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ACTION EA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7120  
INFO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE  
DIA WASHINGTON DC  
SECDEF WASHDC  
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BANGKOK 23140

EO 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: PARM, MOPS, TH, US  
SUBJ: CBW - THE EFFORT IN THAILAND

REF: (A) STATE 115430  
- (B) BANGKOK 10761  
- (C) 82 BANGKOK 16701

1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT.  
2. SUMMARY: WE GREATLY APPRECIATE REF A WHICH PROVIDES  
A SOLID BASIS FOR MOVING AHEAD ON CBW IN THAILAND.  
ADVANCES IN SIRIRAJ RESEARCH AND COLUMBIA-SIRIRAJ  
COOPERATION AND PROVISION OF STANDARD SAMPLES ARE  
ALL WELCOME STEPS. THE ANALYSIS IN REF A OF THE  
STATE OF PLAY WITHIN THE THAI MILITARY WAS ALSO  
BANG-ON, AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR PROGRESS  
HERE. STEPPING BACK, WE REMAIN CONCERNED TO HAVE  
MORE EXPERTISE AVAILABLE IN THE FIELD AND TO FOCUS THE  
MISSION'S EFFORT IN PRODUCTIVE, COST-EFFECTIVE WAYS.  
WE WOULD WELCOME AN EARLY VISIT BY DR. GREEN OR  
OTHER SPECIALISTS TO REVIEW SITUATION AND EXPLORE

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POSSIBLE NEW APPROACHES. END SUMMARY.  
3. WE GREATLY APPRECIATE THE THOUGHTFUL MESSAGE REF

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A OUTLINING THE STATE OF PLAY ON CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WARFARE (CBW) ISSUES CONCERNING THAILAND. THE CABLE DID AN EXCELLENT JOB OF PULLING TOGETHER OUTSTANDING THREADS, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, LAYS DOWN AN EXCELLENT BASIS FOR CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE ACTIVITIES BOTH TO ENGAGE THE THAI AND TO FOCUS OUR OWN RESOURCES.

4. WE PARTICULARLY WELCOME THE INDICATIONS OF PROGRESS ON PENDING PROPOSALS LINKED PRIMARILY TO SIRIRAJ HOSPITAL, WHICH IS ONE OF THE REGION'S LEADING SCIENTIFIC MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS. THE PROVISION OF LABORATORY STANDARD SAMPLES PER REF A PARA 3 C WILL BE MOST USEFUL, AS WILL PROGRESS ON DR. SAMANIYA'S RESEARCH PROPOSAL IF SHE DOES NOT BECOME COMPLETELY TIED UP IN THE CANADIAN PROJECT. WE FOUND MOST PROMISING REF A'S REPORT ON THE PROJECT SKETCHED OUT BY DR. WAGNER FOR INSTITUTIONALIZED COOPERATION BETWEEN COLUMBIA AND SIRIRAJ. IF RESOURCES CAN BE IDENTIFIED AS COMING FROM NON-USG OR AT LEAST FROM CIVILIAN SOURCES, WE WOULD MAKE A STRONG CASE TO SUPREME COMMAND THAT RESEARCH COOPERATION CAN PROCEED ON SEPARATE CIVILIAN AND MILITARY TRACKS TO THE BENEFIT OF BOTH.

5. MORE GENERALLY, WE WOULD HOPE TO BE ABLE TO SEE PROGRESS ON BOTH THESE TRACKS, WITH THE RTA AND SUPREME COMMAND AS WELL AS WITH SIRIRAJ. AS INDICATED IN THE DEPARTMENT'S EXCELLENT RECAP OF THE SITUATION (REF A, PARA 3 E), A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF COMPETITION BETWEEN SUPREME COMMAND AND THE RTA IS INEVITABLE, AND WE MUST TAKE CONTINUING CARE TO AVOID BEING CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE AND/OR HAVING THE RESPONSIBILITY DEVOLVE TO AFRIMS. WE ARE DISMAYED THAT VISITS BY SEVERAL

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THAI MILITARY OFFICERS TO THE US OVER THE PAST YEAR HAVE NOT DEVELOPED A MORE REALISTIC STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES AND MORE SPECIFIC PLANNING TOWARD A STRONGER THAI CAPABILITY. AT THE SAME TIME, WE HAVE FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH THE THAI HERE BECAUSE OF UNCERTAINTY AS TO WHAT USG RESOURCES MIGHT BE AVAILABLE AND WHAT WOULD BE RECOMMENDED SPECIFICALLY BY US EXPERTS FOR A CAPABILITY ON THE THAI MILITARY SIDE. THAI TELL US THEIR CONVERSATIONS IN THE US HAVE BEEN CONFUSING ON THE POINT OF WHICH USG AGENCY OR OFFICE WOULD HAVE RESPONSIBILITY/RESOURCES TO ASSIST DEVELOPMENT OF A THAI EFFORT.

6. WE UNDERSTAND THAT DR. CHRISTOPHER

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GREEN IS PLANNING A TRIP TO THAILAND, AND WE WOULD WELCOME THIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO GET SOME SPECIALIZED RECOMMENDATIONS, ESPECIALLY ON TECHNICAL ASPECTS. WITH MORE CONCRETE STATEMENTS OF OBJECTIVES FOR THAI CAPABILITIES AND A CLEARER IDEA OF WHAT SPECIFIC US ASSISTANCE MIGHT BE AVAILABLE BEYOND INFORMATION, WE WOULD BE BETTER PLACED TO ATTACK THE POLITICAL AND BUREAUCRATIC PROBLEMS EARLIER ENCOUNTERED ON THE THAI SIDE. FOR EXAMPLE, WE WOULD CONSIDER AN APPEAL TO THAI NSC SEC GEN PRASONG FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF COORDINATION ON THE THAI SIDE, BUT IN ANY CASE WE WILL HAVE TO WAIT AS REF A CORRECTLY INDICATED, UNTIL A NEW GOVERNMENT IS IN PLACE TO GET CONSIDERED ATTENTION.

7. IT WOULD ALSO BE VERY HELPFUL TO US TO HAVE SOME EXPERT CONSULTATION ON WAYS TO GO WITH THE IFPA PROJECT. ALTHOUGH THE ACTIVITIES OF DRS. LUCE AND TOWNSEND (AND DR. WAGNER IN A DIFFERENT VEIN) HAVE

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BEEN CONSTRUCTIVE CONTRIBUTIONS, THE FUTURE WORK PLAN AND PROSPECTIVE RESULTS OF THE IFPA PROJECT IN THAILAND ARE STILL VAGUE. THIS HAS BEEN A TIME-CONSUMING BUSINESS AND THERE IS STILL NO OBVIOUS WAY TO INSTITUTIONALIZE THE EFFORT IF IT IS TO BE KEPT SEPARATE FROM THE USG HERE.

8. STEPPING BACK TO TAKE A BROADER LOOK AT OUR OWN EFFORT, WE WOULD RECALL SOME OF THE POINTS MADE OVER A YEAR AGO IN REF C WHICH SOUGHT MORE GUIDANCE TO HELP FOCUS OUR "VACUUM CLEANER" COLLECTION ACTIVITIES AND, INTER ALIA, SUGGESTED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SMALL TEAM OF EXPERTS TO GIVE FULL TIME ATTENTION TO THE ISSUE IN THE FIELD. WE CONTINUE TO GIVE HIGH PRIORITY TO THE SUBJECT, AND, AS THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, ONE DAO AND ONE POL OFFICER SPEND A CONSIDERABLE PROPORTION OF THEIR TIME ON CBW MATTERS. DR. TOWNSEND AND MS. CROSSLAND ALSO REMAIN ACTIVE IN THE SEARCH

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FOR SAMPLES AND INCIDENT REPORTS COMING OUT OF BOTH LAOS AND CAMBODIA.

9. NOTWITHSTANDING THE VERY HARD WORK AND IMPORTANT RESULTS ACHIEVED BY THIS COMBINATION OF EMBASSY AND PRIVATE EFFORTS, WE WOULD AS LAYMEN THINK THAT FULL-TIME EXPERT ATTENTION IS WARRANTED IN THE FIELD BY THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ISSUE. THE ANALOGY WE DREW IN REF C WAS TO THE JOINT CASUALTY RESOLUTION CENTER (JCRC) LIAISON OFFICE HERE WHICH IS FUNDED AND STAFFED WITH EXPERIENCED PERSONNEL WHO ARE FREED FROM THE PRESS OF OTHER DUTIES TO FOLLOW UP ON EVERY POW/MIA LEAD. IT SEEMS, FOR EXAMPLE, HIGHLY DESIRABLE TO PIN DOWN INTERVIEWEES TO ASSURE VERACITY AND AVOID SITUATIONS LIKE THE FALSE STARTS WITH PAVN DESERTERS WHO EVENTUALLY FAILED LIE DETECTOR TESTS AND THE LAO PILOT WHOSE TESTIMONY WAS QUESTIONABLE IN SOME ASPECTS. IT ALSO OCCURS TO US THAT USG

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RESOURCES COULD BE APPLIED ON FIELD RESEARCH TO ADDRESS SUCH QUESTIONS AS THE POSSIBILITY OF NATURAL OCCURRENCES OF MYCOTOXINS IN INDOCHINA TO BUILD UP DATA ON THIS FACTOR. ANOTHER POSSIBILITY WOULD BE TO RESEARCH THE HMONG ORAL HISTORY TRADITION TO ANALYZE CULTURAL FACTORS FOR CLUES TO SORTING OUT CONTRADICTIONARY FEATURES AND ENHANCE CREDIBILITY; STUDY ALONG THESE LINES WAS ONCE PROPOSED BY A USG OFFICER, NOW DECEASED, WHO HAD WORKED MANY YEARS WITH HMONG.

10. IN SUM, THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ISSUE CONTINUES TO SUGGEST TO US THAT WE SHOULD "THINK BIG" AND BRING MORE RESOURCES -- BOTH FUNDS AND EXPERTISE -- TO BEAR ON THE TASK IN THE FIELD. WE FIND REF A AND THE PROSPECT OF A VISIT BY DR. GREEN TO PROVIDE EXCELLENT BENCHMARKS FOR ASSESSING WHERE WE ARE AND EXPLORING

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WHERE WE CAN GO FROM HERE.

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