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September 25, 1969

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Reviewed by: Ambassador W. Wilman, II
Date: 3/6/76 19

SECRETARY'S DELEGATION
TO THE
TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
NEW YORK, September, 1969

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Date: September 23, 1969

Time: 12:30

Place: US Mission

SUBJECT: Secretary's Bilateral Meeting with Foreign Minister Thanat on September 23, 1969 -- The Cooper Admendment (Part 6 of 6)

PARTICIPANTS:

U.S.: The Secretary
Amb. Yost
Mr. Clark

FOREIGN: FonMin Thanat
Amb. to UN Anand
Amb. Designate to US Sunthorn
Spec. Asst. to the FonMin Birobhangse

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Thanat asked in what manner the current Congressional amendment would affect US capabilities. The Secretary said we had not yet made a full study of the Cooper amendment but it would have no effect on US capabilities. He said it was intended to prevent the use of US ground forces in combat situations in Laos. Thanat asked if this would not reduce our ability to respond under the SEATO Treaty. The Secretary said he believed this would not be the case. Thanat then

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asked what our position would be if the Chinese came across his border in force. The Secretary said this would not be a problem since in such a situation we would have full support of the Congress. Such overt aggression was not the present concern. What Congress was concerned about was that we not become involved in another undeclared war. The real concern was Laos; that we might become involved there using the same reasoning that had gotten us into Viet Nam. Thanat again asked if this would not affect our commitment under SEATO. The Secretary said it would not, since it was only an amendment to an appropriations bill. Thanat smiled and said with no money it was not possible to fight. The Secretary said funds had not been cut and the amendment was merely a signal to the Administration on undeclared wars. In the case of a Chinese invasion, we would come to the aid of the Thai. He went on to say the amendment was only for one year and he would get the wording of it and discuss it with Thanat when the latter was in Washington. Thanat said he had thought the amendment might be similar to the Tonkin resolution. The Secretary said no, it was only an amendment to an appropriations bill which said we could not use the funds appropriated in support of an undeclared war. He said we would get the exact wording and give Thanat a memo on it when he was in Washington. He again asked that Thanat advise him of his exact time scheduled in Washington.

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