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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Your Appointment with Minister of National Development Pote Sarasin and Minister of Foreign Affairs Thanat Khoman of Thailand.

You have agreed to meet these two Thai civilian leaders on Friday, October 6, at 12:30 p.m. You will recall that you met with the same two leaders together just a year ago. Thanat is here for the UN, and Pote is here to speak at a major economic meeting in New York.

Enclosed are talking points for your possible use, together with biographical material, and a possible press release.

You should also know that Clark Clifford will be lunching with Pote on the preceding day. We will arrange with Mr. Clifford to pass on any special points that arise at that meeting.

DEAN RUSK

Dean Rusk

Enclosures:

1. **Talking Points**
2. **Biographical Material**
3. **Possible Press Release**

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TALKING POINTS FOR MEETING WITH THAI MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT POTE SARASIN AND THAI FOREIGN MINISTER THANAT KHOMAN

1. You may wish to lead by recalling their call of a year ago, and Thanat's being at the Summit at Manila as well.

2. Thanat will have spoken in the General Assembly on October 5, and his speech is sure to be a strong defense of all that we and the Thai are doing in Viet-Nam. You might wish to congratulate him and to get his impressions of the UN. He will probably be sharply critical of the many nations who have been calling on us to stop the bombing as the single key to peace. (In their talks with Messrs. Clifford and Taylor, the Thai generally urged that we intensify the bombing.)

3. Thai Troop Contribution

Background

Following the Clifford/Taylor visit, the Thai have presented proposals to send an additional 8500-man force to Viet-Nam. We believe that we can work out the immediate military assistance required to obtain their firm agreement to such an addition, and are aiming to do so by the end of October if possible. However, there are major questions affecting our long-term military assistance and the modernization of the Thai forces on a broad basis.

Thanat and Pote probably will not expect you to comment in detail on the present status of these discussions, which are proceeding in Bangkok between Ambassador Unger and the Thai military and Prime Minister Thanom. However, this is certainly an ideal occasion to stress again the great importance of a prompt Thai decision and announcement, both for its effect on Hanoi and for its favorable impact on our

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own Congress. Affirmative Thai action can have a most useful leverage effect in securing resources many times greater than the size of the Thai contribution itself. Since the Thai have shown some tendency to think of their contribution as being "at US request," we suggest you discuss this very much in the sense that it is of great importance to the security of Thailand itself--which both Thanat and Pote will recognize.

4. Asian Regional Development

Thanat played a key role in the formation during the summer of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). It has brought in Indonesia and Singapore to join Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand. We have treated this wholly as an Asian matter, but general congratulations would certainly be in order. As evidence of our support for such Southeast Asian regional activities, you may wish to refer to your message to the Congress of September 26 requesting the $200 million authorization for special funds under the Asian Development Bank. Both Pote and Thanat will undoubtedly be familiar with this, and ask what its prospects are.

5. Thai Economic Development

Minister Pote has been the chief architect of Thai economic policies, which for almost a decade have devoted about 60% of the Government budget to economic and social development, while shouldering growing security expenditures. As a result, Thailand has experienced a remarkable growth rate which has averaged 9% over the last five years.

You may wish to commend Pote on this impressive performance and indicate that the United States will continue to join with other nations and international organizations in assisting Thailand's economic and security development programs so that the momentum of this development is maintained.

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6. Thai Internal Security

Communist insurgency is the most serious internal problem presently confronting the Thai Government. Determination to deal with it as a Thai responsibility and avoid U.S. involvement accounts for Thai insistence on modernizing their armed forces if they are to send additional troops to Viet-Nam. In the last five months there has been a perceptible decrease in Communist terrorist activity in Northeast Thailand due in part to accelerating Government counter-insurgency programs. Thai leaders recognize that much remains to be done and that it is too early to speak of "success" on the basis of current, limited evidence. It does appear, however, that the Thais' approach to the problem--integrating civil, police and military elements of the Government--is on the right track.

You may therefore want to indicate to the Thai Ministers our approval of their approach to the problem and assure them of our continued strong support for their efforts to defeat the insurgency. In so doing, you might stress the great importance of full integration of all parts of the effort--there have been recent indications that the army may be moving to take over in some areas, and this could throw the balance of the effort off.

Following are points the Thai Ministers may raise:

1. U.S. Security Commitment to Thailand

While your reaffirmation of U.S. commitments to Thailand made in Bangkok last October removed Thai pressure for a bilateral security treaty, Thai leaders, and Thanat in particular, are still sensitive to Congressional and public criticism of our involvement in Viet-Nam. Thanat is scheduled to appear on U.S. television and reportedly is prepared to rebut U.S. critics by name.

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Suggested Response

Since we have repeatedly told the Thai that we regard the SEATO Treaty as a bilateral obligation on our part, specifically reaffirmed by you last October, we suggest you respond simply that our commitment to Thailand is clear and that we intend to keep it. As you do so, you may wish to express our thanks for the excellent cooperation that we have had with the Thai in the use of SEATO bases on Thai territory--again putting this in the context of an effort that is wholly in the Thai interest.

Press Coverage

One of our objectives is to have this call receive publicity in Bangkok and elsewhere. Last year you took the two Ministers to the White House door and then left them to make statements to the press and TV. Undoubtedly both men would speak helpfully if you were to do this again, and USIA is standing by, as well as the networks.

Possible Press Release

Last year, a press release was issued following the visit. While we would not regard this as essential--especially if you go to the door with the two Ministers--we enclose a draft for use if you desire.

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THAILAND

THANAT KHOMAN
(Tah-not Koh-mahn)

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Thanat Khoman, Minister of Foreign Affairs since February 1959, was born on May 9, 1914. He was educated in Thailand and later in France where he received a docteur en droit in 1939. He speaks fluent English and French.

Thanat entered the Thai Foreign Service in 1939, first serving in Tokyo. During the early years of World War II he left for Ceylon, contacted the Southeast Asian Command, and joined the resistance movement against the Japanese. Before becoming Ambassador to Washington in 1957, Thanat served in India, in Bangkok with the Foreign Ministry, and at the United Nations in New York.

Foreign Minister Thanat is recognized as one of the most outstanding Asian statesmen. He is a strong supporter of U.S. policy in Vietnam, and a leader in promoting the new spirit of regional economic, cultural, and political cooperation. He was instrumental in mending relations between Malaysia and Indonesia, reviving the Association of Southeast Asia, and assuring the success of the ASPAC meeting in Seoul. Recently he proposed an Asian peace conference on Vietnam which won the support of a number of Asian states, including Japan. He deserves a major share of the credit for the successful negotiations with Indonesia and other Southeast Asian nations which culminated in the organization of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Kuala Lumpur in August 1967.

Thanat is an excellent speaker and an experienced and capable negotiator. Particularly in dealings with Indonesia during the Sukarno regime and subsequently, and with other more or less neutral Asian and African nations, he has displayed great tact and willingness to play a self-effacing and helpful role in bringing such nations together. On the other hand, his volatile temper has caused him, on several occasions, to speak out with extreme candor and boldness in

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defense of U.S. (and Thai) policy in South Vietnam and in defiance of Communist critics of that policy. Although he has apparently had some friction with leading members of the military, Thanat enjoyed the trust and respect of the late Prime Minister Sarit Thanarat, and he appears to be equally secure in his position in the government headed by Thanom Kittikachon. He has on several occasions offered his resignation, perhaps partly as a tactic to confirm his support at the cabinet level, and has always been prevailed upon to continue as Foreign Minister.

He is married and has two daughters and one son, all of whom are studying in the United States.

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THAILAND (21)

POTE SARASIN
(Pote Sarah-sin)

Minister of National Development of Thailand

Pote Sarasin has had a distinguished career in law, business, diplomacy, and government. Born on March 24, 1904, he was educated abroad, attending the Wilbraham Academy in Springfield, Massachusetts, and studying law in London.

He served as Deputy Minister and later as Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1948 to 1950. He served as Ambassador to the United States from 1952 to 1957. In 1957, he became Secretary General of SEATO. He left that post to serve as Prime Minister of Thailand in the interim government which followed the 1957 military coup. He returned to the SEATO position in 1958, and served in that capacity until he was named as Minister of National Development, one of the most important posts in the government.

A good friend of the United States, Pote has endeavored to strengthen Thailand's position as a strong, free government in Southeast Asia. He is widely respected internationally for his broad and sound knowledge of international law and diplomacy. Known domestically as an effective leader, he has been responsible for many of the policies which have facilitated Thailand's impressive economic growth.

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DRAFT WHITE HOUSE PRESS RELEASE

The President met today with Thailand's Minister of National Development Pote Sarasin and Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman. They discussed U. S. -Thai relations, and Thailand's role in the present struggle in Southeast Asian and in regional development in that area.

Minister Pote described Thailand's successful economic development which, despite heavy demands for security expenditures, has resulted in an average national growth rate of 9% in the last five years. The Minister also described Thailand's growing programs to counter externally-inspired Communist insurgency. The President indicated that together with other nations and international organizations the United States would continue to assist Thailand's economic development in order to maintain the momentum of this growth. The United States would also support the Thai Government's efforts to defeat subversion and insurgency.

The discussion covered the growing movement toward regional development in Southeast Asia, its importance for the future of the region, and the important role which Thailand is playing in these activities.

The Thai Ministers expressed their strong support for the United States position in Vietnam, noting its direct relationship to the security of Thailand. The President responded by reiterating the statements he made during his visit to Bangkok last October, paying tribute to the Thai contribution to our collective defense against Communist aggression in Southeast Asia and reaffirming that the commitment of the United States under the SEATO Treaty was not of a particular party or administration, but a commitment of the American people, and that America keeps its commitments.

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