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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

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~~CA~~ S-206

TO : EA/RA - Mr. Masters

DATE: December 9, 1970

FROM : EA/TB - John R. Dexter

12/9/70

SUBJECT: Coordination of U.S.-China Policy with Thailand

POL THAI - US
XP POL Chinat - US
XP POL Chinat - US

Summary

Thailand has been allied with the U.S. since 1954 (SEATO) and even before that was one of the first, and remains the last, country other than the U.S. to contribute forces to the UN effort in Korea. Although Thailand has consistently supported the ROC in the UN, it would like to open a dialogue with Peking and to improve relations with Communist China if possible. Of more importance to the RTG is the large (several million strong) overseas Chinese minority in Thailand; although it is the best integrated group of Chinese in SE Asia, the Thai could be expected to be extremely sensitive to any developments which might impinge on the political leanings of these residents. For these reasons the Thai Government is vitally interested in the development of U.S. policy toward China. Furthermore, the closeness of Thai-U.S. cooperation in security matters in the area would seem to impose on U.S. the necessity as well as the evident desirability of close and regular consultation on this subject.

Background

Over the past few years the RTG, while standing firmly with the U.S. and the ROC on ChiRep and recognition of the CPR, has held open the possibility of a dialogue with Peking. Foreign Minister Thanat in particular has noted publicly that the state of relations between Bangkok and Peking stems from China's anti-Thai attitude, specifically its support of insurgents in Thailand, not because Thailand is "anti-Chinese" (many if not most of the insurgent Communist leaders are Sino-Thai). Thai reaction to the slight shift in the U.S. position has been to point out publicly that as both Chinas demand exclusive recognition as speaking for China, a two-Chinas policy has no chance of being accepted. Privately, the Thai have asked the North Vietnamese Red Cross delegation now in Bangkok to ascertain whether Peking is interested in a dialogue, and the North Vietnamese are reported to have undertaken to raise the matter with the

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Chinese if a suitable opportunity arises.

Bangkok's relations with Nationalist China have been generally quite good. There are two categories of Chinese in northern Thailand ostensibly responsive to Nationalist Chinese control, whose future has been the subject of highly secret exchanges between the two governments. The first and larger of these is the so-called Chinese irregular armies in north Thailand; arrangements are being made to settle these people permanently, with the possibility of their eventually becoming Thai citizens. With respect to the others, the so-called KMT intelligence detachments, our most recent information is that the RTG is trying to put a stop to their operations and get rid of them.

The Thai of course are duly impressed with the weight of mainland China bearing down on them, and would undoubtedly prefer to have good relations with Peking, if possible. Probably more important to the RTG, however, is the fact that there are several million people of Chinese origin in Thailand, especially in the Bangkok area. The overseas Chinese seem to be better integrated into Thai society than anywhere else in Southeast Asia; there has been considerable intermarriage and many Thai officials have an infusion of Chinese blood. Much of the economic life of Thailand is dominated by overseas Chinese or Sino-Thai. Any developments which might bring into question the loyalty to Thailand of this large and powerful minority would cause the greatest concern to the Thai.

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SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON

November 17, 1970

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Dear Alex:

Mr. Monjo informed my office that Ambassador Unger has reiterated the desirability of being able to provide the Government of Thailand with specific names in support of our request for 35 District Senior Advisor families in the Bangkok area.

In the interest of expediting this program and obtaining the necessary approval, I am attaching a list of DSA officers who have expressed interest in locating their families in Bangkok. I must emphasize, however, that it may be necessary to amend this list at a later date. We plan to make a general announcement to all officers after obtaining authority to locate up to 35 DSA families in the Bangkok area.

In addition to the previous information provided concerning the quality of officers assigned as District Senior Advisors, I should also emphasize that the officers being assigned as District Senior Advisors are a highly educated group who have satisfactorily completed the 18-week course of instruction at the State Department-sponsored Foreign Service Institute here in Washington.

I am hopeful that this information will bring about early approval of our plan for adding Bangkok to the housing options of the District Senior Advisor Program. Please call me if I may be of further assistance.

Def 9 US
Kr Pol Thai-US

Sincerely,

EA

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Stanley R. Resor

Inclosure

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BY S/S-I

Honorable U. Alexis Johnson

Under Secretary of State