

POST WAR PLANNING & ANGLO-AMERICAN DIVERGENCE OF ATTITUDES ON SIAM

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SINOPSIS

Pembuat dasar Inggeris menganggap bahawa negara Thai sebagai sebuah negara yang penting terutamanya dari segi keselamatan dan kemakmuran ekonomi tanah Jajahannya di Asia Tenggara, dan justeru itu memerlukan Britain mengadakan rancangan tertentu bagi negara Thai selepas perang. Bagaimana pun dalam merangka rancangan itu pihak Pejabat Luar Inggeris dikehendaki menyesuaikan rancangan itu mengikut kehendak-kehendak Piagam Atlantik dan Pengistiharaan Cairo, dan juga pandangan-pandangan pihak Amerika. Kemunculan Amerika sebagai sebuah kuasa yang agong selepas perang harus diambilkira oleh Britain, bukan saja kerana Britain bergantung kepada Amerika untuk kepentingan keselamatannya tetapi juga untuk kepentingan pemulihan ekonomi negara. Telah menjadi dasar Amerika untuk menyesuaikan rancangan Inggeris itu menurut kepentingan dan pandangannya. Walau pun pihak Inggeris bersetuju dengan aspek-aspek tertentu tentang Asia Tenggara, Asia Timor dan kawasan Pasifik tetapi berhubung dengan negara Thai Britain agak keberatan untuk menerimanya. Percanggahan pandangan mengenai masa depan negara Thai itu diantara kedua kerajaan juga memberi kesan kepada perundingan pendamaian antara Britain dengan negara Thai.

SYNOPSIS

The framers of Britain's policy considered Thailand to be important as far as the security and economic well-being of her territories in Southeast Asia were concerned, and this necessitated that British imposed certain post-war arrangements on Thailand. Nevertheless in formulating the arrangements the Foreign Office had to accommodate it with the Atlantic Charter and Cairo Declaration and the views put forth by the United States. The emerging role of the United States as a major post-war power had to be reckoned with by Britain especially because she depended economically and strategically on the United States not only for war efforts but also for post-war economic recovery. It had been the United States policy to bring the British policy in line with her interests and viewpoints. Although Britain agreed to pursue a similar course of action in certain aspects concerning Southeast Asia, East Asia and the Pacific Region, she found it difficult to reconcile herself with the American viewpoints as far as Thailand was concerned. The divergent

viewpoints of the two countries with regard to Thailand affected the Anglo-Thai peace settlement negotiations.

One important factor that determined British policy towards Thailand before the war was the aim of preventing the Japanese from advancing into Southeast Asia.¹ Japan seemed bent on dominating East and Southeast Asia under her 'New Order' policy. As she advanced deep into the Asian mainland after the Sino-Japanese war broke out in late July 1937 this was seen not only to endanger British's economic and political position in China, but also posed a strategic threat to her vast possessions and interests in South Asia and the Western Pacific. It was the British policy to find a way to protect her interests by either halting or diverting the Japanese-advance. Since Thailand was the remaining independent country in Southeast Asia, it was necessary that she remained neutral and not allow herself to be exploited by Japan and the Axis powers.

The importance of Thailand to Britain was based on two fundamental factors: her closeness to the British territories of Malaya and Burma and her independent status. Her geographical location made Thailand an ideal place from which Japan or any external power could attack Southeast Asia. However, due to Britain's involvement in the European crisis, and later her state of war and America's reticence,² she was discouraged from taking a firm policy against Japan and Thailand. In the circumstances, British policy towards Thailand was tuned towards maintaining and cultivating Anglo-Thai relations while at the same time encouraging her to remain neutral in the international crisis. To some extent, Britain was able to achieve her objectives in June 1940 when Non Aggression Pacts³ were signed between Britain and Thailand and between France and Thailand. It was hoped that the Pacts would not only contribute towards a

1 For a detail discussion on British Policy in East and Southeast Asian in 1930s see, Bernard A. Lee, *Britain and the Sino-Japanese War 1937-1939*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1973; Saul Rose, *Britain and Southeast Asia*. John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1962; Ian H. Nish, "Japan's Relations with Britain", in *Conference on Japan's Foreign Policy The Agenda for Research*, Vol. 3, East Asian Institute, Columbia University, 1963.

2 The United States government was undecided about her commitments to help Britain in resisting the Japanese in East Asia, or Southeast Asia in particular. Though negotiations were taking place between the two countries, the United States felt that the defence of Europe and Britain, in particular against the German threat, was more important. For further detail see, Herbert Feis, *The Road to Pearl Harbour*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1950.

3 The Non-Aggression pacts were signed between Britain and Thailand and France in Bangkok on 12 June 1940. These agreements, which were valid for five years and were subject to denunciation there after by one year's notice on either side, provided for the reciprocal respect by each country of the other's territorial integrity. It was further laid down that, if one country became involved in war with a third party, the other would refrain from affording aid or assistance to such third party. The Franco-Thai delegation had also exchange secret letters agreed to solve the Franco-Thai border problem. Crosby to Foreign (F) Office (O), 12 April 1940, F2565.

regional stability, particularly by solving the French-Indochina–Thai border dispute⁴ but also would reinforce Thailand’s neutrality.

June 1940, however, was not only marked by Britain’s success in finalising a Non-Aggression Pact with Thailand and the parallel Franco-Thai Pact, but by the sudden reverses the Allied Forces suffered in Europe against the Germans and the collapse of France, which drastically affected British hopes for regional stability in South East Asia and a means of checking the Japanese advance. The event had brought two main consequences in Southeast Asia. Firstly, Thai irredentism had risen tremendously because France’s collapse had placed Indochina in a delicate position. Franco-Thai relations deteriorated perceptibly when the French refused to solve the border problem, as agreed secretly between the two countries. The Thais retaliated by refusing to ratify the Non-Aggression Pact signed between herself and France. Secondly, the Japanese had exploited the situation by extending their influence in Indochina and at the same time demanding that Britain and France close their respective frontiers with China. Although Britain was in favour of maintaining Indochina’s status quo, these considerations caused Britain to ‘sympathize’ with Thai aspirations, lest failure to do so would force Thailand to collaborate with Japan.

Due mainly to her own weakness and America’s attitude, which supported continued maintenance of Indochina’s status quo, France was encouraged to remain obdurate and refuse to submit to Thai demands. This led to open border clashes in November 1940 between Thailand and Indochina. The Japanese, who at that time were present in Indochina, intervened and settled the crisis, predominantly in favour of Japan. Despite Britain’s setbacks, she did not lose hope but continued to promote close relations with Thailand. The need for this became more urgent, especially after mid-July 1941 when the Japanese intensified their military moves in Indochina. This resulted in Anglo-American cooperation to assist Thailand economically. Although the measure was partially successful, especially in encouraging Thailand’s resistance against Japan, it also gave rise to a problem for Britain. In her desire to resist the Japanese, Thailand demanded military assistance from Britain and America. Britain, however, failed to provide this but exhorted Thailand to adhere to the Non-Aggression Pact and to be satisfied with passive resistance if she were attacked by Japan. Thus, it was due to Britain’s own weakness that Thailand submitted to Japan in early December 1941.

Siam’s submission to Japan on 8 December was originally regarded by Britain as an act under duress and she was thus content to consider Siam⁵

4 For a brief discussion on the French-Indochina–Thai border dispute see, E.T. Flood, “The 1940 Franco-Thai Border Dispute and Phibun Songkram’s commitment to Japan”, *Journal of Southeast Asia History*, vol. 10, No. 2, 1969.

5 After the outbreak of war, Britain had officially referred to Thailand as Siam. The British’s objection to the word “Thailand” was due to its association with an irren-

as a territory under enemy occupation.⁶ The position, however, was altered when the Siamese government hastily declared war upon Britain and the United States on 25 January 1942.⁷ From the British point of view, Siam had not only violated the Non-Aggression Pact but had breached earlier treaties entered into by the two countries relating to the sovereignty and integrity of the British territories.⁸ Thus, in accordance with international law and regulations, on 2 February 1942 Britain recognized Siam's declaration of war.⁹

The United States, with long-term interests in mind, refused to do so, being satisfied to treat Siam as an enemy-occupied country. This was the first and fundamental divergence of view between Britain and the United States which was profoundly to affect the post-war settlement negotiations between Britain and Siam.¹⁰

As she had recognised Siam's declaration of war, Britain was in an advantageous position to impose certain conditions on the Siam government in the negotiations for a peace settlement. Fundamentally this was important, as several matters had arisen as a result of Siamese collaboration in the East Asia war. As argued by Crosby, "When the terms of peace are dictated she will thus of necessity be liable to punishment, though if the provisions of the Atlantic Charter are observed,¹¹ her sovereign status and her territorial integrity will remain unimpaired."¹²

dentist programme. However, the United States continued to refer to the country as Thailand.

6 Despite the Japanese-Siamese military alliance on 12 December 1941, Britain had refrained from declaring war against Siam. There were two main reasons for this attitude. Firstly, she believed that the majority of the Siamese people were anti-Japanese, if not pro-Ally, and were "likely to become increasingly anti-Japanese as the Japanese proceed to apply their usual arrogant methods and to infringe their agreement to respect the sovereignty of Siam". Secondly, she felt that a declaration of war might change that trend and would encourage the Siamese to collaborate with Japan. See, British Embassy to the Department of State, 24 December 1941, Foreign (F) Relation (R) of the United (U) States (S). British Embassy here denotes the British Embassy in Washington.

7 Foreign Office memorandum, 19 December 1944, F6089.

8 In return for Siamese collaboration, the Japanese had agreed to give Siam the Northern Malay States (Kelantan, Kedah, Trengganu and Perlis) and the Shan States (Keng Tung and Mongpan). In accepting this promise and readily declaring war on Britain Siam had violated the Non-Aggression Pact which had stipulated, in Article 5, the Sovereignty and integrity of the British territories. Furthermore, the Anglo-Siamese agreement of 1909 had firmly stated that the Northern Malay States belonged to the British. See, Donald E. Neuchterlein, *Thailand and the Struggle for Southeast Asia*, Cornell University Press, New York 1965, pp. 73-74.

9 Foreign Office memorandum, 19 December 1944, F6089. Following Britain's example, India, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, except Canada, declared war upon Siam.

10 James V. Martin, 'Thai-American Relations in World War II' *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 22, 1963, p. 461.

11 The Atlantic Charter was signed between Britain and the United States on 14 August 1941. Among other things, it stipulated the agreement between the two countries against seeking territorial aggrandizement and the desire to see no territorial changes without the expressed wishes of the people concerned. See, Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, pp. 975-976.

12 Sir Josiah Crosby, "Observations on a Post-War Settlement in Southeast Asia," *International Affairs*, July 1944, p. 362.

As far as the formulation of policy was concerned, the Foreign Office had no problem. It had received memoranda setting forth proposals for the post-settlement negotiations with Siam as early as January 1943.

The first detailed set of proposals came from Sir Josiah Crosby.¹³ In January 1943 he sent a long memorandum to the Foreign Office discussing the importance of Siam to the British territories of Malaya, Burma and Southeast Asia as a whole.¹⁴ Crosby argued that Britain could not be disinterested in the fate of Siam. It would make all the difference to Britain whether the government in power in Siam was a friendly or a hostile one. Crosby believed "in Southeastern Asia, as everywhere else human society in its broad outlines and reactions tends increasingly to become indivisible, and a diseased Siam would be capable of infecting the whole body politic in her part of the world."¹⁵

Crosby argued that it was important for Britain and the United Nations to assist in the rehabilitation of Siam, particularly by promoting the growth of democratic government and by curtailing or disbanding the powerful armed forces. The armed forces, he said, were responsible for the undesirable features of Siam's recent policy. The continuation of a considerable military establishment would act as a hindrance to the growth of democratic institutions. He disclaimed the argument that powerful standing armies in these small states would be needed for purposes of self-defence. This would enable Siam to make a nuisance of herself, as clearly shown in the French-Indochina-Siamese border dispute in late 1940, rather than defend herself against external aggression as, for instance, Japanese invasion. Furthermore, the upkeep of armed forces would absorb a huge proportion of the national income at the expense of economic development.

Crosby proposed that some kind of "quasi-tutelary authority" be established in the country which would implement the recommendations of a group of foreign advisers chosen by the United Nations. But he deprecated the inclusion of any Chinese among the foreign advisers. The appointment of Chinese advisers could not fail to be deeply resented by the Siamese. Crosby gave three main reasons why the Chinese should not be included: first, there was a tendency towards large scale emigration; secondly, the Chinese were very much superior to the indigenous population in economic well-being and, thirdly, the

13 Sir Josiah Crosby was the British Minister in Bangkok from 1934 to January 1942. He began his career in the British Foreign Service as a student interpreter in Siam in 1904. Since then he was posted to various parts of Southeast Asia and South America.

14 Crosby to Ashley Clarke, 9 January 1943, F222. Crosby had also advocated his proposals through various books and articles, among them: Sir Josiah Crosby, *Siam: the Crossroads*, Hollis and Carter, London 1945 *idem* "Observations on a Post-war Settlement in Southeast Asia", *International Affairs*, July 1944; "The Failure of Constitutional Government in Siam", *The Asiatic Review*, October 1943.

15 Crosby to Ashley Clarke, 9 January 1943, F222.

closeknit racial communities of the Chinese prevented them from being assimilated.¹⁶

Crosby also drew attention to the Kra Isthmus for the defence on Malaya and Burma. He proposed that Britain or the United Nations should establish military bases in the region.¹⁷ Lastly, he discussed the problems of economic rehabilitation.¹⁸ He proposed that measures should be taken to stimulate production, introduce diversification of crops and raise the standard of living.

Crosby's memorandum was commented on by G.F. Hudson,¹⁹ who disagreed with the proposal for the curtailment or disbanding of the Siamese armed forces. Such a step, he believed, would only increase Britain's responsibility and would also be regarded by the Siamese as an infringement of Siam's national self-respect and sovereignty. In the proposal for tutelage, Hudson said such a scheme was to the disadvantage of Britain unless the excessive pro-Chinese bias of American popular sentiment was consistently modified. The United States would probably allow the Chinese to be included in the group of foreign advisers who might be chosen to serve in Siam. On that ground, he believed Siam should be retained as an independent nation rather than be under a "quasi-tutelar" authority.

The Foreign Office had also received a memorandum from the Colonial Office,²⁰ dated 30 March 1943, which discussed the future of Siamese territories in the north of the Malay peninsula. The memorandum drew particular attention to the danger to the British Empire threatened by these territories and commented on the possibility of a Kra Canal being built in the Isthmus. Enclosed with the memorandum was a letter from Sir George Maxwell,²¹ dated 15 March 1943, contemplating direct annexation by the British of Southern Siam, or the establishment of a military base there. Maxwell believed that the region was "The heel of Achilles" for the British Empire. Its importance, he argued, was clearly shown at the time of the Japanese invasion of Malaya. It was in this region that the Japanese landed their forces and wrecked the British defence in Malaya and Burma. He also pointed to the danger of a canal being constructed in the Kra Isthmus by Siam or other foreign powers which would directly threaten the position of Singapore. He argued that it would not be difficult

16 For a detailed discussion on this aspect see, Crosby, "Observations on a Post-War Settlement...", pp. 365-367.

17 Crosby had discussed this aspect in his *Siam: the Crossroads*, pp. 9-10.

18 See *Siam: the Crossroads*, Ch. XXVI.

19 G.F. Hudson to Ashley Clarke, 2 February 1943, F696. G.F. Hudson was a member of the Royal Institute of International Affairs. He was requested by the Foreign Office to comment on Crosby's memorandum.

20 Colonial Office to Foreign Office, 30 March 1943, F1732.

21 Sir George Maxwell was a former Chief Secretary to the Government of the Federated Malay States.

for the British to annex the Southern region. Ethnologically, most of the population there, especially in the region of Patani, Setul, Yala and Narativat, were of the Malay race closely connected with the neighbouring states of Malaya. These Malays, Maxwell stated, as a result of the intensively nationalistic policy pursued by the Siamese, who abolished the Sultanate of Patani and made Siamese the only official language, were said before the outbreak of war to have been likely, in any proper plebiscite, to vote over-whelmingly in favour of transfer to British Malaya.

The Foreign Office, in its comment, however, felt it difficult to recommend direct annexation of the region since Britain had already committed herself to the Atlantic Charter.²² Nevertheless, the Foreign Office agreed to consider the possibility of establishing a military base there sponsored by either Britain or the United Nations.²³

These memoranda provided the Foreign Office with ample information and guidelines for formulating its terms of condition to be imposed upon Siam in the post-war negotiations.

In the meantime, the Foreign Office abstained from making any political commitments which would affect its interest in Siam. The Foreign Office for example, did not recognise the "Free Siamese Movement"²⁴ as the representative of Siam, fearing that this would constitute a political blunder affecting British future planning for Siam.²⁵ Although it could not be denied that the British, for example the Special Operation Executive (SOE), in fact established contact with the Free Siamese Movement either in Europe or Siam, this was merely for operational purposes.²⁶ When the Foreign Office was requested by Lord Mountbatten, the Supreme Commander of Southeast Asia Command (SEAC), to make a general statement of policy regarding Siam, the Foreign Office only clarified the British general attitude towards Siam. It set forth the argument that "the Siamese people would have to pay a price for the acts of their

22 See, Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, 1943, pp. 975-976.

23 See minutes by T.E. Bromley on Colonial Office to Foreign Office, 16 June 1943, F3083, and Ashley Clarke to Monson Colonial (C) Office (O), 8 July 1943; Monson (CO) to Ashley Clarke, 7 October, 1943 F5292.

24 The "Free Siamese Movement" was formed in the United States of America by Seni Pramroj, the Siamese Minister in Washington, as soon as the Siamese Government under Pibul Songgram collaborated with the Japanese in declaring war against Britain and the United States. Seni Pramroj who did not recognise the Pibul Songgram government, refused to submit his government's note of declaration to the State Department. Apart from Seni Pramroj's Free Siamese Movement, in Siam itself, Pridi Banamyong had established his own movement with a similar name. For detailed discussion on the "Free Siamese Movement" see, Jayanta K. Raj, *Portraits of Thai politics*, Orient Longman Ltd, New Delhi, 1972, especially pp. 101-105, 149, 150 and 203. See also, Manich Jumsai, *History of Anglo-Thai Relations*, Chalermnit Press, Bangkok 1970, pp. 263-272.

25 Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs: "Proposed S.O.E operations in Siam", 9 September 1944, F4285.

26 Sheridan to Bennett, 20 November 1944, F5473.

government but that if they cooperated with the British they might expect Britain to support the emergence of an independent Siam after the war".²⁷

The proposed statement by the Foreign Office had indeed aroused disappointment in the State Department. On 20 March 1944, the Department retorted that the statement "would not be helpful in giving any encouragement to the Thai people to resist the Japanese, might very likely be exploited by the Japanese to the disadvantage of the United Nations . . ."²⁸ The statement, it added, failed to give any intimation that Thailand would be continued as an independent country. Although the two countries were seeking to enunciate a single policy for Siam,²⁹ they tended towards divergence, however, in the long run due to their different responses to the Siamese declaration of war and their perceptions of the future status of the colonial countries in Southeast Asia. Unlike the British, the United States, as stated earlier, did not consider herself to be at war with Siam. As argued by Hull, "We did not declare war, but took the position that the Government at Bangkok, under the domination of the Japanese, did not represent the desires of its people..."³⁰ On this basis, the Siamese Minister in Washington, Seni Pramoj, continued to be recognised by the United States as the Siamese Minister, and she had even declared her support for the formation of the Free Siamese Movement in the United States.³¹ In contrast to the British proposed statement, the United States declared Siam as a sovereign state, and "we favour the creation in Siam of a government, which will represent the freewill of the Siamese people."³² This sympathetic attitude of the United States towards Siam could be explained by her all-embracing sympathy with the countries in Asia which had been ruled and exploited for many years by European colonial powers. The traditional anti-imperialist sentiments of the Americans demanded that the Europeans grant national independence to their colonies in Asia and end the exploitation of these backward people. As far as Siam was

27 British Embassy to the Deputy Director of Far Eastern Affairs, 26 February 1944, FRUS.

28 Washington to FO, 22 March 1944, F1486.

29 The two Allied countries, Britain and the United States, had in fact agreed to maintain a unity of effort, not only to establish a new international order in the post-war period as agreed upon in the Atlantic Charter (signed in August 1941), but also towards defeating the Japanese in East Asia as stipulated in the Cairo Declaration (signed in mid-1943). As far as Siam was concerned, the Anglo-American policies were supposed to be based on the stipulated agreements.

30 Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, p. 1588.

31 Darling mentioned that these Free Siamese Volunteers were trained under the direction of Dr. Kenneth Landon and the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). See, Frank Darling, "British and American Influence in Post-War Thailand", *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, Vol. 4, 1963, p. 91.

32 Washington to FO, 18 March 1944, F1327. Henry Wallace, the Vice-President of the United States, at a banquet in Chungking on 22 June 1944, declared that the United States favoured the restoration of the national sovereignty of Siam. Extract from *Daily Express*, 22 June 1944, F3010.

concerned, Kenneth A. Landon, the Adviser of Siamese Affairs to the State Department, argued that:

“Any appraisal of Thailand looking forward to a postwar settlement must take into consideration the fact that the Thai are an old nation with a distinct culture... Above everything else, they want their freedom, their continued national existence. They would resist any forced coalition of the countries of Southeast Asia.³³ Any attempt to put them under the domination of an outside power would merely result in the creation of an Asiatic Ireland.”³⁴

Although the British Foreign Office agreed to amend the proposed statement to conform with the United States’ declaration,³⁵ the war Cabinet overruled the decision on the following principles:³⁶

- “(a) declaration’s terms were too favourable;
- (b) We should be asked to make corresponding statements about neighbouring territories, example of Malay States;
- (c) it was undesirable to make a statement about Siam till we had made one about Burma;
- (d) it would be better not to make a declaration of this kind until we had recovered some of the territories we had lost in the East;
- (e) it was doubtful whether declaration would be much assistance so far as SOE’s operational projects were concerned”.

Anglo-American divergencies on Siam were of little practical consequences prior to mid-1944. The divergences became a matter of real concern with the favourable unfolding of the military situation in Southeast Asia, accompanied by the downfall of the collaborationist Pibul regime in July 1944 and its replacement by a government dominated by the regent, Pridi Banamyong.³⁷ Pridi established contacts with the Allied powers and in-

33 Darling mentioned that there was a proposal submitted to the British government that Siam should be included in a Southeast Asia Federation which would then gradually merge with the British Commonwealth. See, Darling, *Thailand and the United States*, p. 4.

34 Kenneth P. London, “Thailand”, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, March 1943.

35 Memorandum from Secretary of Foreign Affairs to War Cabinet, 20 March 1934, F1399. On behalf of the Foreign Office, Anthony Eden informed the war Cabinet of his agreement to revise the original draft on the lines of the American declaration.

36 Extract from War Cabinet Conclusions: 89 (44) II dated 10 July 1944, F3366.

37 Herbert A. Fine, “The Liquidation of World War II in Thailand”, *Pacific Historical Review*, February 1965, p. 67.

formed them of his preparation to assist the Allies in their fight against the Japanese. Meanwhile, Seni Pramoj, in the United States, intensified his propaganda campaign to gain Allied Sympathy and support.

The British “passive” attitude towards the changing situation in Siam was naturally regarded by the United States as indicating that Britain had definite design upon Siam in the Post-war period. The United States suspicion was reinforced by Britain’s own attitude. For example, the Foreign Office, apart from not being able to issue its general statement on Siam, was unreceptive to the United States proposal that a “Free Siamese Liberation Committee” be established on Allied soil.³⁹ In contrast to the United States policy, the British refused to defreeze Siamese funds in London for use by the Free Siamese Movement.⁴⁰

On 18 August 1944 the Foreign Office received a letter from Winant, the United States Ambassador in London, demanding a confidential statement of British policy towards Siam.⁴¹ Winant expressed his regret for the British attitude.

Eden, on 4 September 1944,⁴² tried to allay the United States suspicions of the British attitude towards Siam by declaring that the British were no less favourable than the United States and China to the idea of a free and independent Siam after the war. However, he said;⁴³

“We, like the United States, want to see the restoration of Siam after the war as a free, sovereign and independent state, subject only to its acceptance of such special arrangements for security or economic collaboration as may be judged necessary within an international system. Before this stage is reached we have to drive out the Japanese and to this end we wish, as do the United States, to encourage the Siamese themselves to create the maximum difficulties for the Japanese and thus to make the maximum contribution to their own liberation. But at the present we and the United States government have not got our ideas coordinated and if we are to get this problem straightened out it is essential that we should recognise that we necessarily view it from somewhat different angles. The United States’ government do not regard themselves as being at war with Siam. His Majesty’s Government do”.

On Siamese resistance to the Japanese, he said;⁴⁴

38 Raj, *Portraits of Thai Politics*, pp. 149–160; see also, Munich Jumsai, *History of Anglo-Thai Relations*, pp. 263–272.

39 Fine, “The Liquidation of World War II in Thailand”, p. 67.

40 Martin, “Thai-American Relations in World War II”, p. 465.

41 Winant to Eden, 18 August 1944, F5550.

42 Eden to Winant, 4 September 1944, F5550.

43 *Ibid.*

44 *Ibid.*

“... it is in any case doubtful to encourage the comfortable view that the Siamese can count on an easy and assured future regardless of their attitude towards the Japanese and the efforts which they make to help themselves and us. We feel, in fact, that if resistance is to be encouraged it may need a spur rather than a sugar-plum”.

On territorial integrity, he said Britain was not thinking of territorial expansion but this did not mean that Siam would be allowed to retain “the ill-gotten gains which she has accepted from her Japanese ally at the expense of Malaya, of Burma and of French Indochina”.⁴⁵

On the Kra Isthmus, he emphasized the need for some special strategic arrangement within the framework of an international security system.

On 21 October 1944 Winant stressed the need for a frank exchange of views between the two governments in order to achieve a coordination of policy.⁴⁶ He demanded that Eden clarify precisely what was intended by those reservations.

Eden, on 15 November, explained that the existence of difference between the two governments was due to their different approach to restoring Siam as “a free, sovereign and independent country”.⁴⁷ He argued:⁴⁸

“To us Siam is an enemy who must ‘work her passage’ before she can rehabilitate herself; Whereas the United States Government regard her, in spite of her declaration of war merely as an enemy-occupied territory”.

On the question of reservations, it was quite difficult for the British Government to clarify these in detail as there were many unknown factors as regards the future. Nevertheless, Eden stressed that it was only

“as a matter of prudence, even in the case of those who are but the satellites of our main enemies, to reserve the right to stipulate that as a condition of their ultimate freedom, sovereignty and independence they should accept such special arrangements for security or economic collaboration as may be judged necessary to the functioning of the post-war international system”.⁴⁹

As regards the special reservation affecting the Kra Isthmus, Eden considered it to be decided and recommended by the respective Allied military experts. However, he stressed that the Kra Isthmus had played an important part in the Japanese plans for the capture of Singapore, and as such

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Winant to Eden, 21 October 1944, F5550.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

“it will have to figure in whatever arrangements may be made for the future security of Southeast Asia, and in particular for the defence of Singapore”.⁵⁰

Thus, by the end of 1944, the British government already had a vivid outline of the post-war arrangements that she contemplated implementing in Siam. In formulating these, the Foreign Office had secured close cooperation from the Colonial Office, Sir George Maxwell and Sir Josiah Crosby. The importance of Thailand to the security and economic well-being of British territories and Southeast Asia was noted and examined thoroughly. Sir Josiah Crosby proposed the establishment of a tutelage system and the curtailment or disbandment of the Thai armed forces, as they were considered to be responsible for the failure of the democratic system in Thailand. Sir George Maxwell advocated either complete annexation or the establishment of a British military base in Southern Thailand.

Nevertheless, in formulating the arrangements, the Foreign Office had to consider two fundamental factors:

- 1) the proposed policy must be in line with the Atlantic Charter and the Cairo Declaration that stipulated the ultimate freedom of the subjected people and countries;
- 2) the views put forth by the United States.

The emerging role of the United States as a major post-war power had to be reckoned with by Britain. Both economically and strategically Britain depended on the United States not only for war efforts but also for post-war economic reconstruction. It had been United States policy, as expressed by Hull,⁵¹ to bring the British policy into line with the interests and viewpoints of the United States. Although Britain agreed to achieve a unity of views with the Americans in certain aspects concerning Southeast Asia, East Asia and the Pacific regions, she found it difficult to be reconciled to the American view-point as far as Thailand was concerned. The divergent viewpoints of the countries with regard to Thailand had affected the Anglo-Thai peace settlement negotiation. Apart from their different responses to Thailand's declaration of war, their differences were also due to their varying perceptions of the future role that Thailand would play in post-war Southeast Asia. As mentioned earlier, Britain considered Thailand, her nearest neighbour, to be important as far as the security and economic well-being of her territories, Burma and Malaya, were concerned, and this necessitated that Britain impose certain post-war arrange-

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Hull, *The Memours of Cordell Hull*, p. 1601.

ments on Thailand. The United States, on the other hand, envisaged post-war Southeast Asia as a region free from colonialism and economic exploitation. As far as Thailand was concerned, the United States wanted to see her as a “fore-runner of the new political order for Asia, freed of colonialism”⁵² and as a model for the former European colonies.

⁵² *New York Times*, September 15, 1945.

