

ภาคผนวก ก .

บันทึกความเห็นสมเด็จพระยาคำรงราชานุภาพต่อพระยาگیลยา ณ ไทร เรื่องการปกครอง

ลงวันที่ ๑ สิงหาคม พ.ศ. ๒๕๖๔

(คัดจาก : กองจดหมายเหตุแห่งชาติ เอกสาร ร.๗ พ.๑.๓/๓๒ No. ๔๗

ส่วนพระองค์สมเด็จพระยาคำรงราชานุภาพ แผนกอภิรัฐมนตรี เรื่องบันทึกการปกครอง ๒๓ ก.ค. - ๑ ส.ค. ๒๕๖๔)

(ร่าง)

วังวรทศิ

วันที่ ๑ สิงหาคม พระพุทธศักราช ๒๕๖๔

ขอเคาะฝ่าละอองธุลีพระบาทปกเกล้าปกกระหม่อม

ข้าพระพุทธเจ้าขอพระราชทานขุดเกล้าฯ ถวายบันทึกความเห็นต่อพระยาگیลยา ณ ไทร มาพร้อมกับจดหมายฉบับนี้ตามรับสั่ง

ข้าพระพุทธเจ้าได้พยายามเรียงบันทึกในภาษาอังกฤษ เพื่อให้พระยาگیลยา ณ ไทรอ่านได้ทีเดียว มีคนมีผู้แปลให้ลำบาก แต่ความรู้ภาษาอังกฤษของข้าพระพุทธเจ้าคงไม่พอที่จะแต่งให้ถูกต้องตามไวยากรณ์ใดหมด ถึงกระนั้นหวังว่าจะพอให้พระยาگیลยา ณ ไทรเข้าใจความคิดเห็นของข้าพระพุทธเจ้าได้/.

ควรมิควรแล้วแต่จะทรงพระกรุณาโปรดเกล้าโปรดกระหม่อม ขอเคาะ.

MEMORANDUM

1. I have carefully read His Majesty's memorandum, as well as that of Phya Kalyan. I have nothing except endorsement to express regarding H.M.'s memorandum, but to P.K.'s memorandum, while admiring

the exposition of his views and agreeing to in some parts. I regret to find myself differ from him in others. But time allowed to formulate my answer is short, and the handicap in my case by having to express my views in English instead of Siamese, compels me to write only briefly. However the proposals made by P.K. in his memorandum are of two kinds, namely, proposal on matters to be promulgated immediately and proposal on matters to be given further consideration. I will only comment on the former.

2. The most important proposal, as it seems to me, is to change the system of administration of the Kingdom by the appointment of a Prime Minister with the power of selection and dismissal of ministers of state, and with the sole power to formulate policy and direct the administrations of the Kingdom, subject of course to the consent of the King and the shadow of a control by the Supreme Council of State. I am bound to admit my limitations both in the studies and the knowledge of the administrations of European countries. My impression is that a Prime Minister is indispensable in parliamentary government, but in a country where absolute monarchy prevails such as, for example, Russia, Turkey and Persia, the system did not seem to do much good without a strong monarch, nor indeed able to save a weak monarch from his ruin. But I repeat again that I do not consider myself competent to judge matters of European nature, so I will confine my comment entirely to what I think would effect Siam and the Siamese.

3. First of all I will consider the general impressions that it would likely make in the country, because a Prime Minister such as proposed by P.K., or, indeed, a Prime Minister in the European sense, is an unknown functionary in Siam, and to create one is an innovation that would naturally give rise to all sorts of conjectures. Plausible explanation may of course be written in the decree, but would it be possible to convince the people? The fact that the King has appointed another person, whom they do not respect as much as the King himself, to govern the country in his stead, will most naturally make them ask, Why? Is it because the King does not care to do the work as a King should do, or that the Supreme Council seeing that the King is too weak to rule, persuaded him to appoint a Prime Minister? In either case the authority and the prestige of the King would suffer in the eyes of the people. The innovation may be applauded by some Westernized Siamese, but how many are they comparing with the whole people of Siam? In short, I am of opinion that the innovation would create a general unfavourable impression in the country. One must not forget that general impression means much in this country, as it has already proved by the result of H.M.'s first act in creating the Supreme Council of State.

4. I will now consider the likely effect that the innovation would take upon the ruling class, taking the effect already seen by the creation of the S.C.S. as a standard of judgement. It would in all probability create 3 kinds of sentiment, i.e.,

(A) Those who applaud and willing to support the innovation, either by conviction, or by allowing loyalty to the King to override their conviction, and those who applaud because they expect personal benefit from it.

(B) Those who are indifferent and scepticle, either because they have no interest of their own to concern, or being opportunists simply awaiting to profit themselves out of whatever result it may bring.

(C) Those who oppose it either by their own conviction, or by personal jealousy, or having profit of interest to loose by the innovation.

In fact no matter what system of government is adopted it can never give universal satisfaction, and there bound to be divisions of sentiment something similar to what I have said. The only thing to be hoped for is that the proportion of favourable sentiment be the majority, which I do not think would be the case in the appointment of a Prime Minister as proposed.

5. H.M. rightly stated in his memorandum that he has received deplorable inheritance when he ascended the Throne, because the authority of the sovereign had fallen much in respect and confidence, the treasury was on the verge of bankruptcy, and the government was corrupted and the services more or less in confusion. It was the master's stroke of H.M. in the creation of the S.C.S. immediately after his accession that instantly restored the general confidence in the Throne. Now let us look at the composition and the working

of the S.C.S. The Council is a committee of five persons of repute and experience preside always by the King in person, and every resolution passed in the Council is executed by the King alone, no member of the Council is ever mentioned in any act, nor has any of them interfered with the work of ministerial departments, and yet accusations are not wanting, that the Council has usurped H.M.'s authority and power, and also trying to interfere with the ministerial responsibility. I am glad indeed that H.M. himself refuted these accusations in his memorandum. But the fact that mischievous accusations are capable of being made against a Council of five persons (perhaps I may be allowed to call of high repute) is enough to make one realise what difficulties a Prime Minister alone would have to face against all sorts of intrigue, while on the other hand he is being held responsible for the good administration of the country. Here one discerns the necessity which may arise that a Prime Minister would be obliged to resort to stratagems, good or bad in order to keep his position or otherwise throw up his appointment altogether.

6. Now I com to the person and the responsibility of the Prime Minister. No doubt H.M. will select the best qualified person in the Kingdom as his first Prime Minister, and let us presume that the selection meets with unlvrsal approval. The first impression created by the appointment of the Prime Minister would be that he is expected to improve the administration in such a way that will give entire satisfaction to the public. Should he fail to realise



general expectations however unreasonable, he would always stand to have censures heap upon his head which would make it extremely difficult for a Prime Minister to maintain the public confidence for any length of time. Moreover the Prime Minister, the however wise and able he may be, has to carry on his work with the approval of the King as well as loyal support and competent assistance of the ministers of state. How is he to be assured of it? It is indeed proposed that the Prime Minister should have the power of removal and selection of ministers. But such powers have always been considered to belong to the King alone, and considered to be the mainstay against personal intrigue of others. It will be a great difference between the King exercising those powers in the S.C.S., and permitting the Prime Minister to exercise them with his approval. If the King's own backstair is considered obnoxious, what would it be to have another one of the Prime Minister? Let us suppose that nothing I have said would happen. Now if the Premier considers one or more ministers of state incompetent, who would he select to replace them? Naturally he would select those whom he has confidence in ability as well loyalty towards him. Here we may discern the element of party government introduced into Siam but without parliamentary control, such element could easily tends to be a government by faction.

7. The relation between the Sovereign and the Prime Minister is also most important and most delicate matter. It would be utopian to expect that the King and the Prime Minister would always see eye to eye, or indeed that every Prime Minister would have the

same degree of favour and confidence of the King. If the King wants to dismiss a Prime Minister, he would have to find convincing reason for so doing, but in the absence of parliament who is to furnish the convincing reason that protects H.M.'s decision from being considered unjust and arbitrary? The dismissed Prime Minister naturally would not proclaim his own faults, and he, being a great man, may have more or less admirers who agree with him, and here we see the element of official opposition being introduced into Siam, and again without parliamentary control. But the worse would happen when the King wants to dismiss a Prime Minister and he has the general support of the people, even in Bangkok alone.

8. There is another thing which in Siam is still different from European countries where the system of government by Prime Minister existed. In a country like England or France where government changes according to the will of parliament, or even Russia in the old days when ministers were often changed according to the will of the Monarch, in those countries they have organised departments of Civil Service in which the permanent officials run the work, the minister only directs the policy; so a change of a minister does not effect the works of the department. Now in Siam, at present at any rate, and I am of opinion that for some time to come yet, the minister is the backbone of the ministry he presides. The organisation as well as the work of a department are still visibly effected by the competency of the minister. That is why even without constant changes of the minister it is difficult to

find a real competent man as head of a ministerial department. If a ministerial post becomes unpermanent before a thorough organisation is made in the ministries in the same way as in European countries, I am afraid local discipline will also break down, because in stead of looking to one chief all the time, speculation as to a coming chief would constantly arise. It may be argued that the Prime Minister is expected to cure all those imperfections, but from the nature of things existing in this country as aforesaid, can one man do it? It may be argued again that the answer could be known only if we give the idea a trial. But why run the risk of a trial for the sake of an idea when there is no necessity.

9. I do not wish it to be understood that I think parliamentary government and the system of government by having a Prime Minister are for ever unfit for Siam. I only maintain that both are unfit and undesirable in the condition and circumstances which now exist in Siam, and the result would be disastrous even if the system of government by a Prime Minister alone is adopted now. What Siam urgently wants at the present moment is to remedy the evils existed before H.M. come to the Throne, and to organise an efficient administration of the Kingdom before anything else. In this respect H.M. himself has done a great act, which can never be overpraised, by the creation of the S.C.S., and himself working with it loyally and arduously with the satisfactory results, that confidence in the Government has been re-established, and the national budget balanced,



and put a stop to official embezzlement and irregularities by removing undesirables from offices and putting in competent men to do the work of reorganisation of the administrations. One should not forget that all the good works accomplished by H.M. was done within the last ten months, and there are many more works to be done, and "Rome was not built in a day". Even if the innovation is introduced I doubt whether it can accomplish more rapidly, not to say, or better. I am an old man and may be considered naturally conservative, but with sincere conviction I beg leave to ask that what fault or drawback the present system has shown, so as to endanger the safety or retard the progress of Siam, if it is allowed to continue? Is there any apparent and convincing necessity which requires radical modification? • If the benefit of the present system is found to exist no longer or has been compromised, I do not think any member of the S.C.S. would hesitate to remedy it even with its own desolution, but if the S.C.S. is still considered useful, I beg to warn that the appointment of a Prime Minister as proposed, and no matter what the proposal may provide for the S.C.S., is bound to be extinguish in so far as its usefulness is concerned even within the life - time of the old men who now serve in it.

10. H.M. has done me a great and gratifying honour by mentioning my name in his memorandum among the first and firm supporters of his idea in the creation of the S.C.S. I did so because I was absolutely convinced that such council alone would be practicable for the successful administration of Siam under the present circumstances. If I remember rightly I have also expressed my opinion to

H.M. even then, that I do not think a system of government by Prime Minister would do in Siam. I was therefore a sort of pride and satisfaction to me to see the results of H.M.'s creation of the S.C.S., because it made me feel that I was not wrong in giving him my support, and I wish H.M. to know that it was a real pleasure to me when sitting in the Council to see and feel that everyone of its members from the King downwards discard all personal ambitions and work together solely for the benefit of Siam.

11. As regards the impracticability of having a parliamentary government in Siam till the people are sufficiently educated to understand their responsibility in the election, I entirely agree with P.K. and think that he is absolutely right. I would only add that either when the institution of the S.C.S. is found wanting in usefulness, or when the time approaches that H.M. is considering the creation of the parliamentary government, then the question of government by Prime Minister should be taken up for consideration.

12. As regards making municipal institution, the starting point for representative government I need not comment in this memorandum, because it was also a subject which I agreed with and supported H.M.'s idea before he came to the Throne just the same as I have supported his idea of the creation of the S.C.S.

1st. August 1926