PAGE 01  BANGKO 15211  091012Z

10
ACTION EA 15
INFO OCT 01, CIRE 00, DODE 00, PM 05, H 02, INR 07, L 03, NSAE 00, NSC 10,
P 03, RSC 01, PRS 01, SS 20, USIA 12, AID 23, ACDA 16, UPW 01, RSM 01,
/126 W

P.090916Z  NOV 69
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASDOC PRIORITY 1656

UNCLASS BANGKO 15211

SUBJECT: US-THAIL MILITARY CONTINGENCY PLAN

REF: STATE 189527

1. STORY THAT CONTINGENCY PLAN HAD BEEN SHOWN TO SENATE
FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE WAS FRONT PAGE NEWS IN AFTERNOON
EDITION OF BANGKOK WORLD NOV 8 (UPI DESPATCH) AND TOP STORY
IN BANGKOK POST NOV 9 (FROM REUTERS).

2. ACCOUNTS ARE SIMILAR AND TRACK WITH UNNA STORY REFTEL.
EACH EMPHASIZED THEME THAT MONTHS-LONG CONTROVERSY ON THIS
MATTER BETWEEN ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESS (OR COMMITTEE)
NOW "ENDED" EACH INCLUDED REMARKS BY SENATOR FULBRIGHT
THAT PLAN CONTAINED "NO SURPRISES" BUT THAT IT WOULD HAVE
BEEN PRESENTED TO SENATE FOR (CONSENT TO) RATIFICATION.
WORLD STORY INCLUDED QUOTE ATTRIBUTED TO SENATOR FULBRIGHT,
"IT'S A VERY CURIOUS SITUATION. THE THAI ARE SAYING THIS
IS NOT A COMMITMENT. BUT I'M SURE THAT BEFORE THIS BECAME
KNOWN, THEY THOUGHT IT WAS A COMMITMENT."

3. WORLD EDITORIAL NOV 9, "CONTINGENCY PLAN PUT TO REST,
CONCLUDES THAT AFTER HUE AND CRY AND RECRIMINATIONS, THE
DOCUMENT TURNS OUT TO BE ABOUT WHAT EVERYONE THOUGHT, "A
CONTINGENCY PLAN BETWEEN TWO NATIONS AIMED AT APPLICATION
OF POTENTIAL SUPPORT OF ONE BY THE OTHER." THEME IS THAT
A GREAT DEAL OF "VERY BAD PUBLICITY MIGHT HAVE BEEN AVOIDED
AND RESULTANT ILL-WILL BETWEEN TWO NATIONS HALTED AT ITS

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PAGE 02  BANGKO 15211  091012Z

ONSET HAD ADMINISTRATION HANDLED THE MATTER MORE FORTHRIGHTLY AT AN EARLIER STAGE, IN KEEPING WITH FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION "WHICH USG PRIDES AS ONE OF ITS GREAT STRENGTHS." EDITORIAL THUS APPORTIONS RESPONSIBILITY BETWEEN COMMITTEE AND ADMINISTRATION: "IT IS DIFFICULT TO BE SYMPATHETIC WITH FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE'S ATTITUDE ON THAILAND BUT ONE CAN COME TO UNDERSTAND ITS VIEW THAT CURIOSITY SPRINGS ONLY FROM THE DARKNESS..."

4. ANY SIGNIFICANT COMMENT FROM THAI-LANGUAGE PRESS, WHICH IS NORMALLY DELAYED, WILL BE REPORTED. COMMENTS SEPTEL.

HANNAH

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