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Thai Assembly Activities

M.R. Kukrit Pramot
Leonard Unger, Deputy Chief of Mission

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At the Ambassador's reception for the United States Investment Group (Mr. Beitzel et al) I had a long and rambling conversation with M.R. Kukrit Pramot. I referred to the economic atmosphere of this reception as an unfamiliar one in which to find him. He replied that he was the only Thai really qualified to be a member of the Investment Group as he was the only one with a university degree in economics.

We then turned to the work of the Interim Assembly where he acknowledged that he has been acting as the principal gadfly by raising numerous objections to the revenue law which Minister Sunthorn has been trying to get through. He said that he is intent on being quite sure that all loopholes for tax evasion are plugged up.

In answer to my inquiry, Kukrit said that the preparation of the rules which the Assembly was formulating to regulate the work of drafing a new constitution was proceeding quite slowly. He estimated that the rules would take perhaps as much as a year to prepare and that the drafting of the new constitution would, of course, take a good deal longer, perhaps as much as five years. Although this was said with a certain irony, it also appeared from the subsequent conversation about Thailand's political evolution that Kukrit is himself not unsatisfied with the present situation and is generally supporting Sarit's policies. (This has been generally confirmed by the editorial policy of Kukrit's newspaper, SIAM RATH.) He repeated what he has said before that Thailand is not ready for the forms of democracy which have been adopted in Western countries and that it will have to find its own way.

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