

RELEASE IN FULL

From: H <hrod17@clintonemail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 21, 2012 10:33 AM
To: 'Russorv@state.gov'
Subject: Fw: "All burst out in laughter"

Pls print.

-----Original Message-----

From: PIR
To: Evergreen
Cc: Jake Sullivan
Cc: Huma Abedin
Cc: Cheryl Mills
Cc: Lona Valmoro
Subject: "All burst out in laughter"
Sent: Nov 19, 2012 5:52 AM

First The Buffalo News, then Warren Buffet, now President Obama - I think you might be rolling these out too early...

Temple Tour Marked by Humour, Respect, Interest in Buddhism The Nation November 19, 2012 1:00 am

US President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton were taken by the beauty of Wat Pho, the first place both visited shortly after their arrival to Thailand yesterday, according to Wat Pho assistant abbot Phra Suthethammanuwat.

The monk led Obama and Clinton to tour the temple and see Viharn, Chedi, the huge Reclining Buddha but not the renowned Hermit Exercise, the art of body contorting for good health, as it was not in their itinerary.

The monk praised Obama for his great human relations as the President had opted for the Thai traditional greeting of a wai and not a handshake.

He said Obama complimented that the temple was very clean and the monk responded that he was the first US President to visit the temple.

Clinton asked the monk why there was a Reclining Buddha statue and she was told that it was a symbol of peace and success. The monk then told Obama that if the US allowed him to be re-elected for a third term, he would win the election because he has paid homage to the reclining Buddha. Obama said he did not want to be re-elected for a third term as he wanted to raise his children and pointed to Mrs Clinton and said she would be the next president. All burst out in laughter.

Obama instructed US officials to find souvenirs from the temple as he wanted to give some to his daughters. The temple also gave him books about the temple as souvenirs.

The monk said he told Obama that he was born in the same year as the president, who responded "then you are a friend". The monk also asked if it was true that Obama had visited the temple once when he was young.

Obama said it was just a rumour but noted that he was interested in Buddhism and asked the assistant abbot why he had ordained to be a monk. The monk told Obama it was not compulsory but in those days rural children did not have a lot of opportunity to get an education and the only chance was to study while being a monk.

After that both were introduced to the 96-year-old abbot of the temple, Phra Thammapanya-bodi. Obama smiled when he was told that he would live longer than 100 years because he had a chance to wai a senior man with extra longevity like the abbot. The US president smiled even broader when the assistant abbot told him that he was like Bodhisattva as he was not just President of the US but the whole world.

Mrs Clinton said she would return with her husband Bill to show him the temple.

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