. IN MY JUDGMENT THE KEY ISSUE WHICH WILL AFFECT THE APPROPRIATE DATE AND THE POSSIBLE LOCATION OF A VISIT BY THE KING IS WHETHER OR NOT THE VISIT WILL BE AN INFORMAL ONE OR A STATE VISIT IN THE OFFICIAL, FORMAL SENSE.

2. IF IT IS A STATE VISIT THAT IS ENVISAGED, THEN IT SEEMS TO ME A LARGE SUITE OF ATTENDENTS IS INEVITABLE, AS WELL AS LENGTHY PREPARATIONS. PROTOCOL EXPERTS COULD SAY BETTER THAN I WHETHER A STATE VISIT CAN BE CONDUCTED ENTIRELY OUTSIDE THE NATIONAL CAPITAL WITHOUT ANY OF THE WASHINGTON FORMALITIES THAT USUALLY ATTEND SUCH OCCASIONS SUCH AS STATE DINNERS, WREATHS AT ARLINGTON, INITIAL RECEPTION AT THE WHITE HOUSE AND PARTICIPATION BY HIGH-RANKING US AND FOREIGN OFFICIALS IN THE CAPITAL. I CANNOT BE SURE OF HOW THE THAIS WOULD REACT BUT I FORESEE THE POSSIBILITY THAT THEY WOULD TAKE EXCEPTION TO THEIR MONARCH'S BEING INVITED FOR A STATE VISIT AND TREATED IN WHAT WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE A LESS CEREMONIAL AND AUGUST MANNER THAN OTHER STATE VISITORS.

3. AN INFORMAL VISIT BY HIS MAJESTY (OR THEIR MAJESTIES) TO SAN CLEMENTE WOULD, ON THE OTHER HAND, SEEM TO ME TO PRESENT RELATIVELY FEW PROBLEMS, REQUIRE MUCH LESS PREPARATION AND THE THAI ENTOURAGE COULD PROBABLY BE KEPT FAIRLY SMALL. IN SUCH CASE I PRESUME THE EMPHASIS WOULD BE ON THE PRESIDENT'S DESIRE BOTH TO RETURN HIS MAJESTY'S COURTESIES EXTENDED HERE IN JUNE OF 1969 AND ALSO TO HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR A FULL AND RELAXED DISCUSSION OF COMMON CONCERNS.

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Department of State TELEGRAM

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I THINK THIS KIND OF VISIT WOULD BE READILY ACCEPTED HERE BY THE THAIS AND THEY WOULD IN FACT BE PLEASED BY THIS FURTHER INDICATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL REGARD FOR THEIR COUNTRY AND THEIR KING. FURTHERMORE, THERE ALREADY WAS DISCUSSION OF THE POSSIBILITY OF AN INFORMAL VISIT IN 1970, I BELIEVE, ON THE BASIS OF AN EARLIER, VERY TENTATIVE INDICATION THAT THEIR MAJESTIES MIGHT VISIT THE US EITHER TO BRING THEIR DAUGHTER, PRINCESS UBOLRATANA AT MIT, BACK TO BANGKOK FROM COLLEGE OR TAKE HER BACK TO COLLEGE FROM HER SUMMER VACATION HERE.

4. AS FOR DATES, I BELIEVE THAT AN OFFICIAL, FORMAL STATE VISIT COULD NOT POSSIBLY BE ARRANGED IN LESS THAN ABOUT 6 MONTHS, BASED ON MY EXPERIENCE WITH THE PREPARATION FOR THE 1960 STATE VISIT. AN INFORMAL VISIT, ON THE OTHER HAND, COULD PROBABLY BE GEARED UP MORE RAPIDLY, ALTHOUGH I AM SURE SEVERAL MONTHS WOULD PROBABLY BE DESIRED BY THE THAI. IN FACT, I BELIEVE THEIR MAJESTIES WOULD BE MOST LIKELY TO RETURN TO THEIR EARLIER THOUGHT ABOUT ACCOMPANYING THE PRINCESS AND MIGHT THEREFORE BE INCLINED TO CHOOSE JUNE AT THE EARLIEST OR MORE LIKELY SEPTEMBER.

5. ONE MORE FACTOR MIGHT WELL STAND IN THE WAY OF BOTH A STATE AND INFORMAL VISIT. THIS IS THE POSITION TAKEN BY THEIR MAJESTIES ABOUT ONE AND ONE-HALF YEARS AGO WHEN THEY SAID THAT THEY DID NOT PROPOSE TO LEAVE THAILAND AS LONG AS THE CURRENT TROUBLED SITUATION CONTINUED. SINCE THE TROUBLES -- INTERNAL INSURGENCY AND THREATS ON THE LAO AND CAMBODIAN BORDERS -- HAVE IF ANYTHING INCREASED, IT MAY WELL BE THAT THEY WOULD DECLINE TO MAKE ANY TRIPS ABROAD. GP-4 UNGER

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