350 POL AFFAIRS (U) 1961
THAILAND

AIRGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING American Embassy London

UNCLASSIFIED

Classification

PAGE 1 OF 2 PAGES

POLITICAL DIVISION

DNB PA CEE PFB

WWH JFM JSR RGB

Sept 7, 1961 2 PM

Received E & C Secti

Date 25 SEP 1961

FROM: LONDON

TO: Secretary of State

NO: A-338

INFO: AmEmbassy BANGKOK A-8

	ACT.	INF.
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POL:CN2
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Significant points in an Economist Foreign Report article "Siam After Sarit", August 31, are summarized below:

Although Marshal Sarit appears firmly entrenched in power as Prime Minister of Thailand, doubts about his health cause rival contenders to make plans accordingly. The succession to power of any of the following, moreover, could arrest or stimulate a possible Thai trend toward neutralism:

1. General Praphat Charusatien: The seeming lead over all rivals held by the Minister of the Interior is attenuated by the fact that these rivals are united in opposition to him. They criticize him for excessive corruption for his many contacts with the Chinese community, and for his anti-Cambodian sentiments. If he were ever in a position to steer Thailand on a neutralist course, he might do so out of a feeling that Thailand's interests, including the prosperity of its leaders, would be better served thus.

2. General Krit Srivara.

3. Generals Krit Punakarn and Siri Siriyothin.

Groups 2 and 3 above have considerable support among junior officers, whose politics range from mild royalism to theoretical reformism of which the Communists could obviously take advantage.

Group 3 would like to have a civilian premier, perhaps Pote Sarasin or General Thanom Kittikachorn.

Marshal

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9-7-61

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Marshal Sarit has played a curious role in this struggle. He is obviously aware of what is going on, and on several occasions has told plotters that he knew of their plans. His main concern seems to be to preserve stability during his own lifetime and let the future look after itself.

BRUCE

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Authority NND 949832

POL/F:CMehlert:lt
September 6, 1961

Francis J. Galbraith

Clearance: POL - Mr. Shullaw

UNCLASSIFIED

TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING Amembassy BANGKOK

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UNCLASSIFIED
Classification

Charge: Embassy

Control: 619

Date: Aug. 30, 1961

ACTION: Secstate WASHINGTON UNCLAS 311

INFO : CINCPAC FOR POLAD 57

Primin Sarit Aug 29 ordered execution Chinese natl Lienghor sae Lao for manufacturing and peddling heroin. Order carried out 6 p.m. same day. Sarit acted under Section 17 of Interim Constitution, which gives him plenary powers, and with approval Cabinet. Execution followed police raid Aug 16 on Bangkok house which netted four men, opium, morphine and heroin-producing equipment. Primin personally interrogated suspects, one of whom confessed, but alleged ringleader Lienghor denied everything. According press, police found letters seized at house of assistant described as "important correspondence from China Mainland."

Sarit, other Thai leaders seriously concerned spreading dope habit here may be Commie device undermine nation's security, have so stated many times past few months.

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YOUNG

POL:JReed:ls
August 30, 1961

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Classification

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Airgram 311
350 Pol Affairs - Thailand
F-30-61

TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

Charge: EMBASSY

UNCLASSIFIED
Classification

Control: 465

Date: March 24, 1961

SENT TO: SecState WASHINGTON UNCLAS 1731

RPTD. INFO: Amembassy KUALA LUMPUR 43

CINCPAC/POLAD 548

DIST

AMB
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MASTER
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According BANGKOK WORLD Mar 23, Interior Min Praphat downplayed recent incident in south which thought connected with attempt by Malayan politicians spark uprising as merely ordinary cops and robbers affair. Other police spokesman called reports that thousands of Moslems would be arrested groundless. Police only collecting evidence.

BANGKOK POST article stated Malayan politicians behind recent incident were conspiring establish autonomous state between Thailand and Malaya consisting Thai provinces Satun, Narathiwat, Pattani, and Yala and Malayan states Trengganu and Kelantan. Malayan plotters consider themselves members Malayan royalty and using extremist Malayan language newspaper as their voice. Said TG does not consider situation in south critical and at present does not require Malayan cooperation in combatting separationists.

DM3

JOHNSON

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 948832

POL:JERoy:jfl

March 24, 1961

UNCLASSIFIED
Classification

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Secret 1731

350 Rel Byroad - Thailand

3-24-61

TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING Amembassy, Bangkok

Secstate 1715

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USIS
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Charge: Embassy

UNCLASSIFIED
Classification

Control: 422

Date: March 22, 1961

SENT TO: SecState WASHINGTON UNCLAS 1715

RPTD INFO: Amembassy KUALA LUMPUR 42

CINCPAC/POLAD 541

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 949832

350 Pol Malaya - Thailand

BANGKOK WORLD Mar 22 quoted Thai spokesman saying Malayan Gvt had offered assist TG in suppressing activities group Malayan politicians who instigating Thai Muslims. Cabinet had discussed situation, which had returned relative calm although other disturbances possible, and decided it could not be overlooked due reports underground movement arms into Thailand and secret training southerners for rebellion. Spokesman said plot hatched in Kelantan and Trengganu by party which having failed overthrow Malayan Gvt, began making trouble in south Thailand in bid for popularity. Malayan Gvt realized danger party poses to it and TG, and offered assist in suppressing it. Spokesman described Malayan offer as "heartwarming" and as revealing Malayan Gvt's true friendly feelings toward TG.

BANGKOK POST Mar 21 headlined report that Thai authorities intended arrest 10,000 Malays in south Thailand who entered Thailand illegally during past 4-5 years and attempting create unrest in four Muslim provinces. High officials cited as source also said TG has names some ~~frm~~ former Thai Muslim MPs and accomplices who behind agitation in south.

3-22-61

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TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING

Charge: UNCLASSIFIED *Classification* Control:

-2-

Date:

Officials charged some leaders of Malayan opposition party known as Rayak are "brains" for conspiracy in which Thai politicians used as tools. This Malayan party responsible for illegal immigration 10,000 Malays who mixed with Thai Muslim population, obtained land for agriculture and other occupations, and engaged in political propaganda and instigating disturbances.

JOHNSON

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 949832

POL:JSRoy:la
March 22, 1961

UNCLASSIFIED *Classification*

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STANDARD FORM NO. 64

DNB IGP [illegible] W 11 JBB
OIR RGB JFM PPB

CF

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : American Embassy, Bangkok
Attn: Political Division

DATE: June 30, 1961

FROM : American Consulate, Chiengmai

SUBJECT: Distribution of Anti-Government Leaflet in Chiengmai

Enclosed is a thermofax copy of a mimeographed leaflet which was received through the mails by several Chiengmai residents. This leaflet was the subject of a front-page report in the KON MUANG DAILY on June 29, 1961 (thermofax copy of a translation of the article also attached).

The copy of the leaflet, borrowed for reproduction purposes by the Consulate, was received by Nai Rueng Nimmanahaeminda. The envelope was addressed in handwriting and was postmarked Bangkok June 26, 1961. (A thermofax copy of the envelope is also enclosed, with the handwritten address copied as identical as possible.) Nai Rueng informed the Consulate's FSL that the address on the envelope, Thai Commercial Bank, is incorrect (he is not associated with this bank) but that over a year ago when he was still Lord Mayor he had received a similar anti-Government leaflet addressed to him in the same way.

Others in Chiengmai, including the Principal of the Prince Royal's College, according to the KON MUANG DAILY, also received copies of the leaflet. The police have been informed by some of the recipients. It would appear that the writers of the leaflet have a Chiengmai mailing list without the knowledge of the addressees.

The Consulate is translating the leaflet and copies of the translation will be transmitted in this same (Saturday) pouch if completed on time.

Enclosures:
1. Anti-Government Leaflet (thermofax copy)
2. From the KON MUANG DAILY of June 29, 1961 (thermofax copy)
3. Envelope (one thermofax copy only - of possible interest as a sample of the sender's handwriting)

Copies to DCM, SA, USIS-Bangkok

GMBarbis:rl

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OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Army-Admin Cen-Japan

350 Pol - Affairs - Thailand

6-30-61

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 995132

ไว้อาลัยแด่นายครองและนายทองพันธ์

พี่น้องร่วมชาติทั้งหลาย

นายครอง จันดาวงศ์และนายทองพันธ์ สุทธิมาศย์ได้ถูกมือฆาตกรของจอมเผด็จการขายชาติสฤษดิ์สังหารเสียแล้วเมื่อวันที่ ๓๑ พฤษภาคม ๒๕๐๑ ขณะที่ท่านทั้งสองกำลังต่อสู้เพื่อชาติ รักประชาธิปไตย รักสันติภาพ และรับใช้ประชาชนได้จากเราไปเสียแล้วอย่างไม่มีวันจะกลับคืนมา ผู้มีใจเป็นธรรมทุกคนย่อมจะมีความสลดใจอย่างสุดซึ้งต่อการจากไปของวีรชนทั้งสองนี้. ขอให้จิตใจอันองอาจกล้าหาญและเสียสละเพื่อการกู้เอกราช ประชาธิปไตย สันติภาพและการอยู่ดีกินดีของประชาชนของท่านทั้งสองจงได้รับการสืบทอดจากประชาชนรุ่นต่อ ๆ เถิด.

การสังหารนายครองและนายทองพันธ์ของจอมเผด็จการขายชาติสฤษดิ์ครั้งนี้ เป็นแผนการส่วนหนึ่งที่สหรัฐอเมริกากับรัฐบาลจอมพลสฤษดิ์มุ่งจะจุดไฟสงครามรุกรานลาวขึ้นใหม่ โดยการสร้างสถานะการณ์ขึ้นใส่ความนายครองกับพวกว่าเป็น "กบฏแบ่งแยกดินแดน" อีสาน และใส่ร้ายป้ายสีรัฐบาลลาว เพื่อทำให้ประชาชนไทยและชาวโลก เข้าใจผิดว่าลาวต้องการเอาดินแดนทางอีสานของไทยไปเป็นของตน อันเป็นกลวิธีอันหนึ่งในการจุดชนวนสงครามรุกรานลาวครั้งใหม่ ทำลายการประชุมเจนีวาลงเสีย และเพื่อปรามปรามขู่ขวัญประชาชน.

สหรัฐอเมริกาจำต้องเข้าร่วมการประชุมเจนีวา เพราะความพ่ายแพ้ทางการทหารจนถึงกับ ดินแดนเกือบ ๓ ส่วน ๕ ของลาวตกอยู่ในความครอบครองของลาวฝ่ายหนึ่ง เพราะประชาชนชาวโลกและชาวไทยได้ลุกขึ้นมาต่อสู้เพื่อสันติภาพอย่างเด็ดเดี่ยวเกรียวกราว และสหรัฐอเมริกาเองก็ต้องการจะปรับปรุงฐานะของตนเสียใหม่ ตลอดจนการรุกรานลาวครั้งใหม่ต่อไป จึงฉวยโอกาสนี้มาแถบอ้างว่าสหรัฐอเมริกาเองก็ต้องการสันติภาพ เรียกร้องให้มีการเจรจากับฝ่ายลาว เพื่อหลอกลวงประชาชนชาวโลกให้หย่อนยานความระมัดระวังลง ครั้นเมื่อการประชุมเจนีวาเปิดขึ้นแล้ว สหรัฐอเมริกากับรัฐบาลจอมพลสฤษดิ์ก็พยายามเกี่ยวกวนและประวิงเวลาการประชุม และเมื่อถึงโอกาสก็จะทำลายการประชุมเจนีวาเสีย แล้วก่อสงครามรุกรานลาวครั้งใหม่

แผนการเตรียมแทรกแซงลาวครั้งใหม่ได้ดำเนินไปอย่างไม่หยุดยั้ง การซ้อมรบชีโต้ในระยะใกล้ ๆ นี้ สหรัฐอเมริกาได้ขนทหารและอาวุธเข้ามาในไทยแล้วไม่ต่ำกว่า [illegible] กองพลทางภาคอีสานที่ติดกับลาว ไทย รัฐบาลเผด็จการขายชาติสฤษดิ์ก็ได้ขยายฐานทัพอากาศอุดรและภูมี–บุ่งอุ้มราย ๓ กองพัน เมื่อเร็ว ๆ นี้ จอห์นสันรองประธานาธิบดีสหรัฐอเมริกาได้มาเจรจากับไทยเพื่อจะตั้งกองทหารผสมชีโต้ในไทย และจะเพิ่มจำนวนพลทหารของสหรัฐอเมริกาในไทยให้มากขึ้นเรื่อย ๆ และรัฐบาลจอมพลสฤษดิ์ยังได้เป็นใจให้พวกเขมรเสรีมาใช้อาวุธปล้นสะดมราษฎรชาวสกลนครและอีสาน เมื่อส่งไปรายใหม่ก็ยังแล้วกลับใส่ความว่าเป็นพวกนายครองกับพวกกู้ชาติ.

พี่น้องร่วมชาติที่รัก จอมพลสฤษดิ์ต่างหากที่เป็นผู้ขายชาติและก่อสงครามรุกราน ส่วน

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 944252

จริงใจที่คอยเกื้อหนุนการ สันติภาพ ประชาธิปไตย และความอยู่ดีกินดีของ
บานครองกับบานทองรัตน์ เป็นยอด !
ใฝ่รัฐบาลสฤษดิ์-ถนอม เผด็จการ !
นโยบายชัดเจน เป็นกลาง สันติภาพ และประชาธิปไตยของเจ้าคุณ !

PRESS TRANSLATION

Kon Muang Daily, June 29, 1961
(Introductory Edition *)

Local News

"DARK HANDS" DISTRIBUTE ILLEGAL PAMPHLETS ATTACKING GOVERNMENT HEAVILY ; PAMPHLETS SPREAD OUT TO SCHOOL; POLICE ARE REPORTED

AMPHUR MUANG, CHIENGMAI PROVINCE - A certain group of traitors has set up plans to overthrow the present government by sending the pamphlets to government officials inducing them to act against the government for being a dictatorial government and launched an attack against the government regarding the recent orders to execute Nai KRONG CHANDAVONG, Leader of the conspirators in the Northeast.

On June 28, about 8:00 a.m., Nai CHALERM INDRAVUDH (first cousin of Nai PIROON INDRAVUDH, Editor of The Sieng Chiengmai -- SM), took a letter which was addressed to Nai MUAK CHAILANGKARN, Principal of the Prince Royal's College (Church of Christ in Thailand-sponsored school -- SM), to Capt. VISIT PATANANAND, Chief of the Mae Ping Police Station.

To the police, Nai CHALERM said Nai MUAK, the Principal, has received from the post office in the morning of the same day and it was not known who is the addressor of the letter.

The letter is in mimeograph type and in the foolscap size and the text of the letter attacks the present government for being a dictatorial regime and expresses condolences to Nai KRONG CHANDAVONG, Leader of the conspirators in the Northeast who has been executed recently.

Also, in the same day at about 10:00 a.m., Nai SUPOTE TREYAPORN, a teacher of the Prince Royal's College, took another letter which was addressed to Miss BOONSUAM TECHAKARUHA, a teacher of the same school to the police. It is the letter of similar text to the ones received by Nai MUAK CHAILANGKARN, the Principal.

TRANS. NOTE - * The Kon Muang Daily 'introductory' editions come out since June 27, while the first and actual daily will be coming out on July 1.

The Sieng Chiengmai of June 30 siad with the original postmark at the General Post Office, Bangkok, for June 26 and the Chiengmai postmark on June 27, the letter signed by "The Patriots" was addressed in long-hand and beautiful hand writing. The letter, generally called pamphlet, attacks Field Marshal SARIT, the Prime Minister, and the United States of America very strongly. The Sieng Chiengmai also sent the 'letter' to the Chiengmai Provincial Police Headquarters. The editorial staff of The Sieng Chiengmai believes that it is the letter which the Communist made and distributed, and it might be also sent to the other newspapers as well as the Buddhist priests and the general public.

SM.

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Authority NND 949832

TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

Charge: EMBASSY

UNCLASSIFIED
Classification

Control: 391

Date: 21 Mar 61

SENT TO: SecState WASHINGTON UNCLAS 1702

RPTD. INFO: Amembassy KUALA LUMPUR 41

CINCPAC FOR POLAD 537

Distr.

AMB
ECM
POL-2
ECON
SA
SEATO
ATTACHES
FILES

According BANGKOK WORLD Mar 21, army units and security police in south Thailand remained on alert due reports "increasing activities" along Thai-Malayan border, but police forces in area considered sufficient handle situation without reinforcement. Pattani provincial commissioner Khasem Sukhum told press that majority Muslim population in Thailand's four southern-most provinces preferred live quietly, but about two percent were political agitators who with outside political help were trying cause trouble by reviving plans prepared by late southern politician, Haji Surong, who murdered four years ago. Agitators were trying use religion, language, education and customs as issues to pry loose frm four southern provinces from Thailand and establish them as independent states ruled over by descendants of former rulers who now living in Malaya.

POST reported Mar 20 Primin Sarit saying some southern ex-MPs might be behind attempts create disturbances. Police announced reported plane crash in Trang possibly only rumor.

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Authority NND 949832

JOHNSON

POL:JSRoy:jfl
3-21-61

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Airgram 1702

350 For Bkk - Thailand

3-21-61

TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

UNCLASSIFIED
Classification

Charge: EMBASSY

Control: 377

Date: 20 Mar 61

SENT TO: UNCLAS / SecState WASHINGTON 1692

RPTD. INFO: Amembassy KUALA LUMPUR 40

CINCPAC/POLAD 530

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 949832

Distr.

AMB
DCM
POL-2
SA
SEATO
ECON
FILES

According BANGKOK WORLD Mar 20, police spokesman said security forces still guarding strategic points in south Thailand against sabotage. Thai authorities informed people in Yala, Pattani, Narathiwat and Satun provinces through leaflets and public address trucks not hold mtgs of more than five persons and not believe (Malay) propaganda leaflets. Public demonstrations also banned.

BANGKOK POST Mar 18 cited authoritative officials saying that certain elements in north Malayan states Kelantan and Trengannu who trying win local elections had been agitating for separation four Thai southern provinces, and some Malay language newspapers instigated trouble. Malayan Gvt completely unconnected with these Trouble-causing activities./ In addition elements described as "Commie" or "opposed to Malayan Gvt."/ events previously reported, POST reported fol isolated incidents in southern provinces: Two leaflets propagating separation found Mar 16 posted at Tha Rua Seng Thin Market, Tambol Piman, Ampur Muang, Satun province. Lines on telephone posts between Khoke Bho and Saiburi in Pattani found cut Mar 16. On Mar 16 sounds of gunfire heard from somewhere between Klong Sai and Klong Tasay railway stations in Ampur Muang, Yala.

JOHNSON

POL:JRRoy:jfl
3-20-61

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Secstate 1692 to Bkk Djkarta - Thailand 350

3-20-61

PRIORITY

UNCLASSIFIED
(Security Classification)

DO NOT TYPE IN THIS SPACE

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : Amembassy BANGKOK

18
DESP. NO.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

July 11, 1961
DATE

REF :

For Dept. Use Only	ACTION	DEPT.	DECLASSIFIED	
	REC'D	INFO OTHER	Authority NND 9-488.32	

SUBJECT: Communist Activity in Northeast Thailand

On July 3, 1961, the Minister of the Interior, General Prapart Charusathien, told newspaper reporters of three tactics being used in Northeast Thailand by Lao Communists. The resulting press report (BANGKOK POST, July 3) follows:

Charging that Communists in Laos are trying to establish a bridgehead in Northeast Thailand, General Prapart Charustiem, Minister of Interior, told reporters this morning that the Government is going to warn the people of that part of the Kingdom of three tactics being used by the Communists to achieve this objective.

He explained the tactics as follows:

1. The Communists are trying to propagandise the northeasterners into considering themselves as Laotians and Northeastern Thailand as part of Laos. They are trying to impress northeasterners with similarities in appearance and daily living between them and the Laotian people.

2. The Communists are trying to effect a split between the Thai people of the northeast and the officials there. They try to arouse the people against the officials. They execute robberies and then tell the people that the officials cannot protect them.

3. They try to win over the people by distributing money and promising high posts if they take over the northeast.

After stressing that the Sakol Nakorn and Nakorn Panom plots are parts of the same Communist conspiracy to take over the northeast, the Minister said that the Government is going to request the people of the other northeastern provinces to report anyone acting in any of the above three ways.

MHH

PUL:MWHitchcock:ls

UNCLASSIFIED

D-18

350 Rd Affairs - Thailand (Communist Activity in Northeast Thailand)

7-11-61

He added that the people will be warned that if they do not report they may be liable to arrest as accomplices.

On the recent trip he made to Udornthani, General Prapart mentioned that the ordinary people in the northeast are living in peace while the officials are working hard to watch out for, and prevent, Communist infiltration and subversion.

He noted that Laotian refugees usually come to Thailand when fighting reaches the bank of the Mekong River but return home when it recedes.

However, he stressed, a number of the refugees have "hidden themselves somewhere" in the northeast and they may be agents doing Communist work. Because of similar facial features and personality characteristics, it is difficult to seek them out from the regular Thai inhabitants of the northeast.

Copies of this despatch are being sent to Vientiane, Geneva (for FECON), New Delhi, London, and Paris.

For the Ambassador:

Douglas H. Batson
Counselor of Embassy for Political Affairs

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TELEGRAM

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Charge: Embassy

Control: 58

Date: February 3, 1961

SENT TO: SecState WASHINGTON UNCLAS 1371

RPTD INFO: VIENTIANE 662, PHNOM PENH 309, SAIGON 406,

LONDON 158, PARIS 159

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Authority NND 9488.32

DEPT PASS USIA

According to Bangkok POST Feb 2, in informal discussion following regular Feb 2 mtg Constituent Assembly Primin Sarit told reporters Thailand would be happy have genuinely neutral Laos as neighbor but doubtful if true neutrality possible for Laos. Sarit remarked that for country be really neutral, must like Switzerland have economic stability, full political independence and respect of other countries which inhibits their violation its neutrality.

Questioned whether he certain Thailand would get protection from SEATO, Sarit replied, "If you certain, I certain." (Bangkok WORLD Feb 3 said Sarit "just chuckled and made no comment.") Reporter responded, "If I you, I would withdraw from SEATO." Sarit answered that such talk irresponsible.

He pointed out Thailand bordered on countries concerned but it India and Poland instead who involved in Geneva settlements. Bigger countries he said make bigger noises; such is world situation. Small countries

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TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING

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-2- Date:

like Thailand and Philippines bound make some noise to try to get heard, he said, but there nothing to it for it only an attempt make people aware of Asia. Asians should have part in determining Asian affairs.

WORLD reported further that ~~Sarit~~ Sarit also mentioned political difficulties standing in way of coalition government. "How could you bring together/~~pro~~ pro-Communists and anti-Communists in one government?" he asked.

Comment follows.

JOHNSON

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POL:WWhitehcock:
Feb. 3, 1961

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Charge: Embassy

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Date: 22 Nov 60

Amb
Mr. Batson
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Files

SENT TO: SecState WASHINGTON 888 Routine

According local television and police radio General Phao Sriyanond, ~~Sriamond,~~ former Director General of Police and Minister of Interior died November 21 in Switzerland of cerebral hemmorhage.

JOHNSON

DNBatson/seg
22 November 1960

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Airgram to Bangkok
350 Thailand (death of Gen. Phao Sriyanond)
11-22-60

TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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Charge: EMBASSY

Control: 384

Date: Oct. 25, 1960

SENT TO: SECSTATE 738

RPTD INFO: VIENTIANE 398, PHNOM PENH 179, SAIGON 240,
CINCPAC/POLAD 240

BANGKOK WORLD Oct 25 reported fol statements Fonmin Thanat:

Thailand may make "agonizing reappraisal" its position cold war as result lessons learned during Lao crisis. "Feeling growing very strong here that we treated less favorably than uncommitted nations. There less attention our needs, requirements, and security than if we by ourselves. This not complaint. I think we can look after ourselves quite alright." Does not mean Thailand going withdraw from SEATO or join any neutralist bloc. "We have much more sense loyalty than many. But we have gained greater consciousness our strength since Lao crisis. Does not mean we going pull out of anything. Means that events in Laos during past weeks have opened our eyes to situation; made us think what would happen should Thailand be threatened; what we could do; what we could count on."

Referring recent announcement resumption US mil aid to Vientiane Gvt, Thanat said US "vacillation" confusing. Depends on situation whether Thailand would permit trans-shipment arms across Thailand to Laos if that included in US aid program. If means arms and

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Airgram 738 to Bangkok 350 for Laos - Thailand

10-25-60

ammunition would enable fighting begin would be considered very grave. Passage arms always serious matter.

Fonmin said the apparently unfriendly attitude towards Thailand displayed by foreign press during Lao crisis one factor that made Thailand feel perhaps it should go it alone.

Comments follow.

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POL:JSRoy:[redacted]/sra
Oct 25, 1960

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American Embassy,
Bangkok, Thailand.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT:
1. Internal Stability
2. The Embassy Bomb Incident
3. A Chinese Astrologer
4. Ambassador Han's Personal Status

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Authority NND 9488.32

PARTICIPANTS: GRC Ambassador Han Li-wu
ADCH John C. Guthrie

DATE: June 28, 1960

COPIES TO: ACOH-ADCH, POL, SA, SEA-Dept, Amembassy Taipei

In an after dinner conversation June 28, Ambassador Han Li-wu commented on a number of topics of interest to the Embassy. Because of his personal capabilities and his excellent contacts in the Chinese community, the Embassy regards Ambassador Han as a first-rate, though not always unbiassed, source of information on the local scene.

(1) Internal stability. Sarit's position is less firm now than it was at the time of the October 1958 revolution. The principal threat to Sarit's continued preeminence is General Praphat, the Minister of Interior. Praphat is motivated primarily by a thirst for gold and has been heavily squeezing the Chinese community in Bangkok. Because of Praphat's ambition, the death of Air Marshal Chaloemkiat was a serious loss for Sarit, since in the "inner circle" Chaloemkiat had been the only person willing and able to stand up to Praphat. Sarit himself is inclined to compromise when faced with conflicting opinions. It is because of his desire to keep Praphat in check that Sarit has not turned over the job of Police Director-General to Police General Prasert Ruchirawong. The latter is "a Praphat man."

(2) The Embassy bomb incident. As soon as he learned that a suspect (Wanchai) had confessed to planting a grenade and a threatening letter to the Ambassador at the gate to the Embassy compound, he (Ambassador Han) had called on Generals Thanom and Praphat to urge that "drastic punishment" be meted out for the sake of the example this would set. Both had agreed with him. (I told Ambassador Han of our concern over the probable repercussions should Wanchai be summarily executed during the time of Their Majesties' US visit.)

(3) A Chinese astrologer. When Ambassador Han had approached Sarit whom he described as "an old friend" to offer condolences over Marshal Chaloemkiat's death, Sarit told of Chaloemkiat's having consulted a Chinese

350 Thailand
X 350 Memo of Conversation Thailand
6-28-60

astrologer just prior to his trip to Taiwan. The astrologer had warned Chaloemkiat that flying during April would be bad "for the big boss." Chaloemkiat had construed this as a reference to Sarit and had enjoined the latter not to fly during April. Han said that this particular astrologer was the most popular and influential of the many practising the profession in Thailand. He described the man as a Shanghai Chinese, who spoke no Thai and thus had to be consulted through an interpreter. He does not use a Thai name.

Comment: Ambassador Han's reluctance, though pressed, further to identify the astrologer suggests that the Chinese Embassy here finds him a useful source of influence and information vis-a-vis Thailand's political and military leaders.

(4) Ambassador Han's personal status. Ambassador Han said that he had indeed been asked last April to serve as GRC Foreign Minister but had turned down the offer. He had "had enough" of cabinet assignments and was happy to stay in Bangkok, where he had "become used to the climate."

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ADCM:JCGuthrie/mpk
June 30, 1960

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Authority NND 94488.32

American Consulate,
Chiengmai,
June 23, 1960

Memorandum for the Record

Subject: Newspaper Inquiry Regarding Alleged Plot of Place a Grenade at the Consulate

A correspondent of the local PHAEDIN THAI called at the Consulate this morning to inquire about the report in the Bangkok newspapers concerning an alleged plan, in connection with the grenade incident at the Embassy in Bangkok, to also plant a grenade at the Consulate. The correspondent asked for my reaction and comments. Through an interpreter, I explained to him that I had no information on this story other than that which appeared in the Bangkok press. The police authorities were dealing with the Embassy grenade incident and would take, I was sure, the necessary actions indicated from the evidence available to them. In the circumstances there was no reason for the Consulate to become concerned or involved.

He asked me if I had received any notification regarding this matter from the local police authorities. I replied I had not and that this confirmed my feeling that there was no cause for concern. Furthermore, the report in yesterday's paper that a suspect in the case had been arrested in Pitsanuloke would appear to close the matter insofar as the earlier report that a suspect was on his way to Chiengmai was concerned. I then asked him whether he had consulted the local police authorities. He said the police chief told him he had not received any instructions from Bangkok. I then commented that this would appear to confirm the absence of any reasons for concern.

Under the circumstances, I told him, I would hope the local press would not revive the story regarding an alleged plan to place a grenade at the Consulate. He replied that there was local interest in the Bangkok report since it referred to the Consulate here and that he would therefore have to write something. He promised, however, that he would not write his story in alarmist language. Since he seemed determined to write a story, I didnot press him further but

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350 Pol Affairs - Thailand (Bomb Incident)

6-23-60

merely reiterated my feeling that there was no need for concern and that I was confident the police authorities were doing whatever was necessary.

George M. Barbis (LS)
American Consul

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American Embassy,
Bangkok, Thailand

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: 1. Coup Rumors.
2. Subversive Activities Among Buddhist Priests.
3. Gathering of Chinese Affairs Officers.

PARTICIPANTS: Mr. Akira Yamamoto - Second Secretary, Japanese Embassy
Mr. Kan Akatani - Information Officer, Japanese Embassy
J. Stapleton Roy - Chinese Affairs Officer

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Authority NND 9488.32

DATE: June 20, 1960

COPIES TO: ACOM/ADCM, Pol 2, SA, Files

350 Pol Affairs - Thailand
+350 Memo of Conv.

Mr. Yamamoto began by saying he had heard various rumors concerning Air Marshal Chalermkiat's cremation. According to one of these, Sarit had purposely had Chalermkiat killed by planting a time bomb in his plane when the latter was in Taiwan, thus resulting in the air crash which killed the Air Marshal. In retaliation, the Thai Air Force had planned to kill Sarit when he attended Chalermkiat's cremation rites. This was the reason why Sarit had arrived late at the rites.

Expanding on this subject, Mr. Yamamoto noted that Sarit and Chalermkiat had reportedly been very close at the time of the 1958 coup but had later fallen out. The Thai Air Force and Navy were dissatisfied because the Army had taken all important positions in the government. As a result, they had plotted to overthrow the Sarit government. General Praphat was aware of these plots and, being interested himself, had sought to improve his relations with his Air Force and Naval colleagues. Mr. Yamamoto also noted that he had heard of a plot to kill the King at the cremation rites, according to which Sarit had arrived late because he was involved in overseeing the preventive measures. Another story related Sarit's late arrival to trouble with rebellious prisoners in one of the prisons.

I replied that the American Embassy was aware of the spate of rumors at the time of Chalermkiat's cremation, but did not believe that any of them were of a serious nature. As for the alleged bomb plot involving Chalermkiat's plane, so far as we knew it was utterly groundless.

6-20-60

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Mr. Yamamoto then mentioned that he had heard speculation to the effect that the present increase in coup rumors was very similar to the increase in rumors of this sort before coups in the past. Did our Embassy share this view? I replied that we were aware of these rumors, but considered them unreliable and of no special importance.

Mr. Yamamoto then referred to the recent reports of subversive activity among Buddhist priests. He said he had heard one story along the following lines. Local Chinese businessmen frequently had private radio transmitters which they used in exchanging information for business purposes. These radios were mainly used within Thailand, but some businessmen also used them to talk with Hong Kong contacts. The Chinese Communists used these private radios to instruct their agents in Thailand. CID was aware of this, however, and had its own agents keeping an eye on this activity. One of these CID agents had some time ago intercepted a message from a Chinese Communist source in Hong Kong instructing local Communists to step up activities among Buddhist priests. According to this report, this was the reason for the recent subversive activities.

I pointed out that the Chinese Communists were undoubtedly involved, and noted that some of the seized documents which the police had uncovered were in the Chinese language.

Mr. Yamamoto said he hoped it would be possible in the future for us to exchange information on rumors of this sort. I said that this could prove very useful.

Mr. Yamamoto then suggested again that the Chinese Affairs officers in the various Embassies in Bangkok arrange to gather occasionally for an exchange of views (he first raised this subject at the Junior Diplomatic Dinner on May 19, 1960 in the presence of a Soviet Chinese language officer). Mr. Akatani described briefly how Information Officers from various Embassies met weekly for a meal and suggested that something along these lines might be possible. He noted that the Soviet Embassy was not included in these gatherings. In the following discussion we were only aware of five Embassies, the American, British, Japanese, Chinese, and Soviet, which had Chinese language officers. I remarked that if we organized such a group, the main benefit would arise from the free exchange of opinions, and that the inclusion of members of the Soviet Embassy would hinder this objective. Mr. Yamamoto agreed, and we decided to explore the possibility of arranging a gathering of the officers concerned with Chinese affairs from the American, Japanese, British, and Chinese Embassies.

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Pola Milloy/ewm
June 21, 1960.

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1) A N D
2) C F

American Embassy,
Bangkok, Thailand.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Prospective Summer Capital for Thailand

PARTICIPANTS: Boon Charoenchai - Minister of Industry

Leonard Unger - Charge d'Affaires ad interim

DATE: March 16, 1960

COPIES TO: POL, ECON, SA, USOM, Department-SEA

Minister Boon referred to a location north of Nakon Nayoke on a plateau about 4,000 feet in elevation which has been tentatively chosen by the Cabinet as a summer capital for Thailand. At this location there is a fairly extensive level area and a good water supply, and it is much more accessible to Bangkok than Pukadeung, the development of which seems likely now to be postponed or abandoned. To get into the new area it would be necessary to construct an access road leading south from the Friendship Highway and construction on this road is to begin shortly if it is not, in fact, under way.

The principal motivation for developing this area is to provide a cool, quiet spot for Cabinet meetings and other high level activities, but it appeared that the concept might well be expanded to provide a hot weather refuge from Bangkok for Thais in general and farangs.

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+350 Memo of Conv.

3-16-60

AIR POUCH
PRIORITY

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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AmEmbassy, BANGKOK 644 DESP. NO.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON. May 12, 1959 DATE

REF : ---

For Dept. Use Only	ACTION	INFO DEPT.
	REC'D	OTHER

SUBJECT: Overseas Chinese Communities in South Thailand: Chumporn, Ranong, Trang and Haadyai

350 Thailand

SUMMARY:

Preservation of the Chinese way of life in South Thailand is rapidly breaking down due primarily to Government restriction of Chinese education and Chinese organizations. Such Chinese schools as still operate are in poor financial shape as a result of the increasing reluctance of the Chinese to support them; further, these schools do not seem to be able to accomplish their principal mission—to teach the Chinese language. Chinese organizations are either non-existent or are in a weak position vis-a-vis local authorities. In general, assimilation of the Chinese in the South is well advanced, primarily because Chinese in the South have been settled there for a long period and the proportion of recent arrivals from the Mainland is less than elsewhere in Thailand. Overseas Chinese consider themselves too far removed from the cold war struggle and too immersed in daily affairs to have any strong opinions on Communist China and Taiwan.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

The reporting officer together with the Embassy's Commercial Officer and a USIS officer recently completed a 1500-mile trip by Jeep and Land Rover from Bangkok to Songkhla via Phuket, traveling over roads which in some stretches were only recently made passable in preparation for the King's visit to South Thailand. Normally, the overland route from Bangkok to the South is blocked by a 175-kilometer stretch between Ranong and Takuapa, but this year, stimulated by the Royal visit, the Highway Department concentrated a small army of road building vehicles south of Ranong and bulldozed a passable road through to good highway leading from Phuket. Unfortunately, it is not likely that the highway will survive the first heavy rains, but the existence of a highway link between Bangkok and the South—even for a few months—should make the need for an all-weather road in this area even more obvious. (For a report of economic conditions in the South, see Embassy Despatch 580.)

O Zo Jan.

FABurnet/cks
REPORTER

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The route of this passage to the South passes through some of the South's oldest settlements—like Phuket, Trang and Ranong—which ordinarily cannot be seen conveniently on a single journey originating from Songkhla and Haadyai. It is possible therefore to gain some impressions in making the overland trip to the South which might not otherwise appear so obvious. One of the most striking impressions, as far as the Chinese are concerned, is the length of time the overseas Chinese have been settled there. Nearly every Chinese met on the trip said he had spent his entire life in Thailand and a high percentage indicated they were second and third generation. Fourth and fifth generation Chinese were not uncommon. Further, these overseas Chinese indicated that their forebears came to South Thailand through Malaya, usually Penang, rather than through Bangkok. Thus at the very beginning overseas Chinese in this part of Thailand had close, tangible ties with British Malaya. The link with Malaya has persevered and gives the overseas Chinese an ingredient in their make-up which is not observable elsewhere in Thailand. For instance, the reporting officer was surprised at the large number of overseas Chinese in places like Phuket, Trang and Haadyai who speak fluent English and good Mandarin. Upon inquiry, it was learned that almost to a man, these Chinese had all received at least part of their middle school or higher education in Penang or Singapore. Even the look of the cities, their style of architecture in residences and office buildings—particularly Phuket—reminds one strongly of Penang. Some British colonial customs have persevered. In Phuket, when the Reporting Officer and the Commercial officer expressed a desire to give a cocktail party to meet leading tin miners and businessmen, they were told politely that it was customary to hold a tea and serve biscuits. The advice was followed and the "tea" turned out to be a very useful means of contacting the most influential overseas Chinese in Phuket.

A tin miner in Phuket related that during World War II everyone in Phuket hoped that the British would some day occupy their little island and develop it as they had Malaya, for they saw no prospect for improvement under Japanese or Thai administration.

Since the end of World War II, however, it has not been possible for overseas Chinese to send their sons to Malayan schools, as neither the Thai Government nor the Malayan Government will issue the necessary travel documents for this purpose. Though commercial ties with Penang and Singapore still exist, they are gradually being replaced by those with Bangkok. Improving communications facilities (a through road from Bangkok should be a significant factor) will enhance this turn away from Malaya toward Bangkok.

Chinese organizations in the South are non-existent or where they do exist their status is tenuous. In Haadyai, for example, the chief speech group associations are all represented, but the provincial government has refused to give them legal status. It thus retains strong leverage against

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the associations which it would not hesitate to use if necessary. The Chinese community in Trang is also highly organized, but informants state that this is due solely to the good connections of one elderly fourth-generation Chinese. In all areas, relations between the Chinese and provincial officials are good and the need for Chinese associations would seem to diminish as Chinese become accustomed to taking their problems directly to local Thai officials. In Phuket relations with the Governor and other local officials is particularly close and no one there seemed to feel the need for a traditional Chinese association.

Chinese schools throughout the South are generally in poor shape. Not only are they losing financial and moral support from the overseas Chinese but school teachers and principals complain that the students are not interested in learning Chinese and, furthermore, find it too difficult. It is no wonder that the Chinese are reluctant to support these schools, since they are unable to carry out their primary mission which is the teaching of Chinese. No doubt if Thai schools were better than they are, the Chinese schools would be abandoned altogether. The slow disintegration of the Chinese school system is obviously having a positive effect on the rate of assimilation of the Chinese. An American missionary in Haadyai who is fluent in Teochiu and Mandarin said that the closing of the big Chinese community school in Haadyai five years ago had a very noticeable effect on the speech habits of school children there and that Thai was much more frequently heard than previously.

CHUMPORN:

Out of a total population of 10,872, there are approximately 2500 overseas Chinese in Chumporn. According to the Nai Amphur, there are 1,194 registered aliens, of whom 22 are listed as Indians, the remainder Chinese. Leading speech group is Hokkien (Fukienese) but there are no Chinese organizations and no Chinese schools. Circulation of the Bangkok Chinese press is 160.

RANONG:

Overseas Chinese number about 1500 in an estimated total population of 8,000. There are about 600 registered alien Chinese. The majority group is Hokkien but again, there are no associations. However, there is one run-down Chinese school with 160 students. The young principal complained that for a number of reasons his job was a frustrating one: students find learning Chinese too difficult and Thai must be used as a medium of instruction in teaching Chinese; members of the school board have been in office for over 30 years and besides being crotchety and conservative do not speak Mandarin so that the principal has no easy means of communicating with them (the only common tongue is Thai which the principal speaks less than fluently); tuition is only 60 baht (about $3.00) per year but most

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students are in arrears. Deficits are met by contributions from wealthy tin miners, but fund-raising is meeting with increasing resistance. A small subsidy is received from the Provincial Government thus reducing the permissible weekly total of Chinese language instruction from ten to six hours. Textbooks used are those produced by the Shanghai Book Company of Singapore--a textbook line approved by the Thai Ministry of Education but considered by anti-Communist sources to have a leftist taint.

The principal stated that overseas Chinese in Ranong under 30 years of age had a poor knowledge of written Chinese and as a consequence would not be very susceptible to Chinese Communist propaganda. Circulation of Bangkok Chinese dailies is only 42.

PHUKET:

The total population of the island of Phuket is estimated at about 60,000 of whom approximately 90 per cent are regarded as overseas Chinese or their descendants. 2,200 are registered Chinese aliens, according to the Nai Amphur. By far the majority of overseas Chinese belong to the Hokkien speech group, but Teochiu (Swatow), Cantonese, Hainanese and Hakka are also represented. The Teochiu are relatively recent arrivals in Phuket, most of them having come from Bangkok within the last 20 years. Many of the small retail outlets are run by Teochiu.

Chinese associations were closed by the provincial Government several years ago, although one of the smallest associations, the Hainan, is permitted nominal status. Some of the functions of a traditional Chinese association are served by the Tin Miners Association, an organization formed five years ago which now has approximately 200 members. Another community grouping is the alumni association of the one Chinese school (T'ai Hua Hsueh Hsiao) but this exists largely for the purpose of raising funds for the school. As in Ranong, the principal of the school said that students were not learning much Chinese and that a majority of them owed tuition.

Sources in Phuket seemed to feel that unemployment resulting from the slump in tin production over the past year had not produced any disaffection among the Thai labor force of about 6,000 northeasterners. During the slump, tin miners assisted approximately 1,000 "coolie" laborers who had been working in the mines to return to their homes in the northeast. The Central Government in Bangkok helped in making some of the arrangements for this repatriation, but according to local tin miners did not provide any financial assistance. The flow of labor from the northeast came to a halt when production fell off and present state of unemployment is not regarded by either businessmen or Government officials as a serious problem.

Chinese tin miners state that because their operations are smaller and more economic, they have weathered the tin slump in better condition than

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the European-owned mines. Where the European mine must produce 600-750 piculs (picul=133 lbs.) per month to make a profit, the Chinese mine operator can make a profit on an output of only 250 piculs per month. The main reason for this difference is that European mines hire high-salaried managerial and technical staffs while Chinese counterparts were fewer in number and worked longer hours. For instance, the Chinese mine manager of the Joo Tee Mining Company told the reporting officer that he was accustomed to working a 16- to 18-hour day. Chinese tin miners pointed to the recent purchase of a British-owned mine by Chinese interests as indicative of the gradual take-over by the Chinese of European-owned tin mines throughout South Thailand.

From many conversations with overseas Chinese in Phuket, it was concluded that 1) Chinese in Phuket are not as concerned with events on the China Mainland as are Chinese in Bangkok, 2) they express little interest in developments on Taiwan, and 3) most Chinese continue to remit money to relatives on the Mainland, although many admitted that it was at a reduced level from that of mid-1958.

Except where they have a direct impact on tin prices, world events appear to make little impression on Chinese in Phuket. Most persons interviewed spoke of the isolated position of Phuket--"halfway between Bangkok and Singapore"-- as the reason for its lack of concern. Tin miners referred to themselves as "naturally" anti-Communist but felt that developments on the Mainland were a little too remote for them to be excessively exercised. However, there was mild interest in the Taiwan Straits crisis in the fall of 1958 and in general the facts of the Communalization program appear to be known. One young mine accountant claimed that it was still profitable for overseas Chinese to invest funds in various enterprises in Fukien despite the strictures imposed since the start of the Commune program. However, this was denied by others interviewed. It would appear in general that the isolation of Phuket combined with the fact that overseas Chinese there have been settled for many generations accounts for the apathetic reaction to outside events. Circulation of Bangkok Chinese newspapers amounts to only 170; circulation of Chinese and English newspapers from Singapore and Malaya is believed to be higher.

Despite the fact that he is still known as a "Phao man", the most powerful overseas Chinese in Phuket is Aroon Chushuhuwongse, Managing Director of the Kamra Mining Company and most vigorous member of the Tin Miners' Association of Thailand. Aroon is a fourth generation Fukienese educated in Penang who speaks fluent but heavily accented English. Although he is physically unattractive to the Western eye, his commanding position probably results from his astute, if not "sharp" business acumen, his past and present connections with Bangkok and Phuket officialdom, and his abundant energy. He is the man whose approval must first be obtained before any civic project is undertaken. During a formal call on the Governor

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and at a tea party hosted by the reporting officer and the Embassy's Commercial Officer in the Tin Miners' Association hall where the Governor was the honored guest, Aroon acted as spokesman for the local group. He was also pointed out as the man responsible for the continued existence of Phuket's one Chinese school. During the reporting officer's visit to Phuket, Aroon was busily engaged in supervising preparations for the King's visit and was frequently seen driving around the city in his flashy blue Mercedes.

Perhaps partly due to the influence of Aroon and his close connections with officials in Bangkok, Phuket normally has elected an Assemblyman who is considered to be affiliated with the official Government party. However, local informants pointed out that a Democrat was elected in the national elections of February, 1957 but was not re-elected in December 1957 because he "didn't show any results." He was beaten by a woman, Mrs. Naem Phrommobon, who ran as an independent but was referred to locally as belonging to the SMP (Seri Manangasila Party--the Government party prior to the ousting of Phibun in the September 1957 coup). She was described as a good campaigner and indeed she must have been particularly astute, since she captured the woman's vote on an anti-concubinage platform yet retained a sufficient proportion of the male vote to get elected with a comfortable margin. It was interesting to note that despite the dissolution of the Assembly to which she had been elected, Mrs. Naem is still a popular figure in Phuket and from time to time is asked to do various favors for her "constituents." Several persons said that she is frequently called upon to make necessary arrangements in Bangkok for the placing of students in U.S. colleges and universities.

TRANG:

The municipality of Trang has a total population of 61,000 of whom about 5,000 are considered to be overseas Chinese. 1,533 are registered alien card holders. Trang is one of the few localities in the South where Teochiu predominate; percentages are: Teochiu 35 per cent, Hokkien 25 per cent, Hakka and Hainan 15 per cent and Cantonese 10 per cent. Trang also has one of the most highly organized Chinese communities in the South, having six Chinese associations and a large Chinese school of 1500 students.

A fourth generation Hakka named Hu Nea-hua is the leader of the Chinese community. He heads the largest association, the Overseas Chinese Association which is Hakka, and the Overseas Chinese Education Association which operates the school. According to informants, Mr. Hu runs a one-man show and through his good connections with local officials over a long period of time is responsible for the fact that the Chinese organizations and the school have never had any serious trouble with the local Government. Mr. Hu was recently among the twelve Chinese throughout Thailand who were decorated by the King.

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The school is politically pro-KMT and uses Hongkong and Taiwan produced textbooks. USIS reports that cooperation with Chinese groups in Trang is among the best in the South. There are 26 school teachers in the school, most of whom are from Trang and vicinity. The principals and teachers interviewed all indicated that the most difficult part of their job was the teaching of Chinese. Students, they said, were not interested in Chinese lessons and outside the classroom preferred to speak Thai or their own native dialect.

A young fourth generation Chinese businessman, Chaeng Saingam (Chinese name is Liang Ch'ang-cheng), who is the Stanvac representative in Trang, proved to be an excellent source of information on the political views of Thai and Chinese in Trang. A fully assimilated Chinese, Chaeng said that his Chinese descent in no way interfered with any of his activities and that he was accustomed to speaking freely. According to Chaeng, sentiment in Trang is critical of the military group in Bangkok; Trang has a history of electing assemblymen from the opposition. A Democrat, Nai Kokiat Sattasen, had been elected three times from Trang. There was no change in mood when Sarit came to power in September 1957, according to Chaeng, as it was assumed in Trang that the new group was just as bad and just as corrupt as the Phibun crowd. Sarit's program for clean government is regarded with considerable skepticism and so far at least, the view from Trang is that the new Government is no improvement over the old.

Chaeng said that while the overseas Chinese have no great affection for Sarit, they do respect him as a leader. During the series of summary executions of racial Chinese for arson last November and December, overseas Chinese resented Sarit's methods and were very doubtful that the executed Chinese were the guilty parties; nevertheless, they realized that Sarit was out to prove his leadership and to put a stop to arson. And in this, he succeeded, they felt.

Local officials in Trang, according to Chaeng, share some of the unpopularity with which the National Government is regarded. As an example of their stupidity and lack of civic-mindedness, Chaeng recalled that he and a group of citizens (well-to-do businessmen like himself) offered to assist the Mayor in building and furnishing a public library because existing facilities were inadequate and the books they had were not even available to the general public, but were kept under lock and key by some petty official. The Mayor turned down the offer. Similarly, when the same public-spirited group offered to send the Mayor on an expenses-paid trip to inspect the city of Penang, the Mayor spurned the offer with the remark, "Do you think I'm uneducated? I don't have to go to Penang to find out what's good for Trang!"

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by a Bangkok opponent of Mr. Mu. Chung thereupon prepared a large bloc of ballots in favor of Mr. Mu's opponent and sent them to Bangkok. Mu, however, learned of this, and under pretext of a Communist plot had the ballots seized in a raid conducted at his behest by the CID. Mr. Mu was eventually re-elected Chairman in Bangkok, but Chung lost out in Haadyai to Hsu Sui-t'ang, a theater owner who had received the blessing of Mu Tung-pak. Right wing Chinese expressed surprise at the choice made by Mu, because they consider Hsu as politically unreliable. However, they believed that Mu--who runs his association and his business with an iron hand--would be able to keep him under control.

An American Presbyterian missionary, Reverend Carl Blanford, who has operated a mission in Haadyai for the past five years, told the reporting officer that the closing of the Chinese school in Haadyai had a marked effect on the speech habits of the local children and that considerably more were speaking Thai than previously. Rev. Blanford's contacts with Chinese are close as he lives with his family in very modest quarters in a relatively unattractive part of Haadyai. He also speaks Teochiu as well as Mandarin.

According to Rev. Blanford, few Chinese in Haadyai are interested in political matters and few seem to express any opinion about world affairs. He had heard some rumblings of disgust with the Government's anti-Communist campaign instituted following October 20, 1958. He said that none of the "big names" usually associated with leftist activity had been picked up and that the only person arrested on suspicion of being a Communist was a nearly-destitute push-cart book peddler. Rev. Blanford said that the arrested Chinese was a member of his congregation and was not a Communist, but to eke out a living he did sell some Communist literature. However, at the time of his arrest, a wide variety of Communist periodicals were available in three or four big outlets in Haadyai.

FOR THE AMBASSADOR:

John C. Guthrie
Counselor of Embassy
for Political Affairs

Action requested: Department please pass copies of this despatch to Rangoon, Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Phnom Penh, Hongkong (including copy for USIS), and Taipei. Return 3 copies to Bangkok.

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