

Approved For Release 1999/09/09 : CIA-RDP82-00457R00240049

~~INFORMATION~~ ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

GD NO.

July 50

COUNTRY Siam

DATE DISTR. 4 Mar 1949

SUBJECT Siamese Requests for Arms through Willis H. Bird

NO. OF PAGES 2

PLACE ACQUIRED 25X1A6a

NO. OF ENCLS. (LISTED BELOW)

DATE OF INFO 25X1C
25X1X6

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

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1. On 10 January 1949, Luang Pibul sent Major Narong Salirathavibhaya to Willis H. Bird's office to ask for assistance in buying approximately \$1,000,000 worth of arms for the Siamese Army. * The Army wants carbines, sub-machine guns, machine guns, rifles, jeeps, weapons carriers, and tanks.
2. Bird stated that he would be unable to buy the arms directly and would have to get someone to make the purchase. He has written to the World Commerce Company (Stettinius group) to see if they can procure the arms.**
3. Bird asked Major Narong why the Siamese government resorted to smuggling. He was told that the Siamese had tried the direct method of asking for arms but had been refused.
4. On 11 January, Bird was called to see Major General Phao Sriyanon in reference to weapons for the Police Force. Phao wants tear gas bombs and police riot dispersing equipment. Bird showed Phao a substantial order from the Siamese Navy for similar types of equipment. Phao immediately signed an order for all Police departments to submit their needs, and marked it "urgent." Phao requested Bird to take the order to one of his (Phao's) assistants for immediate execution.
5. The Lake Erie Chemical Company of Cleveland, Ohio, is Willis H. Bird's supplier.
6. During Bird's negotiations with the Siamese Navy, he was asked not to supply the other services with weapons. However, Navy officials have apparently changed their attitude since they are now urging him to sell to both the Army and the Police Force.
7. Bird is presently (19 January) engaged in writing a letter for General Phin Chunhawan. The letter is addressed to Bird and requests him to secure sufficient arms to completely outfit one infantry division. The cost is estimated at US \$5,000,000 to US \$6,000,000. General Phin's original plan was to equip two divisions, but he abandoned this idea because the cost proved too high.

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Document No. *04*
 NO CHANGE in Class.
 DECLASSIFIED
 Class. CHANGED TO: TS S C
 DBA Memo, 4 Apr 77
 Auth: DBA RUC 77/1763
 Date: 1999/09/09 BY: 029

This document is hereby regraded to CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the letter of 13 October 1978 from the Director of Central Intelligence to the Architect of the Record System.
 Approved For Release 1999/09/09 : CIA-RDP82-00457R00240049
 Next Review Date: 2008

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█ Comment. Bird has brought this matter to the attention of the United States Embassy.

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█ Comment. The Manhattan (New York City) Telephone Directory lists the World Commerce Corporation at 62 West 47th Street, New York.

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█ Comment. For recent reports on arms and ammunition requests and purchases by the Siamese, see █

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