

OP. SIREN

file
[REDACTED]

DRAFT
(for family)

Richard S. Greenlee was one of two OSS civilian officers infiltrated into Japanese-occupied Bangkok in January 1945 to establish liaison with Luang Pradit, Regent of Thailand, who also headed a patriotic conspiracy of high government officers working to unseat their enforced allies, the Japanese. Through a third-party arrangement of by no means assured security the two were flown from Madras in an RAF Catalina flying boat which set down in the Gulf of Siam, where they were transferred to a Thai customs launch, landed at King's Wharf Bangkok, and driven through the city in daylight to a secluded house. Here, confined to a single room, they set up shop as the U.S. "mission" to Thailand.

The Regent had a scheme for armed uprising against the Japanese with the help from outside of several U.S. divisions, and he was anxious that his plans be presented to the U.S. government. In early February, accordingly, Greenlee was picked up by Catalina and flown to Washington. The matter was important enough that General Donovan kept President Roosevelt himself informed:

HISTORICAL DOCUMENT

Destination: [REDACTED]
of the [REDACTED]

Name: [REDACTED]
Date: 30 JAN 1969

STAT

HS/CSG- 1471

[REDACTED]

-2-

22 February 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

A representative of ours, an American sent in especially for the purpose, has just returned here from Bangkok, where he conferred personally with several high Thai officials, including Luang Pradit, Regent of Thailand.

He brought with him certain political intelligence and proposals, including a proposal of the Regent for the formation of a provisional Free Thai government in this country, which have been referred to the State Department.

He also brought with him certain military intelligence and proposals, including a detailed account of Japanese forces in Thailand, the potentialities of the Thai armed forces for aid to the Allies, and a war plan based on these dispositions which are being referred to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

. . .

An American officer is at present in Bangkok, where he has personal access to the Regent, and his principal aides in the Free Thai movement, and radio communication to our base on Ceylon. (He constitutes a channel of communication to the Regent.) He is sending to us information received directly by him, and by this means also we hope to establish an additional line of penetration to Japan.

William J. Donovan
Director

5 March 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

. . .

Luang Pradit requested one of the OSS representatives to return to the United States as soon as possible in

-3-

order to inform our State Department of his sympathies with the cause of the United Nations. In addition, he asked this officer to present to The President of the United States this gold cigarette case. This gift has especial significance because of the affixed Royal Siamese Crown and the inscribed Royal Siamese initials. In making this gift, the Regent stated that he wished this present to be conveyed as a mark of his esteem for the United States and for The President.

The OSS officer complied with the Regent's request. He is presently in Washington and is expected to leave the country enroute to Bangkok on or about 9 March 1945

William J. Donovan
Director

Commissioned a major, Greenlee did get back to Bangkok, again by Catalina, on the first of April, accompanied by a third officer (and \$50,000 in gold). It shows something of the strain they were under in their clandestine activity that the man left in charge during February and March, now that he had someone there to take over, succumbed to a nervous breakdown and had to be evacuated. The mission was, however, moved to roomier and better-protected quarters at about this time.

Greenlee had to tell Luang Pradit that there was not much chance the Joint Chiefs would approve his plan for a U.S. assault on the Japanese positions in Thailand, but he managed it with such understanding and helpfulness in other respects that the Regent remained encouraged and cooperative. He also

SECRET

-4-

managed to heal a detrimental breach between the Regent and his somewhat less cooperative police chief. In the three months of his second stay he perfected the mutually beneficial arrangements under which the Siamese got instructors for guerilla training, arms dropped for them by parachute, and assurances of U.S. sympathy tangibly reinforced by drops of medical supplies for Bangkok hospitals, while the Americans got the release of captured officers and agents, a measure of control over the underground movement, and a copious flow of some of the highest-level intelligence of the war, including information on Japanese dispositions and plans communicated to the Siamese "allies."

Both parties to this bargain sought to honor the man who had brought it about. The Thai government, after the Japanese surrender, presented him with The Most Sacred Order of the White Elephant. This he had officially to refuse under U.S. regulations, because Thailand could not be called a co-belligerent power. But he could accept from the U.S. Theater Command the order of the Legion of Merit, presented him on 15 November 1945 by General Magruder.