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SOUTH-EAST ASIA DEPARTMENT

SIAM

FS10381/12

FROM W. Whittingham
Bangkok

No. 90 (5)
Dated 6
Received in Registry— 11 Sept.

Letter information about Siamese comment on the Korean war and Siamese offer of 4,000 troops.

Gpt'd 75 (5) Saigon no 22 (5) and Tokio 49 (5)

REFERENCES

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MINUTES

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**SAVINGRAM.**

INWARD SAVING TELEGRAM

Cypher

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Clear

1029/33/50.

(Foreign Office & Whitehall)

*From:* H.M.CHARGE D'AFFAIRES BANGKOK.

*To:* FOREIGN OFFICE No.90 Saving
Reptd.to SINGAPORE No.24 Saving
SAIGON No. 22 Saving
TOKIO No.49 Saving
RANGOON No.75 Saving

INDEXED

FS 10381/12

Despatched — Received

No 90 SAVING of 6th September, 1950.

FS/10381/11

CONFIDENTIAL.

Addressed to Foreign Office No.90 Saving of 6th September, repeated to Singapore No.124 Saving, Rangoon No.75 Saving, Saigon No.22 Saving and Tokio No.49 Saving.

p30 My telegram No.552 - KOREA.

There is little further to report about the state of Thai public opinion and press comment about the Korean war except to say that there has been marked agreement in the press and generally with the Government's support of United Nations action. At the same time the minds of the politicians have been turned away from consideration of internal political intrigues to thoughts about foreign affairs. There is, however, as yet nothing tense about the atmosphere in Bangkok nor any public realisation that a crisis might be at hand.

2. Some 11,000 men have volunteered to fight in Korea as a result of the Siamese offer of 4,000 troops. Some preliminary training has started. The United Nations request for information regarding the equipment, etc. of the 'combat team' which the Government had offered produced dismay, and the United States Ambassador informs me that, on the basis of the equipment which it possesses, the Siamese Army offer is likely to be modified to the provision of one battalion only. It may be noted here that, in conversation with my Naval Attaché, General Erskine of the Melby mission presently in Bangkok has observed that he has been impressed by the potential fighting material among the Siamese, that modern warfare will have to be taught to the Siamese forces "from the ground up" and that they will have to be re-equipped completely. Certainly, Siamese official circles are at present rather ashamed of the condition of their fighting services as revealed to the searching eyes of the visiting United States Military Mission and it is significant that in a conversation which Sir John Sterndale-Bennett and I had with Marshal Pibul two days ago, His Excellency had nothing to say about the Siamese combat team for Korea.

WHITTINGTON.

RW/ERC.11.

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