

# THE AMERICAN FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISERS IN THAILAND, 1917-1940

by

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In 1917, the office of 'General-Adviser', which had been the most important functionary in Thailand since the beginning of the 20th Century, was changed to that of 'the Adviser in Foreign Affairs'. Assurances were made by the Thai Minister for Foreign Affairs that no change in the duties or responsibilities of the office was contemplated by the Thai Government, and that the power, influence and prestige of the new office would remain the same.<sup>1</sup> However, in practice, the advisership was reduced considerably in importance. This was a blow to the prestige of the American General-Advisers since only Americans had held this chief position for nearly twenty years.<sup>2</sup>

As the matter stood, the idea of limiting the activities of the incumbent of this office to advise only on foreign affairs instead of all state functions was the result of the growing nationalist movement in Thailand which aimed at the ultimate exclusion of foreigners from government service. Since the beginning of the reign of King Rama VI (1910-1925) it was an idea among the Thais that executive direction had to be wholly Thai, and an open feeling existed in official circles of

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- 1) Report of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Siam 1910-1929, Microfilm no. 729, Roll 6 (Hereafter cited as *US Archives 729/6*) United States Archives, no. 829. oia/23 Hornibrook-Secretary of State, March 3, 1916.
- 2) See Thamsook Numnonda, "The First American Advisers in Thai History". *Journal of the Siam Society*, Vol. 62, Part 2, July 1974, pp. 121-148.

"Siam for the Siamese".<sup>3</sup> The King himself led the fight for Siamization. In his writing, which he took as a hobby, His Majesty insisted that better use should be made of Thais who had received their education in Europe, and enquired what was the value of education in Thailand itself if the people of the country "are not to be anything but underlings."<sup>4</sup> In fact from 1915 onwards, there was a gradual transfer of foreigners from executive posts to positions as advisers where it too often appeared that their advice was either unsought or neglected. The Thai Government also displaced advisers and other persons of foreign nationality in the employment of the government as soon as qualified Thais, trained abroad, were available to fill their places. Sir Edward Grey, the British Parliamentary Secretary, summed up the general attitude of the Thais as follows :

Young and old are imbued with a sense of nationalism and a great pride in everything Siamese. They all desire to see Siam admired, respected and if possible feared. They all look forward at any rate in theory, to the day when every vesting of foreign control will have disappeared from the land....<sup>5</sup>

The role of the American as General-Adviser was hit hard. It suffered not only Thai criticism but also interference from other Legations in Bangkok, especially the British, to abolish the post.<sup>6</sup> At the same time the State Department at home acted indifferently towards the wave of anti-foreignism. It made it clear to the American Legation in Bangkok on the subject of the employment of American advisers by the Thai Government that the State Department was reluctant to take any steps in the direction which might in the remotest way be interpreted

3) US Archives Microfilm no. 729 Roll 3, 892.00/50 Edward E. Brodie-The Secretary of State, August 24, 1922.

4) Foreign Office Paper, Public Record Office, London, File 371 (Hereafter cited as F.O. 371) no. 2464, Crosby-Sir Edward Grey, May 11, 1915. Mr. Crosby referred to the Article 'Clogs on Our Wheels' written by King Vajiravudh. See also the *Siam Observer*, April 22, 1915.

5) F.O. 371/9250, Grey-Curzon, August 8, 1923.

6) US Archives 729/6, Edward E. Brodie-Secretary of State, May 25, 1922.

as bringing pressure to bear to obtain such appointments.<sup>7</sup> In 1916, J.I. Westengard, then American General-Adviser, himself recommended the proposed change of status in the office of the General-Adviser. Consequently, the importance of American General-Advisership was reduced to Adviser in Foreign Affairs according to the recommendations made by Mr. Hornibrook, the American Consul in Bangkok, but the office was still occupied by an American.<sup>8</sup>

The American Foreign Advisers serving the Thai Government, from 1917 until the outbreak of the Second World War in 1940, were Eldon R. James, Francis B. Sayre, Courtenay Crocker, Raymond Bartlett Stevens and Frederick R. Dolbeare. The tenures of office varied. Professor James had five years from 1918 to 1923. Dr. Sayre spent less than one year in Bangkok and took almost two years to perform several important diplomatic missions in Europe for the Thai Government. Crocker's tenure lasted only two years (1924-1925). In fact during the last year of Dr. Sayre's service, there were two Advisers in Foreign Affairs, one in Europe on special duty and the other in Bangkok. Stevens stayed nine years (1926-1935) and Dolbeare about five (1935-1940).

What was striking was the fact that all these Foreign Advisers possessed notable qualifications. Dr. James was a graduate of Harvard Law School, and had been Professor of the Universities of Wisconsin and Minnesota and Dean of the Law School of the University of Missouri.<sup>9</sup> Dr. Sayre was an Assistant Professor of Law at Harvard University and son-in-law to President Wilson,<sup>10</sup> the latter qualification being perhaps his chief claim to distinction.<sup>11</sup> Crocker, at 42 years old still young for the position, was also a graduate of the Harvard Law School, a member of the Massachusetts State Legislature, a member of the Civil Service Commission of Massachusetts, and Associate Counsel

7) US Archives 729/6, 829. oia/50 Curtis Williams—Secretary of State, November 16, 1921.

8) US Archives 729/6, Edward E. Brodie—Secretary of State, May 25, 1922.

9) F.O. 371/3364, Derring—A.J. Balfour, March 4, 1918.

10) US Archives 729/6, Brodie—Secretary of State, November 22, 1923.

11) F.O. 371/10346, F 4/4/40, Grey-Curzon, November 27, 1923.

US Archives 729/6, 892. oia/80, Dickson—Secretary of State, May 27, 1924.

of the Trust National Bank of Boston. He was also President of the Foreign Policy Association of Massachusetts and actively associated with the World Peace Foundation.<sup>12</sup> Stevens, another Harvard Law School graduate was a member of the Legislature of the State of New Hampshire for four sessions 1909, 1911, 1913, 1923, a member of the U.S. Congress, 1913-1914, a Counsel to the Federal Trade Commission, a Commissioner of the United States Shipping Board and a United States delegate on the Allied Maritime Transport Council.<sup>13</sup> Dolbeare was a graduate of Yale and Columbia Law School, the first break in Harvard's role. He had served with the State Department from 1915 to 1928 in various capacities at Vienna, Bern, Paris, Warsaw, Berlin, London, Ottawa and Istanbul before joining the J. Henry Schroder banking firm.

Thai Government officials appointed each adviser solely on the basis of merit. The American Government did not directly participate. Contact appeared to have been between certain Thai Princes and such American individuals as Dean Pound of the Harvard Law School and former American advisers.

In 1917, prior to his resignation as Adviser in Foreign Affairs, Pitkin recommended 45-years old Eldon James. James was also recommended by J.I. Westengard, the former General-Adviser. The Thai Minister in Washington interviewed James and recommended him for his 'unusually pleasant manner... likely to take with our people...' <sup>14</sup> though he was not quite satisfied in his own mind that James was really properly qualified for the position. The Minister thought that the candidate should not only be well versed in International Law but also should have experience in governmental affairs, and James apparently lacked this.<sup>15</sup>

In connection with the appointment in 1923 of Dr. Sayre, James was asked to nominate his own successor. He, however, had no one in mind for the position, and suggested to Prince Devawongse, the Thai

12) *Bangkok Times*, Adviser in Foreign Affairs communique, June 23, 1924.

13) F.O. 371/12535, Waterlow-Sir Austen Chamberlain, January 28, 1927.

14) US Archives 729/6, 892. oia/34, Ingersoll-the Secretary of State, January 11, 1918.

15) *Ibid.*

Foreign Minister, that he apply to Pitkin, his immediate predecessor.<sup>16</sup> But the Prince was not sympathetic to the suggestion. The Thai Government then instructed Phya Prabha Karawongse, the Thai Minister in Washington, to communicate with Dean Pound of Harvard Law School with respect to a likely candidate. Pound recommended Francis B. Sayre as 'none could be better fitted for the place'.<sup>17</sup> Mr. Sayre's appointment was originally for one year, which seemed to be the maximum time he could be spared from the work of the Law School. As for Crocker, who succeeded Sayre, he was appointed as Adviser after consultation between the Thai Minister in Washington and Dr. James.<sup>18</sup>

In 1925 when Crocker's term came to an end, Prince Traidos, the Thai Foreign Minister, asked Sayre and James, together with Phya Buri Navarasth, the Thai Minister in Washington, to find 'a good impression man'.<sup>19</sup> Sayre reported that after innumerable interviews he had discovered a 'large calibre man', Raymond B. Stevens, who was known for 'his broad experience, great ability in transacting public affairs, wide and very human sympathy, his altogether likeable personality...' According to Sayre, James heartily concurred.<sup>20</sup>

In 1935, Stevens was commissioned to find his own successor. After consultations with Sayre, then Assistant Secretary of State, and Luang Dithakar Bhakti, the Thai Minister in Washington, he recommended Frederick Dolbeare, 'a man desirable for adviser, . . . of varied and valuable experience representative abroad, . . . a good personality, and seems acceptable in every way'.<sup>21</sup> Sayre agreed.

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16) US Archives 729/6, 892. oia/67, Brodie—Secretary of State, March 7, 1923.

17) Foreign Ministry Archives, Bangkok, Thailand, File Miscellaneous, The employment of foreigners. (Hereafter cited as FM) no. 7/6290, Telegram, Phya Buri—Prince Traidos, July 18, 1923.

18) US Archives 729/6, 892. oia/79, Dickson—Secretary of State, May 26, 1924.

19) FM. Copy no. 44/68, Cablegram, Prince Traidos—Siamese Minister in Washington, November 19, 1925.

20) US Archives 729/6, 892. oia/93, Dickson—Secretary of State, December 5, 1925.

21) FM. no. 3015, Telegram, Luang Dithakar Bhakti—State Counciller, July 8, 1935.

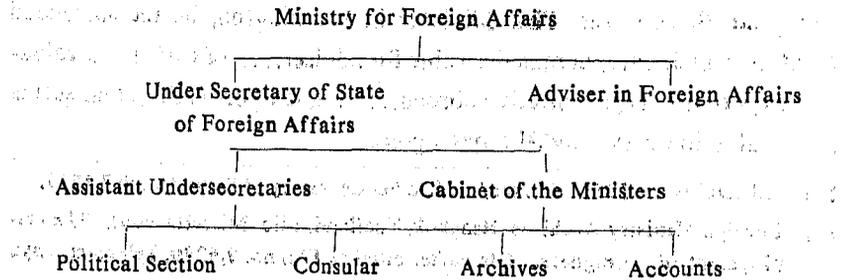
## II

After 1917 the American Advisers in Foreign Affairs still played a useful and important role in Thailand's international politics, though the powers were more limited. The duties were strictly advisory, technical and were not supposed to involve keeping in personal touch with the Foreign Legations.<sup>22</sup> The office itself was reduced to a branch in the Foreign Ministry with a staff of ten or twelve young Thai diplomats.<sup>23</sup> However, as just mentioned, the Advisers were still influential. The best general description of the function of Adviser is contained in the letter which James sent to King Vajiravudh and Prince Devawongse in 1918.

..... When I saw Mr. Westengard at his home during February, 1918, he told me that my great duty would be to work for the maintenance of the independence of Siam. This appealed to me as a task of the most inspiring character and worthy of my best endeavours and, accordingly, I came out filled with enthusiasm at the prospect of becoming one of the very distinguished line of American advisers in the service of His Majesty's Government...<sup>24</sup>

22) F.O. 371/10346, F 4/4/40, Grey-Curzon, November 27, 1923.

23) The Chart of Division of Responsibility of Ministry for Foreign Affairs :



See US Archives 729/6, Division of Responsibility of Ministry for Foreign Affairs undated.

During the time of Sayre he had the office at Sapan Yose with the staff of three Assistants and the necessary stenographers. See, Francis B. Sayre, *Glad Adventure*, (New York, MacMillan, 1957), p. 90.

24) Eldon James Papers, Harvard Law School Library, James-Prince Devawongse, April, 1919.

The most striking accomplishment of the Advisers in Foreign Affairs was the revision of the treaties Thailand signed with the Western nations from the 1850's to the 1880's. As is known, a great obstacle to Thailand's progress in those days lay in those 'unequal' treaties. In pressing for revision of the obsolete treaties, the Thai Government emphasized the most important question, namely that of the abolition of the system of extraterritoriality by which the nationals of the treaty powers were responsible only to their own laws and subject to the jurisdiction of their Consuls in Thailand. By agreements with France in 1907 and with England in 1909, the exercise of such extraterritorial jurisdiction over French and British nationals was in large part done away with under certain conditions and guarantees.<sup>25</sup>

In 1920 Dr. James, the Adviser in Foreign Affairs and the Thai Government, through its Minister in Washington, proposed to negotiate with the American Government a new treaty of Commerce and Friendship doing away with the restrictions imposed upon Thailand by the old treaties, and also doing away with the corresponding restrictions which Thailand had placed upon the residence and trade of foreigners.<sup>26</sup>

As a matter of fact, tentative negotiations for such a treaty were begun as far back as 1910 but no real progress was made until 1915 and 1916 when the negotiations reached a stage where it seemed likely that they would be brought to an early conclusion. The First World War, however, suddenly brought an end to the negotiations and they were not renewed until the Peace Conference at Paris. A preliminary Conference was held between American officers there and the Thai Delegates to the Peace Conference. Active negotiations were renewed in Washington in March, 1920 on the return from Paris of the Thai Minister accompanied

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25) See Thamsook Numnonda, *Anglo-Thai Negotiations 1900-1909*, Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, University of London, 1966.

26) Records of the Department of the State Relating to the Political Relations between Siam and the United States 1910-1929, Microfilm no. 730, United States Archives, (Hereafter Cited as US Archives 730), 711. 923/135, March 21, 1920, Memorandum on Present Status of Proposals for the Revision of Treaties with Siam.

by Dr. James who insisted on carrying out the 'inspiring task' of working for 'the maintenance of Thailand's independence'.<sup>27</sup>

The main point of discussion was the wish of the Thai Government to obtain a treaty which would define a certain period after which the enjoyment of American extraterritorial rights in Thailand should cease entirely. James pressed hard. He demanded a fixed definite date for the termination of all extraterritorial jurisdiction, preferably on the date of the promulgation of all the Thai Codes: namely the penal code, the codes of procedure, the civil and commercial codes, and the law for the organization of the courts. Prior to such termination, the Thai Government was willing to agree that legal proceedings against Americans be tried in Thai Courts with the understanding that any case pending before the court of the first instance or the court of appeal might be evoked. That is to say, the case could be taken out of the hands of the Thai courts and disposed of by the Consular Court or the American Minister. This would supersede, for the transition period, the practice of trying such cases solely before American Consuls and the American Minister. The important point James was making was that the absolute termination of such jurisdictional rights would be on a definite date.<sup>28</sup>

The question next in importance was that of fiscal autonomy. Thailand was bound by treaty to fixed *ad valorem* import and export tariffs,—the import duty being established at the preposterously low rate of three percent.

After months of discussion the treaty was signed on December 15, 1920 defining the following important points:

First, extraterritoriality in Thailand was abolished, but the right of evocation in all legal proceedings for a period of five years was preserved.

Second, full fiscal autonomy was granted to Thailand. Thailand had the right, to impose any tariff she pleased against American goods,

27) See Peter B. Oblas, "A Very Small Part of World Affairs", Siam's Policy on Treaty Revision and the Paris Peace Conference," *Journal of the Siam Society*, July 1971, Vol, 59, Part 2, pp. 51-74.

28) US Archives 730, Memorandum Regarding the Proposed Surrender of Jurisdiction Over American Citizens and American Concerns in Siam, June 7, 1920,

provided that all the other Treaty Powers agreed to similar provisions without compensations or price.

Third, the treaty of 1856 was abrogated, and the new treaty was made terminable after ten years by either party upon giving one year's notice. A clause provided that its termination should not have the effect of reviving any of the former treaties abrogated by the new one.

The treaty was of epoch-making importance for Thailand. She was at last freed from the old extraterritorial restrictions. America demanded and received no compensation whatsoever. The success and assistance of Dr. James in pushing through the treaty were invaluable. King Vajiravudh remarked:

.....The new treaty is in effect an assurance of justice given to us by the United States of America and, on that account, it marks the initial success of our efforts towards the revision of the old Treaties which constitute an obstacle to the advancement of our policy and it leads us to hope that all the Great Powers will ultimately help to rid us from such obstacle in the same generous spirit...<sup>29</sup>

And in a personal letter to James:

I know—none better—with what loyalty and zeal you have carried out your onerous duties, and that you have done so with that wholeheartedness and honesty of purpose which I have learnt to respect—and have ever found—in the best type of your compatriots. I therefore feel sure that you will continue to give us of your best...<sup>30</sup>

After the American treaty of 1920, James then advised the Thai Government on negotiations with the other Western powers, but, up to almost the end of 1923, when he turned the office over to Dr. Sayre, the discussions bogged down. England was the most troublesome and

29) *Bangkok Times*, January 3, 1922.

30) Quoted in Kenneth T. Young, "The Special Role of American Advisers in Thailand 1902-1949" *Asia*, (New York. no. 14, Spring, 1969), p. 28.

the most difficult to deal with. She would not go beyond the treaty that she had made with Thailand in 1909. And Thailand had no more territory to give away. Thailand realized that until she could succeed in separately persuading England, France, Italy, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Spain and Portugal each to give up its fiscal rights voluntarily without any compensation, the country had to be sadly bound by the rights of extraterritoriality in addition to the old three percent tariff restriction. The problem of how to induce ten European nations, some of whom had very substantial commercial interests in Thailand, to give away their rights for nothing seemed insoluble. In spite of the American treaty, Thailand seemed from a practical viewpoint no nearer her goal than before.<sup>31</sup>

Experience had shown, however, that Thailand failed repeatedly in her efforts to persuade European Powers to surrender their existing rights through representatives in Bangkok. The force of local prejudice and the unavoidable lack of understanding on the part of the ordinary and routine methods of negotiations could end only in failure. If success were possible it could come only through direct, personal work in Europe. Accordingly, King Vajiravudh decided to send a representative on a roving commission to Europe to visit, one after another, the European Foreign Offices with special instructions with reference to the elimination of extraterritorial rights and to complete fiscal autonomy for Thailand.

The King's choice was Dr. Sayre who in 1924 had to leave Thailand after his one year's service as Foreign Adviser in order to join his family which had left earlier for health reasons.

After two years of extensive travels, ceaseless energy and superb diplomatic tact, Dr. Sayre was able to sign treaties with France, England, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Belgium and Italy.<sup>32</sup> All these treaties involved the surrender of extraterritoriality and in

31) See Francis B. Sayre, "Siam's Fight for Sovereignty", *Atlantic Monthly*, November, 1927 and "The Passing of Extraterritoriality in Siam", *American Journal of International Law*, January, 1928.

32) The dates of the signature of the Treaties are as follows:

United States Treaty	December 16, 1920
Japanese Treaty	March 10, 1924

the case of England, the modification of the guarantees set up in the treaty of 1909, and the recognition of Thailand's claim to the control of her customs tariff, according to the model of the American and Japanese treaties of 1920 and 1924.<sup>33</sup>

With the ratification of the Belgium treaty—the last one in the series—in 1927, Thailand was free, both from extraterritoriality and the three per cent tariff after seventy years of hardship. At long last the great diplomatic task of this American Foreign Adviser, set for him by the King of Thailand, was accomplished. One observer wrote in 1927 about Sayre's negotiations:

It was tremendously thrilling. One felt the tense moments of suspense and despair and ever the urge that would not admit defeat. It is heartening in this age of materialism rampant on the face of things, to find that the higher appeal, backed by a common sense program, and a sincerity and enthusiasm of service for another which was above price, found a hearing and support from the sophisticated diplomats of the Old World. ... As for yourself (Sayre), the marvel is how you stood the "gaff", the swiftly changing scenes, in each of which, alone you had to match minds with the

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French Treaty	February 14, 1925
Netherlands Treaty	June 8, 1925
British Treaty	July 14, 1925
Spanish Treaty	August 3, 1925
Portuguese Treaty	August 14, 1925
Danish Treaty	September 1, 1925
Swedish Treaty	December 19, 1925
Italian Treaty	May 9, 1926
Belgian Treaty	July 13, 1926
Norwegian Treaty	July 16, 1926

- 33) US Archives 729/6, 892. oia/79, Dickson-Secretary of State, May 26, 1924.  
 US Archives 729/6, 892. oia/83, Brodie-Secretary of State, July 21, 1924.  
 US Archives Microfilm no. 731, 729.00/5, F.A. Sterling-Secretary of State, March 11, 1925.  
 US Archives 731, 729.00/8, Brodie-Secretary of State, April 8, 1925.  
 792.00/9, no. 727 Dickson-Secretary of State June 26, 1925.  
 792.00/11, Dickson-Secretary of State, September 4, 1925.

trained cunning of Europe...I should think you would find the life of even a Harvard Law Professor a bit tame after such an experience.<sup>34</sup>

Other admirers wrote :

To have helped a small country free itself from the octopus tentacles of self-seeking Powers is not only great merit in you, but also through you, great credit to America...<sup>35</sup>

And

... As lovers of Siam we ask that you will accept our most hearty thanks for your labors on Siam's behalf..... Your work is a remarkable account of a wonderful series of successes in accomplishing most difficult tasks... This great service to Siam places you forever in the list of her greatest benefactors and her people and all her friends will not forget you.<sup>36</sup>

After Sayre, the Thai Government continued to employ Americans, Stevens and Dolbeare, as Advisers in Foreign Affairs until the approach of the Second World War in the Pacific in 1940. However, their normal duties in assisting in the revision of the foreign treaties became less significant. Also it appeared that American prestige in Thailand underwent a gradual decline from 1931 to 1940. On the other hand, Thai-Japanese relations were growing more and more cordial, and Japanese prestige was rising, this, too, until 1941 when the Japanese army occupied Thailand.

The American Foreign Adviser took up his important assignment once again in 1933 corresponding to Thailand's putting into effect the full battery of modern legal codes required by the Powers. Through this Thailand wished to base her commercial relations on modern treaties, to safeguard her national economy from foreign domination as well as to

34) The Papers of Francis Bowes Sayre, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division (Hereafter cited as *Sayre Papers*), Subject File Box 1, George Thompson-Sayre, April 22, 1927.

35) Sayre Papers, Box 1, A.H. Leonowens-Sayre, December 6, 1927.

36) Sayre Papers, Box 1, McKean (Chiang Mai Hospital, and Dispensary)-Sayre, March 10, 1928.

obtain formal recognition of the final extinction of extrality. In 1933, Pridi Phanomyong, the Thai Foreign Minister, together with Stevens and later on with Dolbeare, began to negotiate the new treaties which were completed in 1937. America took the lead as always. She signed the treaty with Thailand in 1937 and other powers took similar action in the months that followed.

The American-Thai treaty of 1937 covered matters of entry, residence, and movement of nationals of each country in the territory of the other country ; it stipulated with a few exceptions, most-favoured-nation treatment in commercial matters, and provided for national treatment of shipping. It also contained provisions respecting the rights, functions and jurisdiction of consular officers.<sup>37</sup>

The treaty of 1937 completely replaced the treaty of 1920. Thailand was enormously pleased to have regained full and explicit sovereignty through this, and she was grateful to America and to the helping role of the American Foreign Advisers for the unselfish part they played. This was exemplified in the remark of M.R. Seni Pramoj, the Thai Ambassador, upon presenting his credentials to President Roosevelt in 1940 :

For my own part, I beg to mention the sympathy and support which the United States have manifested toward my country, in both her past and her recent successful efforts to obtain full and complete autonomy through treaty negotiations, have ingrained in me a pious sense of gratitude...<sup>38</sup>

Besides the active part in treaty revisions, all American Foreign Advisers also had roles in other internal affairs. In fact, they were active in every step taken by the Thai Government in carrying out the King's programme of advance. For example, Sayre saw the King constantly and worked with His Majesty in furthering the royal plans for Thai progress. In 1926, soon after King Rama VII came to the throne, Dr. Sayre submitted a memorandum in reply to the King's questions concern-

37) US Archives, File 711. 922/172, Department of State, For the Press, October 7, 1938.

38) *The Department of State, Bulletin VII*, p. 716.

ing the Thai political situation. He gave some wise suggestions on principles of succession to the throne, the work of government, the appointment of Prime Minister, the authority of the Supreme Council, the creation of a Legislative Council, and the general situation of financial affairs. He even proposed a preliminary draft of a short Constitution which was supposed to be the framework of the Government as discussed by him. This was the first and most precise Constitution ever mentioned in Thailand's history of administration. It consisted of 12 articles, investing supreme powers in the King with the assistance of a Premier and a Cabinet.<sup>39</sup>

Stevens was also consulted in all matters including retrenchment and taxation. In 1929 he was believed to be on the Constitution Drafting Committee but the work was called off by the Supreme Council since it was agreed that the time was not yet ripe for Thailand to introduce a Constitutional Monarchy. Dolbeare, the last adviser before the World War, was active in the Thai Farmer assistance programme since he was an expert on American legislation on the subject.

### III

It is interesting to note that friendship existed fondly between the American advisers and the Thais. Most advisers regarded Thailand as their 'home'. Their length of tenure was, of course, the key to this success. As has been earlier mentioned, James' term was some five years, Sayre about three, Crocker's two years was short and less successful, Stevens spent nine years and Dolbeare five years. In considering the fact that Americans nowadays have only two years in Thailand and many advisers only a year, we should recall Prince Devawongse's statement in 1923 that :

39) National Archives, Fine Arts Department, Bangkok, 7th Reign, File B. (บันทึก) 1.3/32 no. 47, Prince Damrong's Private Papers, Supreme Council Section, Memorandum on Administration, July 23-August 1, 1926. King Rama VII's Memo on Administration to Francis B. Sayre, July 23, 1926. Memo of Sayre on Administration to King Rama VII, July 27, 1926. For further details, please see the supplementary notes,

We Siamese will like the man who knows us well and whom we have full confidence and worked together for a length of time than a new man, who will be new to everything in Siam.<sup>40</sup>

It is most difficult to compare the accomplishment of these advisers. Each was notable in his own way. James was a highly capable adviser, straight-forward, trusted, honourable and liked by the Thais from the King down.<sup>41</sup> Prince Devawongse once wrote to him :

Your assistance to me is most precious... without your most valuable assistance I could hardly accomplish the duties which devolved upon me... I sincerely believe that the Royal Siamese Government really want a man like you who can be trusted to advise them on the spot whenever any question of foreign affairs might crop up at any time, and you can well imagine for yourself that when they desire a very sound and impartial advice in foreign affairs, to whom can they call upon to do in Siam?... I am perfectly satisfied with you in every way and I know of nobody who is dissatisfied with your service in Siam... I really want you to be in Siam as long as we could persuade you to do so...<sup>42</sup>

When James resigned and went back to America in 1923 to take his post at Harvard University, his departure was deeply felt among the Thai officials.

Friendship between Sayre and Thailand was most striking. The Thais are very appreciative of his work and have been most commendatory of his diligence and faithfulness in the performance of his duties. In fact, Sayre certainly made himself popular from the time of his arrival and was the recipient of unusual marks of confidence and favour on the part of the King.<sup>43</sup> In appreciation of his efforts for Thailand Sayre was given a Thai noble title—Phya and granted the official name of 'Phya Kalyan Maitri' meaning 'Phya the Beloved Friend'. He was also awarded

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40) F.M. Prince Devawongse—James, March 2, 1923.

41) US Archives 729/6, 892. oia/36, Ingersoll—Secretary of State, May 27, 1918.

42) Eldon James Papers, Prince Devawongse—Eldon James, March 29, 1919.

43) F.O. 371/10351, Grey—Ramsay Macdonald, June 27, 1924.

the Grand Cross of the Crown of Thailand, including permanent appointment as Minister Plenipotentiary for Thailand and as Thailand's representative on the Hague Permanent Court of Arbitration.

Sayre himself retained a deep affection for the country and often said that next to his own country, America, his greatest love was for Thailand.<sup>44</sup> He had made a lot of real friends among the Thais from the King down. Mrs. Elizabeth B. Sayre, apparently his mother, who visited Thailand in 1931 made the following remark :

The name of Sayre is one to conjure with in Bangkok from Prince to peasant, hotel coolies and railroad clerks, I have never felt so important in my life!<sup>45</sup>

Sayre was kept informed and took a keen interest in affairs of Thailand until his recent death in 1971. During this long period he remained a wise and altogether impartial friend. Whenever the Thai Government faced difficult problems they could turn to him for sage and sound advice. In other words, Thailand always found in him a rock of strength to lean on. His longtime and regular correspondence with his Thai friends reflected deep affection and genuine friendship. To quote some. In 1928 Prince Mahidol of Songkla whom Sayre got to know while in Bangkok and who later became his neighbour in Boston wrote to him before the Prince left for Bangkok :

I want you to know that I am deeply grateful to you for all the world of good you and Mrs. Sayre have done us while we were here... I will never forget your kindness. It has been the purest pleasure to have been associated with you and to have learned to know both of you. Thanks for ever!...<sup>46</sup>

Prince Damrong, the famous Minister of Interior during King Chulalongkorn's days, wrote to Sayre from Penang where the Prince lived in exile in 1937 :

44) US Archives 729/6, 892. oia/97, William W. Russell—Secretary of State, July 10, 1926.

45) Sayre Papers, Box 1, Elizabeth B. Sayre—Francis B. Sayre, February 21, 1931.

46) Francis B. Sayre, *Glad Adventure*, p. 100.

I seldom write to my friends abroad, not because I have forgotten them and their kindness, but because I hate to write about affairs in my own country, knowing that they love it as I do, it would amount to inflicting unhappiness upon them.<sup>47</sup>

In 1950 Sayre wrote a letter to His Majesty King Bhumipol :

Soon you will be leaving on your long journey back to Bangkok, and I cannot forget sending you a word of goodbye and wishing you godspeed in your great task that lies ahead of you. Often I think of your father, who was my close and warm friend. How I wish he was still with us to give you his help in the difficult days ahead !...

God bless you through the years ahead, and through you bless also the people of Siam ! I hope you will freely write one if I ever can be of help to you.<sup>48</sup>

In a handwritten letter King Bhumipol replied :

... Thank you for your nice letter, it was very good of you to write to me in that manner and I appreciate it very much. I shall try not to get discouraged, although sometimes, I nearly discouraged even in Switzerland because of intrigues concerning my own personal affairs. But I know I must hold on what I think is the right thing to do, and I can assure you I shall try my best.

Your support will come to me as a refreshment. You know Siam much better than I do; a word or two from you will always be welcome, any time.<sup>49</sup>

After his departure from Thailand in 1926 Sayre came back twice, in 1953 and 1968 as the guest of the Thai Government. Each visit brought back a flood of memories and, of course, confirmed the gratitude of most of the Thais. To quote Mrs. Sayre's description of her husband's first 'homecoming' in 1953 :

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47) Sayre Papers, Box 14, Prince Damrong-Sayre, August 6, 1937.

48) Sayre Papers, Box 14, Sayre-King of Siam, February 14, 1950.

49) Sayre Papers, Box 14, King of Siam-Sayre, March 21, 1950.

All the chief officials of the Kingdom as well as many of Frank's old friends were gathered there. (the Government Residence) Speeches were exchanged and I can never forget some of the things they said about "Kalyan". In the middle of the dinner a Siamese chorus, accompanied by native stringed instruments, sang the song of welcome composed in our honor. A very rough translation from the Siamese runs something like this:

'Elated is the Prime Minister

To welcome as a good omen  
The visit of Phya Kalyan Maitri

And charming Khun Ying to Thailand.  
Chao Khun with distinction served

Our Government in the past ;  
The results greatly pleased His Majesty

And his memory will live forever.

'Let us welcome today Chao Khun and Khun Ying,

Great friends of ours for many years past ;  
May the Triple Gem protect them both,

And may they be blest with happiness and wealth  
May no illness come in their way

And may their wishes be fulfilled always,  
May our two nations be closely drawn together

In 'Kalyan Maitri'.<sup>50</sup>

As regards Crocker, he was also personally very charming, following so closely on the heels of Sayre, his predecessor. Unfortunately, his high calibre was overshadowed by both James and Sayre who were held in very high esteem among the Thais.

Stevens and Dolbeare were both unfortunate in the sense that their tenure was untimely. It was the time when American-Thai relations were at a very low point partly due to the lack of enthusiasm with which

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50) Sayre, *Glad Adventure*, p. 127.

America greeted the revolutionary threat to the Chakkri Dynasty in the early 1930's and partly to the disappearance of official Thai support for American missionary enterprise following the Revolution of 1932 and the even more serious differences of opinion with respect to Thai pressure on Indo-China after France's fall. Worse still, since the coup d'état, new Thai officials in the Thai Government had greater self-confidence and believed that they possessed more freedom of action.<sup>51</sup> Also the state of economy in Thailand offered less prospect for foreign advisers. In 1933 the Thai Foreign Minister even said, "We do not need any adviser".<sup>52</sup> Still Stevens fared well. He was given the complete confidence of the Thais. One reason for his success was that he was known to be whole-heartedly loyal to the Thai Government.<sup>53</sup>

The same case could apply to Dolbeare. In spite of being polished and amicable he was allotted very little responsibility in the Foreign Office and then voluntarily resigned five years later when he felt that it was time that his engagement should come to an end.

With the departure of Dolbeare in 1940 the chapter of the active, influential and important role of American Advisers in Foreign Affairs in Thailand came to a close.

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51) US Archives, File no. 892.011/12, J. Holbrook Chapman—Secretary of State, January 6, 1933.

52) F.O. 371, F 1991/1991/40, Annual Report on Siam for 1933.

53) US Archives, File no. 892.oia/103, David E. Kaufman—Secretary of State, April 7, 1932.

**Supplementary Notes**  
**Outline of Preliminary Draft of the Constitution**  
**proposed by Dr. Sayre**

**ARTICLE I**

The Supreme Power throughout the Kingdom shall be vested in His Majesty the King.

**ARTICLE II**

The King shall appoint a Premier who shall be responsible to the King for the entire executive work of the Government. He may be dismissed by the King at any time.

**ARTICLE III**

The Premier shall appoint and may remove on his own responsibility the Ministers of State at the heads of the various Government Ministries. He shall be responsible to the King for the entire work of each Ministry. He shall also be charged with the duty of carrying out the general policies of the Government as directed by the King and of coordinating for this purpose the work of the separate Ministries.

**ARTICLE IV**

Each Government Minister shall be responsible directly to the Premier for the work of his own Ministry. He shall assist in carrying out the general policies directed by the Premier.

**ARTICLE V**

The Cabinet shall be called together and presided over by the Premier, and shall be composed of all the Ministers of State. It may

discuss matters of common interest, but the responsibility for all decisions shall rest with the Premier.

#### ARTICLE VI

The Premier will refer to the King for decision all questions of large general policy. In all matters he shall be subject to the direct control of the King.

#### ARTICLE VII

The King shall appoint a Supreme Council of five members. The Premier shall be a member *ex officio*, but no other Cabinet officer shall be a member. The Supreme Council shall exercise no executive power whatsoever. Its function shall consist solely in giving to the King when called upon to do so advise on questions of general policy or on questions other than the detailed executive work of the Government. It shall have no power to advise as to appointments nor as to details of administration. It shall however have the power to interpellate the Premier or any Cabinet officer.

#### ARTICLE VIII

The King shall appoint and may remove at any time the members of the Privy Council.

#### ARTICLE IX

Within three days of ascending the throne the heir apparent shall be provisionally chosen by the King with the advice and consent of the Privy Council. The choice shall be limited to sons of a King and a Queen or to those of Royal Blood, but shall not be otherwise limited either by rank or seniority. The choice of the heir apparent shall not be irrevocable, but shall be freshly made by the King with the advice and consent of the Privy Council at the end of *each five-year period thereafter*,

(Note: Or perhaps a period longer than five years may be desired.) Should the King die before any choice has been made, the heir apparent shall be chosen immediately after the King's death by the Privy Council. In all cases three quarters of the members of the Privy Council then within the Kingdom shall be necessary to elect.

#### ARTICLE X

The judicial power, subject to the supreme power of the King, shall be vested in the Supreme or Dika Court and in such inferior Courts as the King may from time to time create.

#### ARTICLE XI

The supreme legislative power shall rest in the King.

#### ARTICLE XII

Changes in this fundamental law may be made only by the King with the advice and consent of three quarters of the members of the Privy Council.