DUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 969000

EA/LC:TJCorcoran
(Drafting Office and Officer)

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: August 25, 1969

SUBJECT: Thai - American Relations

PARTICIPANTS: His Excellency Khamking Souvanlasy, Ambassador of Laos
Marshall Green, Assistant Secretary for East Asian Affairs
Thomas J. Corcoran, Country Director, Laos and Cambodia

COPIES TO:
EA
EA/LC
EA/TB
AmEmbassy Vientiane
AmEmbassy Bangkok

AUG 27 1969

COPY FLO-PDR

AUG 26 PM 4 49

Ambassador Khamking opened the conversation by asking for information on the "Thailand Affair" which he had been reading about in the press. Many of his friends in Laos have written him about it.

Mr. Green replied that because of the Viet-Nam war many senators were concerned about future Viet-Nams. They focussed their attention on Thailand because it was in the center of Southeast Asia and seemed a most likely site for future involvement. They wondered if statements made to the Thai might lead them to believe that we would do things we were not actually committed to do. These Senators wondered whether there was a weakening of the legislative role in foreign affairs and whether the executive branch was going beyond the SEATO commitment. They were interested in Project Taksin or Project 22. This was one of a number of contingency plans drawn up some years ago in relation to attacks on threats to Thailand. It was not a commitment. It stated that it would not take effect until the two countries so agreed. We had told the Foreign Relations Committee this a number of times but they did not seem to be satisfied that the Thai might not consider it a commitment since it had been signed by General Thanom and General Stilwell.

Mr. Green said that the Thai did not regard it as a commitment and that Thanom and Thanat had said so. However the issue was so fundamental and so reflected the views of the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee that the executive was taking responsibility away from the legislative branch that it would inevitably get great attention. If it were not the Thai question it would be another. Earlier it had been the Spanish Bases question.

FORM DS-1254
3-61

CONFIDENTIAL

DECLASSIFIED
Authority

...ing asked what would happen if the Thai took the position that ...oops should get out of Thailand. Mr. Green replied that it was not ...re of either the Thai or the U.S. Governments to have a large with-...wal of U.S. forces. If there could be a reduction of U.S. personnel not needed in Thailand then we wanted to talk with the Thai about it. We envisaged a gradual reduction of a small number of personnel. Many U.S. troops were in Thailand in relation to Viet-Nam not Thailand. A limited and gradual withdrawal of some of these elements over a long period of time was what we had in mind. Despite press reports Thanat had not been talking about big-scale withdrawals.

Ambassador Khamking asked if Thanat's statement about withdrawal of U.S. troops did not reflect a personal reaction on Thanat's part prior to his departure for the International Court of Justice. Mr. Green replied that Thanat's desire for the ICJ post was a longstanding one. The Thai had asked our support for his nomination and we have granted it. We thought highly of Thanat who had played important roles both in Thailand and in the Southeast Asian region. We were sorry to see him go. He would leave a gap. We were sure that a capable successor would be found but we did not yet know who this would be.