

HUMAN RIGHTS IN THAILAND

I.

HEARINGS
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and Mr. Robert Oakley, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Department of State.

We are delighted to have both of our witnesses here this morning. Dr. Morell, perhaps you should go first.

STATEMENT OF DAVID L. MORELL, PH. D., LECTURER IN POLITICS,
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Mr. MORELL. Thank you. I would like to open by congratulating you and your subcommittee for deciding to hold this kind of open hearing on an important foreign policy issue in which U.S. interest is involved. To my knowledge, this is the first time that this type of hearing has been held on Thailand in 27 years of close American relations with Thailand. This hearing has given me an opportunity to share some of my thoughts and concerns with you. I have been a student of Thai politics and political processes for over a decade, including 5 years in Thailand, most recently in the summer of 1975 under a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. The committee staff has been provided with further details on my background and experience.

THAILAND: DOMINO BY DEFAULT?

As part of the hearing record, the committee has been provided with a preliminary version of an essay entitled "Thailand: Domino by Default?" This essay was written earlier this year by myself and three others, all concerned about events in Thailand and their implications for the United States. My three coauthors are: William Bradley, president, Edwin W. Hazen Foundation, has spent 2 years as visiting professor of philosophy at Thammasat University. David Szanton, staff associate, Social Science Research Council, has spent 2½ years in Thailand as an administrator of Ford Foundation programs. Stephen Young, lawyer with Simpson, Thacher & Bartlett, has spent 3 years in Thailand.

The four of us chose to write this essay in a rather provocative style, in order to generate the maximum debate on several vital and controversial issues. Preliminary versions of our analysis have indeed received rather wide distribution and stimulated much comment. Wide-ranging discussions to which we were invited took place at the Council on Foreign Relations and the Asia Society. The essay reportedly has been read widely in the State Department and the American Embassy in Bangkok. My information suggests that the State Department's testimony next week may reflect some of their reactions to this essay. Many American scholars on Thailand have written us with supportive commentary, along with helpful criticism on specific points. And we are told that the essay has received wide if clandestine distribution within Bangkok, in particular at Thammasat University, but among government officials and others as well. A revised version of our essay, taking into account many of the suggestions we have received, is scheduled to be published as part of Ohio University's Southeast Asia reports series later this year.

We do not claim that the rather gloomy view of the future set forth in "Domino by Default?" is the only path which Thailand can take. In fact, all four of us genuinely hope that this outcome does not come

¹ See appendix 2, p. 80.

to pass. However, our analysis of the political forces now at work in Thai society suggests that, if rampant insurgency and eventual collapse of the system of government as we now know it are indeed to be avoided, massive alterations in the regime's political performance, and characteristics are essential.

THE OCTOBER 1976 MILITARY INTERVENTION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

To examine these political forces, let's go first to the military coup of October 1976. This coup was dramatically different in many respects from the eight others that have occurred since abolition of absolute monarchy in 1932.

First, in contrast to earlier coups, this one was marked by kinds and levels of violence, even atrocity, that were previously unheard of, and would have been considered "un-Thai" behavior only a few years earlier.

Second, this time the royal family, fearful for the future of the country in the wake of Communist victories in Indochina, lent its unmistakable support to the forces of the right. The King remains loved and revered by all Thais, a central figure in their lives. Precisely for this reason the continuing and apparently growing involvement of the palace in the military's factional politics since the coup in October 1976 suggests an emerging vulnerability of immense significance for the overall Thai polity.

Third, and very critical, moderate and liberal reformers now have been driven into the insurgent movement. For decades the insurgency has been trying to attract educated young people who have both an inside knowledge of the Thai establishment and the conviction that the military-political elite must be destroyed. Such people, in the past, have remained determined to work for change within the system. Ironically, through its own actions in October 1976, the military produced the infusion of new leaders which the insurgents have never been able to obtain on their own.

To understand these factors, and their causes, we need to turn our attention briefly to October 1973, when an unprecedented spasm of popular animosity toward the ruling military clique forced the generals to relinquish their overt political power. Suddenly, all things seemed possible, as the events of October 1973 altered people's perceptions about the military and about their own role in the nation's political future. Yet the basic power structure had scarcely changed, for the relinquishment of overt political power in no way signaled the end of the military elite's inherent dominance over political resources. In fact, the real story of October 1973 was not student power alone, but the doublecross of one army faction (Thanom/Praphat) by another (Krit).

Nevertheless, few realized this at the time, and the enormous gap between public expectation and political reality led to disillusionment beginning early in 1974. Concerns emerged with the inept performance of the new civilian Government and the often counterproductive behavior of the enthusiastic, overly aggressive student movement. Strikes, demonstrations, violence, unheard of only a year or two earlier, were now almost daily events. Bangkok became dominated by chaos and disorder, a situation which was deeply unsettling to so

many for whom "order" remains a far higher priority than "equity" or "participation." No, they didn't really want Thanom, Praphat and Narong back; but, no, they certainly didn't want this kind of chaos either.

Some important and long-overdue reforms indeed were undertaken: Land reform, grievance articulation, rent control, decentralization of Government finances and development project administration. All of these were attempts to redress the serious structural imbalances resulting from the socioeconomic change of the sixties and seventies combined with the political stagnation of that period.

Yet, though these reform efforts were too slow and meager to satisfy the left, which kept pressing for more, they were too threatening to the status quo to be long tolerated by the right, which by 1975 had organized to oppose these changes, and the group associated with them. Wrapping themselves in the cloak of "nation, religion, king," and successfully branding their opponents "Communists," the new rightist organizations went on the offensive. Consensus disappeared from Thai politics, and polarization became the principal dynamic.

On the foreign policy dimension, the elected civilian Government's policies in 1976 were shifting toward more open dialog with China, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. Again the military saw its own interests directly threatened.

All of this led on October 6, 1976, to the killings at Thammasat University and to the coup.

That, of course, is all past. What of the present and the future? The present regime, despite its use of article 21 martial law powers to detain or execute any individual deemed dangerous to society, is highly unstable. It retains power almost solely because of the absence, as yet, of cohesive army support for an alternative, and because the prestige of the King and Queen themselves remains linked to continuance of the Thanin-Sangad-Kriangsak-Samak regime. Nevertheless, and despite later official protestations to the contrary, the coup attempt in March 1977 nearly succeeded, disintegrating only when its adherents could not agree on which general or field marshal should become the new Prime Minister. Since then, 27 senior army officers apparently have been placing increasing pressure on the army commander, Gen. Serm Na Nakorn, to take action to replace the present structure with one more compatible with the army's own interests. Moreover, just as Thanom's return last September sparked the demise of the elected Government, the expected return later this summer of his son, the aggressive Colonel Narong, may well be the catalyst for the next coup.

Yet whatever leaders these machinations of military factionalism happen to bring forward, the inherent structure seems certain to remain basically the same. No Ataturk or Nasser seems to exist in the Thai Army and a new Sarit would find himself 20 years out of date. Thai society has changed far too much for such a simplistic model to be effective.

While the generals pursue their own narrow auditions, the true Thai political drama is well underway. The country is on the brink of—some would say already in the initial phase of—a true civil war on the Maoist model. Revolutionary insurgency based in the jungles and villages is competing for the mantle of long-term leadership against militarism centered in Bangkok.

INSURGENCY IN THAILAND: HAS CIVIL WAR ALREADY COMMENCED?

Reasonable observers may argue about whether the youthful activists who have now joined the Thai insurgents in the hills number in the hundreds or the thousands. Reliable statistics remain unavailable. No one should doubt, however, that the movement has received an unprecedented infusion of impressive new leaders, some of the most capable individuals in the nation: poets, writers, teachers, farmer leaders, labor union organizers, student leaders, village headmen, doctors, nurses, former elected members of Parliament.

Some of these new recruits to the Thai insurgency include: Seksan Prasertkul, former Thammasat University political science student, who was one of the leaders of the October 1973 uprising; Thirayut Boonmi, former Chulalongkorn University engineering student, labor union activists; Boonyen Worthong, former elected MP from Ubon and lecturer at the National Institute for Development Administration; Chonthira Kladyu, prominent poet and intellectual, former Chulalongkorn University lecturer; Khaisaeng Suksai, former Member of Parliament and deputy leader of the Socialist Party; Sithon Yotkantha, village headman and deputy chairman of the Farmers Federation of Thailand; Kriangkamol Laohaphairoj, former secretary general, National Student Center of Thailand; Wisai Khanthap, well-known poet and writer; Prasarn Marukhapitak, former president of the Chulalongkorn University Students Union and Socialist Party member; Terdppun Chaidi, labor activist, president of the Hotel and Hostel Workers Union; and Sumai Luadwonghud, Thai Moslem, former president, Federation of Independent Students of Thailand.

These are some of the well-known activists who have now openly announced their joining the Communist Party of Thailand. Many others have gone to the hills as well, and not just in the immediate aftermath of October 1976. For example, in January 1977 it was reported that 66 lecturers from various teachers training colleges and 10 nurses from several hospitals had joined the insurgents.

Individuals like these have never before been available to the Communist Party of Thailand. Once the movement has absorbed this large and unexpected gift from the military, a quantum increase in insurgent capabilities seems certain. Moreover, it is obvious that Thailand's neighbors to the north and east have an intense interest in seeing this insurrection eventually triumph.

The situation already is grave. Over half of Thailand's 72 provinces have been declared sensitive areas. Liberated areas exist in the north, northeast and south; indeed most of the student volunteers to the CP'T apparently are being trained in these areas, not abroad.

Regional separatism is a real and growing threat, especially in the south where there are Malay separatists, Chinese insurgents, Thai insurgents and a generalized antigovernment feeling. The Democrat Party won 30 of 37 seats from this region in the April 1976 election. After the October 1976 coup, leading Democrat MP's from the south, Ministers in the former government like Surin Masadit and Chuan Leekpai, were accused of being Communists and had to go into hiding. All of this suggests a grim scenario for Thailand's future, one in which a growing insurgency is exacerbated by the actions of a regime

which, just like its conservative predecessors in South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, conceptualizes the threat as predominantly military and external rather than political and internal.

Indeed, unless a new set of leaders emerges with either charismatic power or clear recognition that the insurgency is primarily a product of serious internal social, economic, and political imbalances, growing strife and eventual collapse seem the most probable results. However, no such leadership is in sight. This collapse surely will not occur overnight but 5 or so years may well be sufficient.

U.S. POLICY OPTIONS

What will America's role be in all of this? Though I do not adhere to the belief that the U.S. Government was the progenitor of the October 1976 coup—Thai domestic tensions provide sufficient explanation—the United States certainly cannot claim complete detachment from all that has transpired. U.S. support of the Thai police and military, official and unofficial, began in 1950 and continues to this day. CIA involvement in the country has been comprehensive, involving such critical organizations as the Border Patrol Police—the King's Special Force—the special branch of the police, and the Communist Suppression Operations Command, later renamed the Internal Security Operations Command. These are the very institutions that lent financial and organizational support throughout the recent 3 years of open politics to the right wing vigilante groups that ultimately led the brutal attack on Thammasat University students. That is, the very organizations that we have been supporting for over two decades are those that supported the emergence and growth of the new rightist organizations.

As the insurgency expands, it seems likely that Thai leaders will request expanded American military and security assistance. This could mean more aid to the police and even the reopening of such facilities as Ramasun, the CIA-NSA intelligence base near Udorn in north-east Thailand near the Laos border.

To me it seems imperative that the United States not become entrapped yet again in Southeast Asia on the wrong side of a losing battle, sacrificing our prestige and our material and human resources in a futile quest for short-term repressive stability at the expense of inherent human rights and essential social change. The lesson of April 1975 in Indochina is painfully clear: that a strategy of containment and suppression of revolutionary communism in the absence of simultaneous and sincere social and economic reforms is doomed to failure. If the Thai military, police, and monarchy have not yet learned that lesson, so be it. But the United States should avoid being dragged further into Thai attempts at suppression.

This conclusion is based on an assessment of Thai political realities. The present regime cannot possibly cope with the myriad of challenges facing Thailand, foreign or domestic, nor will any other conceivable coup group do much better. All are trapped in the massive fiscal, moral, and institutional corruption of a system which has carried internal colonialism beyond the threshold of its acceptability. How can people support a political system of which they are no longer proud?

In this situation the choices available to the United States in our relations with Thailand fall analytically into four categories:

(1) Revitalized military alliance: We could continue and strengthen the long-standing relationship between our military leadership and theirs, attempting to hold the line militarily at the Mekong. This approach seems ridiculous to me, but perhaps others will support it.

(2) Withdrawal: Another option is simply to withdraw, maintaining only a minimal, formal relationship with Thailand, at least while some form of military rule remains. Thai neutrality could well result. Depending on the specific situation, this might or might not be in the U.S. interest.

(3) Responsive, cautionary flexibility: A third option is to pause, withholding major forms of assistance to the junta in Bangkok and reacting to whatever Thai initiatives emerge. This is essentially what we have done since the coup.

(4) Active U.S. support for Thai reform: A fourth, difficult and controversial approach would call for an active U.S. effort to identify those reforms necessary if the Thais themselves are to preempt the insurgency challenge and avoid the depressing trajectory of defeat and collapse. Under this approach, U.S. assistance, support, and legitimacy, which the Thai leaders need so badly in their present isolated situation, would be linked explicitly to implementation of key reforms.

Although the current regime in Bangkok, with its strident anticommunism, clearly hopes that the United States will adopt the first option—active military support—so far, at least, American policy has been closer to the third option—cautionary flexibility. In my opinion the highest priority facing this committee and the Congress as a whole in dealing with U.S. policy toward Thailand is to insure that we do not allow ourselves to be dragged by Thai actions and the press of events into a renewal of the discredited, inoperative policies of the past, shifting gradually but inexorably back to option 1.

Beyond this negative congressional stance, however, I believe that the United States now has a unique opportunity in Thailand to begin to implement a new kind of foreign policy, one which is activist but responsive to local imperatives, and is based on concern for fundamental human values but also grounded in a firm evaluation of political realities and long-term U.S. interests. Though much is indeed at stake here, such a policy might be feasible in Thailand when it probably is not today in Korea or Taiwan, for example, or in the Philippines or Iran. Since American security interests are not so directly involved in Thailand since we no longer need seven air bases there any more, we can afford to adopt a policy directed toward achieving longer-term goals rather than just hanging on. They need us more than we need them.

What kinds of reforms seem essential? Though this would have to be the subject of lengthy study, the following seem relevant at this point:

(1) Decentralization: Serious efforts to decentralize political power and increase local participation in the political and economic development of local units.

(2) Participation: Construction, appropriate to the nation's need for modernization and stability, of institutional means for popular participation in the political process and legitimate forums for local, regional, occupational, and other interest group expression.

(3) Freedom of discourse: Open discussion and expression of opinion through a press which represents a broad spectrum of political opinion.

The means adopted undoubtedly would be distinctly Thai—and they should be—but the actions would have to be realistic not only as defined by the military but also by the growing insurgency and the demands for change which it symbolizes.

To the degree that U.S. policies and actions along the lines of option 4 can influence Thai leaders in this direction, we will have given meaning to the emerging rhetoric in Washington of practical morality in foreign policy. If Thai leaders choose to tell us to mind our own business, as does seem likely, then fine, let us do so, closing down our assistance effort, refraining from symbolic support through U.S. legitimacy, and leaving them to live with the results of their own decisions without involving us further.

It remains our national policy not to concede to Communist domination of independent nations. Yet we continue to concede to domination of independent nations by repressive military regimes that provide the ideal climate for Communist insurgency to grow. To combat the growth of these insurgency movements, we then shower the ensuing chaos with military and economic aid—administered by the same military and police leaders. The effect is like that of spraying gasoline over smoldering embers.

We now have an opportunity to devise a new policy toward Thailand that revolves around the things we are for, not against. In doing so, we might help create the conditions for a middle path toward economic and political development, avoiding the kind of harsh military rule which returned to Thailand in October 1976 and that, in the end, leaves Communist insurgency movements as the only remaining alternative.

Mr. FRASER. Thank you, Dr. Morell. That was a very interesting statement.

Now, our second witness, Mr. Meacham.

STATEMENT OF STEWART MEACHAM, FORMER NATIONAL SECRETARY FOR PEACE EDUCATION, AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

Mr. MEACHAM. Thank you. I have submitted here copies of the document I prepared, "Human Rights in Thailand and Implications for U.S. Policy," which is too long to read, and there are areas of it that I don't even need to summarize in light of David Morell's presentation, with much of which I am certainly in agreement, particularly as to the basic analysis of the events which have brought about the present situation in Thailand.

However, there are a few points that I would like to comment on where our emphases, while not confronting each other, are different enough so that there is some significance to the difference in analysis and point of view.

I think, for instance, that it is important that we consider in a rather objective and searching way the nature of the whole human rights issue as it relates to foreign policy. This must not be an exercise in self-righteousness. Americans became committed to human rights in the struggle for our own national independence; 200 years later we like to look back and feel that there is a special character to our country. I think that there is, in fact; but we also have to remember that, despite that struggle that went on 200 years ago, it was almost 100 years later before the human rights principle became operative enough in our country so that the institution of slavery was no longer permitted.

It was almost 100 years after that before those who were the children and the grandchildren of people who had been slaves were able to live and function in our society on the basis of equality and sharing in the human rights that had been established, many had thought, back in 1776.

These rights were strongly and significantly reaffirmed in the great movement that was led by Dr. Martin Luther King; but we have not yet moved in a clear way to say what the meaning of all of this is as far as American foreign policy is concerned.

We can welcome the fact that, with the development of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration for Human Rights has become one of the basic documents of the United Nations. This is not just something that America has created but the challenge is coming to us from the world community that these rights shall become operative in the area of international affairs.

With this background in mind, I would like to point out a few things about our relationships with Thailand. It seems to me that it is not enough to point to the horrors that occurred on October 6 in Bangkok which have produced manifestations of power in Thailand, with which we continue to cooperate as a country in very significant ways, not only economically, but also militarily, and through institutions of social control and social power which we have helped to build during the last 25 years, as David Morell testified.

During that period, Thailand has been used by the United States; it has been used for sea and air assaults against its neighbors, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. It has become the base for United States supersecret electronic intelligence operations beamed not only at Indochina but also China.

During this period, we gave very low priority to the human rights of the Thai people, for we were preoccupied with purposes that, to those who were shaping American policy in those days, seemed more important than human rights.

We wanted to be free to operate in Thailand without students carrying on demonstrations, without intellectuals and humanists lecturing, or writing or publishing critical analyses of what the United States was up to, or even without the workers of Thailand demanding higher wages.

So the time came when the repressive relationships that we had developed with those in power in Thailand reached a crisis point. In 1973, after nearly two decades, new forces were finding expression and did find very dramatic expression in the middle part of October 1973. They toppled the military regime. They challenged not only the

power structures of Thailand but also the power implications of American relationships in Thailand that had been maintained over a long period of time.

At the very heart of those relationships was the linkage between the military elites of Thailand and the ruling families in Thai economic life. Field Marshal Praphat and Field Marshal Thanom had not scores but hundreds of directorships in corporations that were lucrative and paid them well. This was a two-way street. They, in turn, provided protection for the corporations on whose boards they functioned in guiding ways.

This pattern of relationship between the generals and the business community continued right through the period of democracy following the October 1973 overthrow of the military dictatorship. When General Kris died, shortly before the October 1976 coup, a rumor circulated, according to a story in the New York Times, that General Kris had directorships in more than 200 companies. David Andelman, the correspondent for the New York Times, said that when one prominent banker was questioned about this he replied, referring to General Kris:

He probably had only a handful of directorships; but hundreds of companies, far more than 200, paid him handsomely just the same. He was their protector. His name need never have shown up on any paper connected with the company but they paid him well.

Despite the persistence of this relationship between the people who were in the top areas of Thailand's economic and commercial and financial life and the military, the 3 years of democratic rule in Thailand were very exciting years, even though they are looked on now by many and denigrated, as years of chaos and confusion, demonstrating the incapacity of the Thais to rule themselves. But that is not a fair appraisal.

If we look back to the situation that existed in our own country in the middle thirties, particularly in the South, there were new opportunities for people to express themselves. Participation in public and political life was ushered in by the New Deal. If we recall those years it will be a bit easier for us to understand the dynamism, the creativity and really the beauty of what was happening socially and politically in Thailand from 1973 right through to 1976.

It was a time when villagers who had been forgotten, who were not even thought of as having any role at all in Thailand's public life, began finding it possible to come into Bangkok in groups and to make demands and requests on the Government. Peacefully, coherently, logically and reasonably they sought not only a larger role but also a larger opportunity economically in their own way of life.

It was a time when students, who had played a very strong role, of course, in a struggle that was remarkably nonviolent—though it was marked during a period of about 24 hours by somewhat terrible violence—found themselves able to engage in social activity in Thailand, to form links with workers and trade union people, to form links with people in the villages, and to talk in terms of a democratic Thailand. It was a period when intellectuals, journalists and writers were able to find free expression.

These activities, of course, involved, among other things, a demand of workers for increased wages. This threatened Thailand's access to investment capital from the outside. There has developed in Southeast Asia—and we can't go into this in this hearing very extensively, of course—a pattern of competition amongst the countries of Southeast Asia, for investment capital from Europe, from the United States, and from Japan, and for the technology that the big corporations and the big banks, both public and private, bring into that part of the world. One of the key factors of that rather intense competition is what the big corporations have in mind when they talk about stability. They want low wages. The test is whether they can count on wage rates that will give them something like a 10-to-1 advantage over wages paid in the United States for an extended period of time.

There is no way that this kind of stability can be guaranteed in Southeast Asia today—and this includes Thailand, of course—unless government can effectively deny the rights of workers to bargain collectively for higher wages.

Thus democracy and human rights were a threat to the capacity of Thailand to compete successfully with the other ASEAN countries for the presence of the outside corporations and the outside economic interests. Thus the students and the workers and the villagers as they made their social demands threatened the economic powers—both Thai and American—and the terrible situation of October 6 was the result.

It is important for us to look very seriously at the question of human rights and not simply say "Well, human rights are a good thing and we now should affirm that because that is a very American thing to do." But we must look at the specifics cited in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the United Nations.

For instance there are these quotations from the Declaration of Human Rights, articles 3, 5, and 9:

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

These declarations are specific indictments of what went on in Thailand on October 6 and what since then has been an undergirding dimension of power in Thailand.

Article 10 says:

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

One of the most chaotic and difficult to perceive situations in Thailand today is what is happening to the people who have been arrested and either are still detained or have been released on bail subject to further judicial process. I think frankly it is rather disappointing that our own State Department in its recent report on the situation in Thailand can say that the lack of constitutionally guaranteed human rights has not altered the structure and practices of Thai courts, which continue to adhere, according to the State Department to a legal code based on libertarian European models. That is an extremely

strange statement to be made about the Thai situation where people are being held on very vaguely stated charges, under situations where their opportunities for trial are equally vague and uncertain, and where people can be held for time periods which can be extended and extended again up until, as I understand it, 180 days without charge or trial.

How our State Department can report to the Congress that human rights of fair and open trial of criminal charges is being observed in Thailand is very strange to me. We should ask ourselves not just where the State Department is or certain individuals in the State Department are, but where we are as a people when these kinds of situations can arise and would go virtually unheeded were it not for the determination of a committee such as is conducting this hearing today.

Articles 19 and 20:

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression: this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

Following October 6, according to the New York Times and the Washington Post reports, over a million books were burned in Thailand, raids were carried out on five universities and many private bookstores, documents were seized and burned by the ton.

A seven-point press code was announced on October 9. It forbade the publication of any material and illustrations which violate the institution of the monarchy or regency, make accusations or give distorted or contemptuous or insulting impressions about Thailand and the Thai people or which may cause other countries to lose respect for Thailand, which make accusations or give distorted or contemptuous or insulting or damaging impressions about Thailand or which promote communism.

All of these are grounds for denial of right of publication. It is in that context that newspapers today are trying to function in Thailand.

Equally devastating has been the impact on regulations with respect to freedom of assembly and freedom of speech. It is illegal for any meetings in any political context of more than five persons to occur except, of course, where people meet who are committed to continuing the repression in Thailand such as the growing number of meetings and seminars of the Village Scouts, which played such a strong and obvious and brutal role in the October 6 events at Thammasat University.

Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, says: "Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives * * *." That right is indefinitely deferred at this time in Thailand. The most hopeful prediction which has been made by the present regime is that elections might be returned to in Thailand in about 12 years.

Article 23:

Everyone, without discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
* * * Everyone has the right to form, join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

The right to form trade unions and to protect their own interests in that way no longer exists in Thailand; it has been specifically outlawed. The right to engage in efforts for equal pay for equal work is particularly significant to the United States today in the application of human rights principles to international affairs.

There is a new institution in the world today called the international runaway shop and such American institutions as General Electric and Burlington Mills and numbers of others have fled to the underdeveloped countries seeking wage scales that run at a differential of about 1 to 10; and on this basis they not only take jobs away from American workers at a time of rising inflation but also exercise power in league with elites in those countries to build power structures that will effectively deny workers in any of those countries the human right to engage in collective bargaining that would establish internationally the principle of equal pay for equal work.

There is not any decent and humanitarian and democratic solution for the world today with the very close association of the elites that are running these countries; on the one hand, and the radical denial of any kind of effective communication among workers in different parts of the world. Working people need to be able to combine their resources and to come together to restore and to build some degree of equality across the wage gaps that exist between the developed countries and the Third World.

In the early days of the New Deal there were runaway shops to the South; but the principles of government, even if they were applied somewhat differently, were uniform between North and South and it was possible for southern workers to begin to struggle under protected rights for equal pay for equal work.

That opportunity effectively is now denied not only in Thailand but in Southeast Asia generally. One of the principle reasons is not that the governments in those countries are run by people who are particularly cruel but more because the United States is exercising a kind of power in that part of the world that builds repressive structures.

I would like, in closing, just to refer to the kind of structures that we have developed in Thailand which have this character: I would like to point to a monograph that has been published by the University of Denver Graduate School of International Studies done by Thomas Lobe, "United States National Security Policy and Aid to the Thailand Police," in which Thomas Lobe, a professor now at the University of South Dakota, deals in knowledgeable and specific ways with the structures of control that the United States has helped to build in Thailand, which, through JUSMAG, through the CIA, through the Office of Public Safety, through AID, through USOM, through USIA, through DEVCOM and through other structures, have built and strengthened such institutions as the Border Patrol Police, the National Security Command, the Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit, the Provincial Police, and other instruments of Thailand control.

The relationships among those institutions and the structure of those institutions, which persist right down to this day and which lie at the core of the repression that has now been released in Thai-

land, is something for which our country must bear a great deal of responsibility.

These structures need to be far better understood, not only in Thailand but their relationship to our own military and State Department structures.

The result of all of this in Thailand today on those who are at the receiving end of it, who are the vast majority of the people, has been predictable. On the one hand, many of the people who saw the years of 1973 to 1976 as years of opportunity and hope have now subsided into a kind of sullen silence. There are some who have been forced into exile or who were caught, at the time of the overthrow of democracy in Thailand in October 1976—caught out of the country and have not been able to return, and there are others who have fled—fled to the northeast, fled to the north, fled to the south and possibly have even gone into Laos, seeking new ways to develop a somewhat more vigorous and explicit liberation struggle with all of the implications that that involves.

There is also a fourth response, that I refer to in the next to the last page of my paper, which is represented by a coordinating group for religion and society in Thailand which is operating quietly but openly, under leadership of Buddhists, Catholics, and Protestants. Congressman Stark has visited with this group. They want to maintain communication; they want to do it openly. They want, in the name of humanity and nonviolent approaches and nonpolitical approaches, to make contact with those who are the victims of the repression, are being held in prison or are being suppressed in a variety of ways.

These four responses are responses of people who have been at the receiving end of the impact of these events. And it seems to me necessary to restore their opportunity—their opportunity to again play a constructive role in Thailand without fear of being repressed in these rather awful ways.

It is not only a responsibility that we as a country that has extended considerable political and financial support to Thailand over recent years must help in, but also as part of the United Nations. And possibly in the process we can help create a new dimension to foreign policy that will make us a better country—I mean we have not reached the end yet—and possibly build a better world, not in terms of self-righteousness, how much better we are than the Communists or the Thai or this, that or somebody else, but look at our own conduct with a certain amount of self-critical examination and say: What have we done that has helped build these things? What have we done that has kept a better world from developing and how must we change?

In my opinion we must change very radically through the State Department, through the Defense Department, and I would think this is time for a great breath of fresh air in the Congress, and it seems to me that this committee is helping to supply that.

[Mr. Meacham's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY STEWART MEACHAM, FORMER NATIONAL SECRETARY, FOR PEACE EDUCATION, AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

Thailand is a demanding test of President Carter's declared intent of linking human rights to international political and economic relationships. If this policy

can be applied to our relations with Thailand it can be convincingly pursued elsewhere. And the opposite is equally true. If the United States is not serious about the implications of human rights to foreign policy toward Thailand it will be difficult to maintain the appearance of good faith in insisting on the human rights linkage elsewhere. Our government cannot press the Soviet Union on human rights, or other socialist countries for that matter, unless we are willing to press our friends. The question we face in Southeast Asia today is whether we are now prepared to deal with our friends in that part of the world in a manner consistent with our own constitutional commitments and with the principles set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations. Or will we continue policies which are heedless of human life, freedom, and the rights of people on the opposite side of the earth?

As President Carter has eloquently said, the human rights question goes beyond national boundaries. Every nation must be concerned about human rights in every part of the earth. Every nation must be prepared to be judged as well to judge. This must not be an exercise in self-righteousness. America became committed to human rights in the struggle for our own national independence; we confirmed the commitment in the Civil War; we reaffirmed it in the days of the Freedom Struggle in the 1950s and 1960s led by Dr. Martin Luther King; and now again in foreign policy, we must decide whether we are more concerned to protect the power interests of special groups than to protect the rights of people to independence and freedom.

In 1954 when the Geneva Accords opened the door to peaceful reunification and self-determination for Vietnam, Thailand became our Asian land base to block those possibilities. What began as an invasion of Vietnam to contain China ended up as a Presidential Mission to Peking to contain Vietnam nearly two decades later. In the intervening period Thailand was used for sea and air assaults against its neighbors, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. It also became the base for U.S. super-secret electronic intelligence operations beamed not only at Indochina but also China. During this entire period we gave low priority to the human rights of the Thai people. We were pre-occupied with using Thailand's territory for attacks on its Indochina neighbors without Thai workers demanding higher wages, without Thai students carrying on demonstrations against American military bases in Thailand, and without Thai intellectuals and humanists lecturing or writing or publishing critical analyses of what the United States was up to. What we wanted from Thailand was stability, cooperation, and compliance. The one group in Thailand that could deliver what we wanted was the Thai military elites. Happily for those who were shaping U.S. policy in Southeast Asia in those tragic years, the military were very much in charge of Thailand straight through from the end of World War II until after the end of the American military failure in Indochina. The United States embraced the ruling Generals and Field Marshals and made arrangements with them for the military aid, the military basis, and the sea and air facilities from which the American War against the countries of Indochina could be carried forward.

One Thai intellectual who has very strong feelings of friendship for Americans, and who is himself a liberal, humanist, Buddhist, has described this period in these words: "From then onwards American experts penetrated within many Thai Government agencies, even in the provinces, and we developed our country in the American image in most respects. Our educators, and administrators, our soldiers and policemen, were trained en bloc in America by Americans. Our officials were even trained to suppress our own people! Development means more roads upcountry, which means the rich can buy more land in the distant provinces. Development, means officials have more access to the people in the outlying areas, which means more dissatisfaction with officials. Without Parliament, without the free press, there is no real leadership developed in the open."

"In the towns the U.S. presence has had catastrophic effects on Thai culture. The Thai elites became greedy and corrupted. The best way to earn money was through working with the Americans who had a lot of money, they did not have to account for. The rich and the powerful got the bigger share from dealing in weapons and heroin, to catering to Rest and Recreation for the soldiers from Vietnam as well as smuggling PX goods to flood the Thai market."

"The poor and the beautiful could also earn something through manual work and sex. As a result we are known for our prostitutes, for cheating and corruption. Every town now must have a night club, as every college must have at least one teacher who has been educated in the United States. How all of these

will benefit us I do not know. And to be fair, we should not blame all these on the Americans. But without the American presence to the extent already indicated, would all this have been possible?"

During the two decades of American predominant influence in Thailand (1954-1973) the senior military officers who held power and ran the government profited hugely from their corporate directorships and their financial, commercial, and industrial connections.

The pattern was for the top military officers to be members of the boards of leading financial and industrial institutions. This provided security for the banks and the corporations, and it was highly lucrative for the top people running the government. For instance when the Thanom-Prapass military dictatorship was overthrown in October 1973 General Prapass held many directorships on the Boards of banks and corporations. He was Chairman of the Board of the Bangkok Bank. His personal assets included shares valued at \$2,000,000 in the Bangkok Bank alone. And this was only one of his scores of top corporate positions from which he received substantial sums of money.

The system was described by David A. Andelman, correspondent for the New York Times in this way:

"At that time a dozen or two dozen families, through business, military, and political connections, could have been said to run Thailand.

"The largest part of the ruling families' power came from the strongmen who ran the government—Field Marshals Sarit Thanarat, Thanom Kittikachorn, and Prapass Charusatharan who not only held the reins of power but also they accumulated financial might.

"When the Bangkok Bank was in the process of amassing its first \$1 billion in deposits—it now has passed the \$2 billion mark—Field Marshal Prapass was on the Board of Directors, along with four senior army generals. That pattern was constantly repeated while the military were in power; indeed it was virtually impossible to run a major business or to build a small one into a large one without enlisting the support of military men, which meant money and directorships."

During the period of democratic rule from October 1973 until October 1976 this pattern survived. The most prestigious military figure then was General Kris Sivara. He had refused to enlarge the use of the armed forces to crush the student-led revolt, and was credited with making the victory of those seeking democratic government possible. When General Kris died suddenly shortly before the October 6, 1976 coup he had accumulated, according to rumor, directorships in more than two hundred companies. One prominent banker when questioned about this said, "He probably only had a handful of directorships, but hundreds of companies, far more than 200, paid him handsomely just the same. He was their protector. His name need never have shown up on any paper connected with any company, but they paid him well."

Thus the dominance of the military in the economic life of the country continued even into the 1973-76 period of democratically elected governments and wide civilian participation.

Despite this the years 1973-76 were exciting years for Thailand. For the first time Thai farmers were able to organize and come to Bangkok and present their demands for land reform and economic justice to the elected authorities. Workers were free to form unions, to bargain collectively, and to strike for higher wages and better working conditions. Students went into the villages and the countryside to share the life of the villagers, to discuss with them their aspirations, their problems, and their role in the political and economic life of Thailand.

There was a heightened awareness of the American military bases in Thailand. Opposition to them began to be strongly expressed and pledges were made by the successive democratic governments to bring the American armed presence in Thailand to an end and to close down the bases. This pressure reached a high point in the summer of 1975 at the time of the *Mayaguez* incident when the United States launched an attack on Cambodia from the American base at Sattahip south of Bangkok without seeking Thai government permission. Demands for total U.S. military withdrawal became powerful and could no longer be denied by the elected government despite the opposition of the still powerful military establishment and their close colleagues and patrons in the business community. The very success of the students, workers, and village people in demanding an open and available society and political process threatened the power of the Generals and was deeply disturbing to the ruling families.

As strikes in industry proliferated (workers earning less than \$1.00 per day were demanding a minimum daily wage of \$1.25), as students joined forces with the trade unionists in supporting worker demands for a larger share in the fruits of their labor, pressures increased from the military elites and from the business interests first to isolate and then to demoralize student and worker leadership.

The people of the villages remained the forgotten majority. The initial wave of student enthusiasm for going into the villages and engaging in discussion to encourage political participation by the village people subsided. Groups of villagers who came to Bangkok to meet government officials, went away rebuffed. The elected governments made no clean break with the past. They relied on the business and military interests and paid less and less attention to the students and the trade unionists. The unity of the Right was increasingly felt, and the fragmentation and disunity of the liberal-left.

Terror became an explicit weapon of the Right against the students and workers. Assassinations became commonplace. Over fifty political assassinations took place between 1973 and 1976, and virtually all were village leaders, unionists, and students. Arrests were never made. Instead open encouragement was given to right-wing extremists by the police and the military, and, in the case of the Village Scouts, even by the Royal Family.

It was just such terrorism that ignited the explosion of October 6. A few days before two young labor unionists distributing leaflets calling for the expulsion of ex-strongman Thanom Kittikachorn were found hanging in Nakhon Pathom not far from Bangkok. The police hastily buried their bodies after photographs of the hanging corpses had been taken, saying that no relatives had come forward to claim them. One student leader called their murder "another police job which will remain forever unsolved just like the assassination of Boonsanong." Boonsanong was the highly regarded Socialist Party general secretary and was a leader of the democratic left in the National Assembly. He had been assassinated in May 1976.

The news of the killing of the two unionists only heightened the determination of people to demonstrate against the return to Thailand of the ousted Thanom. Thousands of students and trade union people came to the Thammasat campus on October 3 and entered into a continuing vigil and demonstration demanding that Thanom be expelled from Thailand. The widely publicized brutal events of October 6 at Thammasat followed. The police, elements of the military, Village Scouts, the Border Patrol Police, and miscellaneous thugs crushed the student-labor protest and ended the three year effort to build democratic human rights into the political base of Thailand.

THE ISSUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Any country has the right inherent in its own sovereignty to refrain from acts that are morally repugnant to its underlying principles of government. There is nothing inconsistent with respect for the self-determination of other nations if we stop short of giving aid for the exercise of powers that do violence to basic concepts of common decency. An analysis of the human rights violations of the present Thai government can easily be made. It is consistent for Americans to make such an analysis so long as the purpose is to decide what we are willing to give aid to and what we are not. That is not aggression! It is self-defense!

There is a broader and less unilateral base than our own Bill of Rights for determining our responsibilities toward Thailand. There is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which has been adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Both Thailand and the United States are members of the United Nations and each has the right and the duty to deal with the other on matters affecting human rights within the context of the Universal Declaration.

This rightly entails the Government of the United States, as is being undertaken here today, analyzing reports from the media, and from its own channels of communication, and identifying those human rights which appear to be grossly violated by the Government of Thailand. Our Government then might share this analysis with the Thai Government and request an opportunity to enter into discussions of the apparent violations to determine whether there are human rights barriers to further extension of aid. It is not enough to point to the misdeeds of the present Thai Government and of the junta which has

¹ Officially: National Administrative Reform Council (NARC).

created it. A very great deal of what has been starkly photographed and described in Thailand in recent months flows directly from the way in which American power has been used. We cannot raise human rights questions with the present Thai Government without also raising them with ourselves. We are a part of the problem.

RELEVANT ARTICLES OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Articles 3, 5, and 9. "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile."

Since October 6, 1976 thousands of persons have been arrested and held in prison for extended periods of time. No one knows exactly how many but informed estimates are far beyond the 4,000 which was the announced total as of October 20, 1976. Those held are charged with such vaguely worded offenses as being a "threat to the security of the state." As of March 20, 1977 it was reported in the New York Times that 8,000 people have been arrested on this ground alone, many of them in areas outside Bangkok.

On October 6 the life and security of several thousand students and trade unionists were put in great jeopardy as they were attacked by police, military units, and Village Scouts. Photographs widely published showed students crawling half stripped as they were kicked and beaten by armed men in uniform. Those who tried to flee were shot as they tried to swim the Chao Phraya River, others were garroted and burned. Many unable to flee were killed inside Thammasat and their bodies were piled up and set on fire.

The Rector of Thammasat University, Dr. Puey Ungpakorn, Thailand's distinguished liberal, humanist, educator, and economist fled for his life that day and only barely escaped being lynched at the hands of Village Scouts as he was detained for several hours at the Don Muang Airport before being allowed to take a plane for England.

It has been estimated that two or three thousand students, teachers, journalists, trade unionists and farm leaders have fled into the jungle to the north, south and northeast where areas are controlled by insurgent forces; some possibly have crossed the Mekong into Laos.

Still others have made their way to Europe or to the United States, and are not able to return without serious risk to life, liberty and security of person.

Those who have been jailed or have been forced to flee include many of the best minds and best qualified people, including young people, of Thailand. Basically they are seeking two things: (1) some measure of freedom and human rights, and (2) the opportunity to participate in determining the destiny of Thailand. But this is difficult for the right to life and liberty free of cruel treatment and arbitrary arrest no longer exists in Thailand.

Article 10: "Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him."

The system of justice now being observed in Thailand includes no clear provision for trials of the accused in open court with access to counsel. Persons may be held without charge for six months or longer; they are tried before military tribunals; and the charges brought against those arrested include being "potential dangers", "stirring up trouble", "by one means or another urging people to support any regime other than democratic rule with His Majesty the King as head of state", and "with occupations that offend good morals." Article 21 may be invoked. This gives the Prime Minister the power to carry out sentences as he may decide without any trial at all. General Chulad who was involved in a coup attempt against the NARC-Thaksin Government in March 1977 was executed on April 20. There was no trial. Thaksin simply ordered him shot. A prominent drug dealer was disposed of in the same way a few days earlier. The threat of similar treatment has been hanging over the heads of some 111 persons now either being tried or awaiting trial.

Articles 19 and 20: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

"Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association." These rights include:

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

During the days following October 6 the junta government seized and burned more than 1,000,000 books. Raids were carried out on five universities and many private book stores, and books were taken and burned. Hundreds of tons of documents were seized. A censorship committee established two days after the coup summoned the editors and publishers of newspapers and journals and informed them that when they had been permitted to resume publication everything they printed would be subject to prior censorship by this committee. Meanwhile the publication of all newspapers was suspended.

A seven point press code was announced on October 9. It forbade the publication of "any material and illustrations which violate the institution of the monarchy or 'regency', make accusations or give distorted or contemptuous, or insulting impressions about Thailand and the Thai people or which may cause other countries to lose respect for Thailand, which make accusations or give distorted or contemptuous or insulting or damaging impressions about the government, or which promote Communism."

A police round-up of Thai journalists was announced on October 10 when a list of 57 newsmen under suspicion was published in two right-wing newspapers. The 57 were charged with having "committed acts endangering national security and serving the Communists." Those listed had been investigated earlier by the police during the three years of democratic government, according to one of the newspapers, "but could not be arrested then."

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

One of the first acts of the junta when it took power was to ban all meetings of more than five persons. A notable exception has been the meetings and seminars of the Village Scouts. Their gatherings have proliferated following their active participation in the beating, burning and hanging of students and unionists at Thammasat on October 6. Otherwise there are no meetings which might be suspected of having a political nature allowed in Thailand.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

There is a sense of fear about discussion, even casual and informal discussion, of political matters, even apart from meetings, or groups, Thai students, and teachers exercise the very greatest caution in arranging opportunities to discuss recent events either with each other or with friends, briefly visiting their country. Those who have been killed or arrested, are a warning to all others, that the same thing can happen to them. A visitor to Thailand senses immediately that while the exercise of free speech has not been silenced it is subdued—reduced to something close to a whisper.

Article 21: "Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives." The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures. Nothing remotely related to these rights has existed in Thailand since October 6, 1976. Those who take part in the government are those who have been chosen to do so by the NARC generals and admirals. And it is not intended that this shall be a merely temporary emergency condition. Prime Minister Thaksin has announced that the return of democracy will be a process which will take twelve years.

Article 23: "Everyone, without discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work." "Everyone has the right to form, join, trade unions, for the protection of his interests."

"In three years of democracy, labor struck again and again," according to one press report, explaining the reasons behind the October coup. It is an accurate statement and undoubtedly is one of the main reasons why the generals and the big business families were ready for denial of human rights. To them the period of democracy had been three years of chaotic turbulence marked by nearly 800

strikes. After October 6, as one prominent Thai put it, "Law and order have returned to Thailand, labor seems to be calm." What he meant was that strikes had been outlawed and collective demands for higher wages were now illegal and could be suppressed as communist subversion. The Far Eastern Economic Review has commented: "Last October's military coup removed the student and liberal lobbies from the political arena and installed the Thanin Administration, which made an improved investment climate the top priority in its economic programme." From the point of view of the workers the value judgments are quite different. Before the 1973 uprising labor had no freedom of association, but this was dramatically changed with the advent of democracy. Labor law was enacted towards the end of 1973 giving freedom to negotiate collectively and to strike. That this freedom resulted in work stoppages is not surprising. The industrial disputes of 1974 and 1975 were not an indication of worker and union irresponsibility but just the opposite. At the time of the 1973 uprising the minimum wage in Thailand was about 60¢ a day. Not an hour—a day. The unions, the workers, and their new allies, the students, pressed demands for wage increases under the democratic government, and gradually these were raised from 60¢ to 80¢ a day, and then to \$1.00 and even up to \$1.25 by early 1976. That level is only slightly more than half as much in a day as is the U.S. minimum wage for an hour, but the business interests in Thailand found it threatening. They were trying to attract foreign investment to Thailand, and the key to that anywhere in Southeast Asia today is what the multinational corporations and the international lending agencies (the World Bank, IMF, ADB, etc.) mean by the word "stability". They mean governments that can provide foreign capital investors and corporations not only with tax concessions, repatriation of profit assurances, duty free zones, and fiscal conservatism but also low wages and compliant workers. The wage demands of Thai workers were threatening to Thailand's capacity to compete successfully with its Southeast Asian neighbors for the electronic assembly plants and the textile and apparel factories which were looking for stability in this special sense.

The investment climate in Thailand became, as the Wall Street Journal put it, bleak. Only two weeks before the October 6 coup it reported that the inflow of capital to Thailand had been "near a standstill for more than a year." With the suppression of the students and workers and the sweeping cancellation of human rights the military coup of October 6 hoped to bring the stability sought by outside investment capital back to Thailand.

This short-term link between capital investment and the suppression of human rights can scarcely be challenged. The long-term link is quite a different matter as the American failure experience with the repressive Thien regime in Vietnam should have taught us.

The right to equal pay for equal work is crucial to developed-country relationships not only with Thailand but with all of the less-developed countries of Southeast Asia. All of them, and particularly the ASEAN countries plus Taiwan and South Korea, have been carried into the sharpest kind of competition with each other to attract the more labor-intensive operations of the multinational corporations. The key to success is wage scales that can compete with American wage levels at approximately a 1:10 ratio. (Workers in the LDCs getting about one-tenth what American workers would get for the same work.) To maintain this kind of low wage competition requires authoritarian regimes. Any tendency among workers to drive wages upward must be quickly and effectively crushed. So long as a 1:10 wage differential with the developed countries can be maintained by Southeast Asian countries the new international "run-away shop" phenomenon which has been robbing American workers of jobs will continue.

But the solution cannot be found by tariff structures aimed at buttressing "Buy America" campaigns. The only possible solution is for the workers in all countries to find ways to cooperate with each other in closing the wage gaps—to fulfill the human rights principle of equal pay for equal work internationally. In the early days of the New Deal the powers of government were used to help close the wage gap between the North and the South. Today the challenge is to use those powers to close a similar gap among nations.

For now, at least, the business interests both of the developed world and of Thailand can depend upon the NARC-Thanin regime to suppress human rights so far as the rights of Thailand's workers are concerned. Thus it is not enough for Americans to look askance at the Thai elites who are now successfully suppressing human rights. There are American interests as well which have a stake in this suppression and which have been much relieved to see Thailand again lining up with its ASEAN neighbors as a reliable autocratic regime.

Article 26: "Everyone has the right to education. * * * Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms."

During the years of democracy in Thailand the university campuses, and particularly the Thammasat campus, became the base for democratic development. Students and faculty engaged in free and open discussions about the relevance of human rights to Thailand's future. From the campuses students went out into the villages and engaged in work and study with village people. They were concerned with democratic development in which all of the people could have a part. From the campuses contacts also were made with the newly emerging trade unions and support was generated for the workers in their struggles for the right to bargain collectively and win at least the beginnings of industrial democracy.

Thus it is understandable why the initial blows were struck at education. The enemy of those who found human rights an uneconomic luxury was education itself. The first act of the NARC when it seized power was to close all schools and universities, and they were only reopened when the NARC-established government had banned any instruction in "democracy and communism."

The New York Times described the situation in this way: "The new authorities have banned any instruction in 'democracy and communism', but there have been no guidelines and, like many of the actions of the new government and its military sponsors, no indication of what will be enforced and how. As a result students and teachers alike are making elaborate preparations today for protecting themselves. * * * A number of courses are expected to be canceled, particularly in the most politically sensitive departments of economics and political science. It's on the initiative of the professor," explained a member of Chulalongkorn's political science faculty. "If he or she feels he cannot teach a course, it will not be offered. A number of teachers having been told in effect that their lectures would be audited by officials of the state security organization Chulalongkorn professor observed."

The effective denial of these human rights in Thailand persists to the present day. In its foreign policy relationships with Thailand, the United States must decide whether its conduct will be consistent with its own Bill of Rights and with the Universal Declaration of the United Nations or will we in practice modify our moral commitments to fit the arbitrary and brutal acts of tyranny which, since October 6, 1976, have been decisive in Thailand.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTION FOR THE UNITED STATES

- The decision made at this time by the United States will affect:
1. The repressive structures operating in Thailand some of which were built originally with the help, encouragement, and guidance of the U.S. State Department, the CIA, and the U.S. Department of Defense.
 2. American business interests in Southeast Asia which define economic and political stability in terms of access to cheap raw materials and cheap labor.
 3. Those in Thailand who hope for restoration of human rights.

REPRESSION IN THAILAND WITH U.S. AID AND SUPPORT

Probably the most knowledgeable study of U.S. security assistance to Thailand has been made by Thomas Lobe, Professor of Political Science at the University of South Dakota. His monograph, "United States National Security Policy and Aid to the Thailand Police," has been recently published by the Graduate School of International Studies, University of Denver, in its Monograph Series in World Affairs. In the Preface Lobe states:

"The case study of Thailand is more than the history of an agency. It is, rather, the typical and symbolic history of a policy—the policy of the United States intervention and experimentation in social control throughout the Third World over the last two and a half decades."

In his Postscript 1976 he concludes: "The least that can be said is that the anti-democratic forces now in control in Thailand were nurtured, trained, and armed by the various United States security bureaucracies. The United States government, under successive Administrations since 1951 created the conditions for the terror of October 6 and whatever may follow."

In his monograph Lobe describes in detail how these security agencies built instruments of social, economic, and political control in Thailand, how they competed with each other for pre-eminence, and how the Thai police power structures which these U.S. agencies brought into being are now fully in control.

The U.S. part of this network is centered in Washington and is controlled by the Pentagon, the CIA, and the State Department. Under their guidance and with the funds which they supplied, Thailand has developed its own police control agencies.

The Pentagon worked mainly through the Joint United States Military Advisory Group (JUSMAG) with its Thailand headquarters in Bangkok. The CIA operated mainly through the Office of Public Safety (OPS) which for administrative and "cover" convenience was located within the Agency for International Development (AID) of the State Department. Other State Department agencies in Thailand building internal security and police control resources were the United States Operative Mission (USOM), the United States Information Agency (USIA), and Development Consultants, Inc. (DEVCON), according to Lobe.

These U.S. agencies developed close working, planning, and funding relationships with a whole range of Thai police and military agencies including the Border Patrol Police (BPP), Department of Local Administration of the Ministry of Interior (DOLA), the Metropolitan Police, The National Security Command (NSC), Police Aerial Reinforcement (PARU), Provincial Police (PP), Special Action Forces (SAF), Village Defense Corps (VDC), Village Protection Unit (VPU), Village Security Force (VCF), and Thai National Police Department (TNPD).

These well-financed U.S. agencies and their counterpart network of agencies in Thailand have played a powerful role in Thailand for 25 years. Thailand cannot enjoy human rights so long as these instrumentalities which the United States has helped to create survive unchanged. The activities of the Village Scouts, the BPP, the TNPD, and the Metropolitan Police at Thammasat on October 6 are proof that they not only have survived but are thriving, stronger than ever.

THE HUMAN RIGHTS STRUGGLE WITHIN THAILAND

Extreme repression usually generates political and social polarization. Those on the receiving end of repression are reduced to sullen silence, or they turn toward explicit liberation struggle, or else they are forced into exile. All three of these alternatives are now characteristic of Thais committed to human rights.

There is also a fourth response. A coordinating group for religion and society has come into being and has been operating openly in Bangkok, carrying on prison visitation, compiling lists of names of persons being held, examining opportunity for fair trials and due process for those accused, and ministering to the needs of those who have been arrested or injured. Thus far this coordinating group has managed to survive despite growing indications of governmental suspicion of them for their good works. Their leadership is made up of Buddhists, Catholics, and Protestants, seeking nonviolent solutions in a time of great violence. As they continue quietly but openly to aid the victims they are attracting some public attention. An article about them recently was published in the widely read Far Eastern Economic Review.

U.S. Congressman Fortney Stark Jr. of California met with members of this group when he visited Bangkok in April 1977. They discussed with him the human rights situation in Thailand and gave him copies of relevant documents.

Their April Report includes factual information regarding the situation of many who have been arrested, including lists of people now reportedly facing trial in the near future. Amongst these, 110 persons were to have been brought to trial by June 10, 1977. Whether their trial has begun is not known. There is the danger, of course, that Article 21 might be used against them which would permit even the possibility of summary execution without trial. All of these are people who were involved in the student and related activities at Thammasat.

It would be relevant and timely if the Congress of the United States were to make inquiries about these 110 accused. Are they being tried? Will they be tried? What are they charged with? Have they the right to defence counsel? Will the trial be in open court? These and related questions are of concern to the United States and to all members of the United Nations. They are of great concern to Thailand, but not many Thais are in a position to ask them.

Can our State Department help clarify these questions?

Attached is a report on these 110 persons. This report includes the names of those being tried or awaiting trial. A photo-copy of the original official document of the Government of Thailand dealing with these defendants, as a part of this attachment.

CONCLUSION

Thailand's struggle for domestic and (humanitarian) government was brutally crushed on October 6, 1976, and the repressions of that day continue. Forces within Thailand continue the struggle for freedom and justice. The road ahead is a difficult one for Thailand, and neither the United States nor any other outside power can decide for Thailand what its future shall be. But we and other nations committed to freedom and justice can refrain from giving aid and comfort to the oppressors. Our commitments to ourselves as expressed in our own Bill of Rights, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations clearly define the principles that must guide us as a nation in our international dealings in this crucial time.

As the President challenges us and the world to a clearer human rights policy in foreign affairs the Congress has an opportunity to protect and support the Presidential initiative and assure that its application is morally consistent. America's friends in Thailand will welcome such consistency.

(BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE) Stewart Meacham has been involved in Quaker service for the past twenty years, working for the American Friends Service Committee until his retirement last year. His posts with the AFSC have included National Secretary for Peace Education during the years of the War in Vietnam, and more recently with Charlotte Meacham conducting the Quaker International Seminars in Southeast Asia. During these four years he lived and traveled extensively in Southeast Asia and was in Thailand many times. Most recently he was in Thailand in January and February, 1977 en route to and returning from an AFSC delegation visit to Vietnam. Prior to his Quaker service Stewart Meacham was on the staff of the National Labor Relations Board (1937-40), and was Labor Advisor to the Commanding General in Korea during the period of military government there (1946-47).

Mr. FRASER: Thank you very much, Mr. Meacham. There have been no elections since 1973, is that right?

Mr. MEACHAM: Yes, there have been. There was an election that brought in for a very short period of time a government under Seni Pramoj. That government was not able really to get itself set up. After that there was an election out of which Kukrit Pramoj became the Prime Minister. That government survived for a year or so and then Kukrit dissolved the government and called for new elections.

The result of that was another coalition, this time led by Seni Pramoj. These two brothers came into power and that government was one that was overthrown.

Mr. MORELL: The first election was in January 1975, the Democrat Party had the most seats and tried to form a coalition government, but it lasted only 8 days. Then out of the same House elected in January 1975 came the Kukrit coalition government, of some 14 parties.

Then there was another election in April 1976. Thus, during the period October 1973 to October 1976 there were two elections: January 1975 and April 1976.

Mr. FRASER: Tell me more about the elections.

Mr. MORELL: The first point which I think is important to make is how long it took from the uprising, or revolution, or dramatic change of political scene in October 1973 until the convening of a national election in January 1975. Some 15 months went by while things got organized. While it took so long to promulgate a new constitution and hold an election, so much was beginning to happen but side of the structure of parliamentary performance. A variety of

¹ Not included in this volume.

interest groups were beginning to emerge which were not working through the legislative structure, but were operating directly against the power structure.

The January 1975 election was remarkable in terms of its peacefulness: There was essentially no violence. There was about a 50-percent rate of voter turnout, and a very large number of political parties ran candidates for the House. There were something like 42 parties, if I remember correctly, of which over 20 had members elected to the House.

So this was a period of some confusion within the House of Representatives, as you would expect with so many political parties and after such a long time with no elected House. The previous election before 1975 was in February 1969; this legislature was dissolved by a coup in 1971. Before that, there had been an 11-year period without a single election.

The campaign for the second election in the recent period, in April 1976, was characterized by extremes of violence primarily, as one can tell from the record, by the rightist organizations I described in my prepared statement, striking against the progressive parties: the Socialist Party of Thailand, the Socialist Front, the New Force Party, and the left wing of the Democrat Party.

For example, the Secretary General of the Socialist Party at the time was assassinated. The killers were never caught by the police. The headquarters of the New Force Party was hit by fire bombs. People were terrorized during that election campaign.

The election results in 1976 were a striking victory for the moderates, for the Democrat Party, a nonprogressive classic centrist party which dominated the House of Representatives in its number of seats after the April 1976 election. By then, however, so much had taken place outside of the parliamentary format that we went only from April to October 1976 before the coup.

Mr. MEACHAM. I would like to make one comment to this and that is that I think we have to remember that in our own national experience there was a time gap that was between 10 and 15 years, between the time that our Constitution was signed and we actually reached the point where we began having national elections. There was a long period there before the Constitution even got ratified, and there was still a much longer time before the principal States rights finally got settled and it clearly became established that the authority of the Federal Government was greater than any possible combination of the several States. That did not happen until 1865. So these are not processes that can happen overnight.

The fact that there is a division may mean that there is participation and that there seems to be chaos may mean that elements are discovering that they can have a role and a place and that interests are being asserted that have a very valid place but no one has acknowledged those interests before and therefore their claims tend to become strident.

Mr. FRASER. Since the coup in 1976 which involved the students you have indicated that the present leadership is talking about 12 years before a new election.

Mr. MEACHAM. Yes.

Mr. MORELL. Twelve or sixteen.

Mr. FRASER. Is there any organized political activity permitted now?

Mr. MORELL. Not legally. All political parties have been outlawed, which of course leaves only one active political party, the Communist Party of Thailand.

Mr. MEACHAM. There is a good deal of activity that goes on from the extreme right. There was a story in the New York Times showing pictures of the Village Scouts which are burgeoning. People all over the country want to join up with the Village Scouts. Their image as an image very close to the King and one that gives people the right to go out and beat their enemies over the head has created a good deal of excitement.

So there is a good deal of political activity from the extreme right that is fully sanctioned. Nothing can be published in Thailand legally today without prior censorship.

Mr. FRASER. How severe is the censorship now?

Mr. MEACHAM. I don't know how to answer that question except to say that legally it is total. On a recent visit that I paid to Thailand in January and February of this year, and I was there for several days both times, I was told by friends that I have talked to the papers only publish what they are allowed to publish. I didn't get into any great details on exactly what they want to publish that they are not able to publish.

One of the things that struck me was how two things seem to be operating. One is people who are liberals and who found the earlier situation one that was challenging and exciting to them and were speaking out very strongly. Now, when a person who has friends in Thailand goes back you get in touch with your old friends very carefully and then they get back in touch with you as to where there might be a chance to talk and when.

Then this chance to talk develops and there is a strange kind of dichotomy here. On the one hand there is practically no paranoia toward their old friends. Their talk is very free. On the other hand, it is emotionally subdued. It is emotionally subdued. Everybody is sort of saying things with a great deal of care. The attitude is that nothing can be published except what is acceptable to the Censorship Committee.

Mr. MORELL. It is important to look not only at what is appearing or not appearing in newspapers, but at the absence of the kind of smaller journals reflecting a much wider range of opinion which flourished in the 3-year period of open politics and now has been totally abolished. The newspapers continue to publish. Primarily there is self-censorship, but under close Government scrutiny, under a climate of fear, plus total prohibition against the smaller journals of various kinds.

Mr. FRASER. Is the foreign press available in Bangkok?

Mr. MORELL. It is generally available, certainly in the Bangkok, but not always openly available. That is, we now have a situation in which a wide range of materials is circulating on a quasi-legal or clandestine basis.

I described earlier the essay "Thailand: Domino by Default?" Copies of this essay were reproduced at Thammasat University on mimeograph machines and then distributed by hand. I received one of

copies back with extensive comments written in the margin by a young Thai who disagreed with much of it. His commentary was very interesting. But the essay is circulating widely, if clandestinely. It certainly could not be published openly in any of the Thai newspapers, nor in an academic journal.

Mr. MEACHAM. One thing on this point, too, is that the foreign press, the English language press or other foreign language press in Thailand, there is only a very small upper crust group in Thailand that would read such papers.

In the Philippines, the English language press can have a very wide distribution or even in Malaysia and Singapore. But Thailand is really very Thai and the Thai language in Thailand is really the language. It is used very extensively all the way through the society and an English or foreign language paper is not going to get very wide distribution except a very small percentage of the people who are the elite.

Mr. FRASER. If one speaks out too openly in Thailand today what happens?

Mr. MEACHAM. What is in people's minds that happens, and people are not speaking out too openly in Thailand today and the reason they are not speaking out in Thailand today is because they have very fresh in their minds pictures such as these which are pictures of events that occurred in Bangkok at the Thammasat University on October 6. This kind of thing can occur. Those who would speak out openly would either have left the country or sunk into silence. The fear among those people is that they themselves very likely would not be burned alive as some of these people were, would not be hanged across from Thammasat University, but that they would be jailed and that they very well could be detained on charges of promoting communism, or endangering the regime, or held for indefinite periods of time over periods, renewable periods, of detention.

Mr. MORELL. Like so many other things in Thailand, and in many other societies, what happens to you if you speak out openly is very much a function of who you are. Look at a villager who is just plain angry about something, and who was very much involved in a movement like the Farmers Federation of Thailand. Suddenly, now, after the coup, this villager is not supposed to speak out, but perhaps he has not quite understood that yet. Such a villager may be subjected to very direct pressure from the police, from landlords, from the rightist organizations that are still very active in rural areas. On the other hand, if you are a member of the elite, or a student from a middle class or upper middle class family, you will first be called in by the police for a warning, without violence but a quite explicit warning: "What is the matter with you? Get on the team". Beyond that, it is clear that people have been, are being, and will be arrested in Thailand since the 1976 coup for speaking out openly.

Finally, as Stewart Meacham said, some choose to go into exile abroad, in the United States, Japan, England and so on. As I said in my earlier statement, a large number have chosen to go to the hills to join the active insurgency in lieu of being arrested or assassinated.

Mr. FRASER. What is this article 21 authority that is operative now?

Mr. MORELL. The article 21 authority allows the Prime Minister to take any action which he deems necessary regardless of any other

those provisions of the Constitution in the name of national security. This includes executions.

Mr. MEACHAM. A copy of article 21 is attached to the document that I have given to the subcommittee. I think it is on page 18 of the document headed "Report of Thai October 6th Defendants."

Mr. FRASER. This trial of political prisoners is coming up soon, I believe.

Mr. MORELL. Apparently, it has been deferred. It was scheduled to begin last week. The latest word that I have received is that it has been deferred indefinitely, whatever that means. The reasons for the deferral are by no means clear, but may not be totally unrelated to the opening of this hearing this morning.

In that connection, may I add, I have provided for the subcommittee and for the record a copy of a letter sent recently to Prime Minister Thanin Kraivichien by 37 American scholars concerned about events in Thailand. This letter deals quite specifically with our concern over the forthcoming trial, and our hope that the Prime Minister will insure that legal due process is fully provided during such a trial, should it occur. This letter was sent before the deferral. Again, whether this letter or actions like this have any impact one simply does not know. The fact is that the trial has been deferred.

[The letter and 37 signatures follows:]

His Excellency THANIN KRAIVICHIEU,
Prime Minister of Thailand,
Bangkok, Thailand.

JUNE 1977.

DEAR MR. PRIME MINISTER: We, scholars who have devoted ourselves to the study of Thai society and culture and individuals who through our experiences have come to have deep attachments to the people of Thailand, are greatly concerned about the protection of civil rights of those who have been arrested on political charges since October 6, 1976. Knowing your commitment to the maintenance of due processes of law and your reputation as a practitioner of the law, we are certain that you will understand our concerns.

We are particularly concerned about the 111 people, including 24 still in prison, who were arrested on October 6, 1976 and who, while being charged with political crimes, have yet to be brought to trial. Many of these people are known to us to be former students, former labor and farmer leaders, and former members of political parties who desire only to contribute in any way they can to improving conditions of life in Thailand. We strongly urge that if the charges against these people are found to be insubstantial that they be dropped and that these people be allowed to return to take their places in society. If these charges are deemed to be more substantial, we urge that legal proceedings be instituted. We are certain, knowing your own commitment to justice, that when such legal processes are instituted that they will be conducted openly and with allowance for the presentation of a full and adequate defense.

We are also concerned about the thousands of people who have been arrested since October 6, 1976 on charges of "endangering society" and more serious charges. We know that many of the arrests have been made on the basis of unsubstantiated evidence, often provided by fellow villagers or neighbors. Knowing your desire to create a just society in Thailand, we urge you to bring to an end these indiscriminate arrests, arrange for the release of all those against whom the charges are without solid legal basis, and speed up the legal proceedings for those for whom the charges appear to be more substantial.

Our experience in Thailand makes us acutely aware that the power given to the police to arrest people on the basis of vague charges, such as has been the case since October 6, 1976, provides certain policemen with the strong temptation to use their power to extort money from those who have been charged. We have learned of a number of cases where villagers charged with "endangering society"

¹ Not included in this volume.

have had to pay large sums of money to policemen to get these charges dropped. We know that such actions must be as abhorrent to you and they are to us. We urge you to give your attention to these problems of civil rights and associated corruption which must be so alien to your own sense of justice and to your incorruptibility.

Respectfully yours,

CHARLES F. KEYES,
University of Washington,
(and 36 others).

Mr. FRASER. A number of us wrote the State Department urging that there be somebody from the U.S. Embassy at the trial. What is the basic charge against these people?

Mr. MEACHAM. They started out being charged on about 10 different counts. I think in this document that I just handed you, that I just referred to, beginning on page 5 of document No. 1, there is the list of the October 6 defendants and over on page 8 there is a statement as to the categories in which the defendants fall. No, these are the places of detention. Over on page 9 there is the official offense list and the charges run from conspiring in communist actions, conspiring to kill or attempt to kill government officials on duty, conspiring to kill or attempting to kill others, recruiting of manpower and weapons for insurrection, coinstigators of insurrection or disorders within the kingdom, conspiracy of 10 people with use of weapons to threaten others and failure to obey police orders to disperse, conspiracy of five people to harm others, conspiracy to enter government building with weapons at night and damaging government property, conspiracy to resist or harm police officers on duty and possession of weapons and ammunition.

Now word has come to me from Thailand that the prosecuting authority in Thailand was unable to find evidence sufficient to go to trial on these 10 charges with respect to the 110. The military have requested a reinvestigation to see whether or not they can't find some evidence. Then there is an 11th charge dealing with Communist activity which has been added onto this which would open the way for article 21 to be used with respect to these people.

Mr. MORELL. This is all with respect to the 110 or 111 arrested at the time of the October 6 massacre at Thammasat University. In addition, there apparently have been hundreds, and perhaps thousands of individuals arrested since the coup on charges of "endangering society"—as simple as that. No further details are provided on the charge. No further details are necessary under the present Thai legal system, simply "endangering society" is sufficient.

Mr. FRASER. Has anybody been released?

Mr. MORELL. Some have been released. There is a constant turnover, particularly in rural areas. If I may quote from this letter to Prime Minister Thanin which has been submitted for the record: "We have learned of a large number of cases where villagers charged with endangering society have had to pay large sums of money to policemen to get these charges dropped." This is apparently another device to generate additional corruption.

Mr. MEACHAM. A recent phone call that I received, an international call, coming from an individual that I would be inclined to respect, said that there are something like 8,000 people in the outlying areas who have been charged and held for periods of time under this

endangering society provision and about 1,500 of them are still being held.

You know, it is extremely difficult, even if you are in Thailand, to be able to assemble this kind of information with any great degree of accuracy.

Mr. MORELL. I suspect that the Thai regime itself does not know exactly how many are in jail.

Mr. MEACHAM. I would imagine so.

Mr. FRASER. Professor Morell, you referred to this letter signed by a number of scholars to the Prime Minister. You may have touched on this. What is the general feeling in the academic community among those who are interested in this part of the world?

Mr. MORELL. I have been quite amazed at the wide range of individuals across the traditional political spectrum, all of whom are extremely concerned about events in Thailand and about their implications for human rights and for the future of Thailand. This is a very different kind of reaction than one saw after any earlier Thai coups. It is partly the different nature of this coup.

I have provided your committee with a list of those who have signed this letter, all of who are leading American specialists on Thailand. Some of the names give one a sense of the range of the political spectrum: Prof. Charles Keyes, University of Washington, Seattle, an anthropologist; Prof. David Wilson, University of California, Los Angeles, a political scientist; Prof. Walter Vella, Hawaii, a historian; Prof. Herbert Phillips, University of California, Berkeley, an anthropologist; Prof. S. J. Tambiah, Harvard, a historian; Prof. Stephen Piker, Swarthmore, an anthropologist, plus a number of American academicians who some years ago were very active in the antiwar movement and, whom one would identify on another part of the political spectrum. The names I have mentioned are particularly interesting because they include several individuals who never really were identified with the antiwar movement in the United States, yet are now extremely concerned over recent events in Thailand.

Mr. FRASER. The students that have been released that have been picked up since the coup in October, is there any evidence that any of these were tortured?

Mr. MEACHAM. There is evidence of the use of a kind of, you might say, improved type of tiger cage. If a specific inquiry could be made, an inquiry could be made about the people being held at the police headquarters in Bangkok on Setsiri Road where information has come that there are about 140 people who are being held in this particular prison in tiger cages that are very small, very compact little boxes, that are dark, there is no light that comes into them. People are let out of them only once a month and are kept otherwise in the dark tiger cages.

It is my opinion that as the use of terror becomes more sophisticated there is a tendency less and less to hit people over the head with a club. Our Philadelphia police are still doing that. More and more and more of a tendency to use cold rooms and dark rooms and extended periods of isolation to cause a collapse of morale that will generate the kind of fear both of stepping out of line and also readiness on the part of the people to confess to whatever you want them to confess to.

Mr. FRASER. Professor Morell, you are explicitly suggesting, I think it was your fourth option, more active involvement.

Mr. MORELL. Yes, that is correct.

Mr. FRASER. Do we have any place in the world we can point to where that works?

Mr. MORELL. Not that I know of. Where we have intervened and it has worked, we were not in pursuit of the kind of objectives I was getting at in that fourth option. The track record has not been good, yet I don't think this approach really has ever been tried sincerely.

Mr. MEACHAM. I think that is the important point.

Mr. MORELL. As I said, there is a potential for success in such an endeavor here, for trying this kind of activity, forthrightly, openly. I don't see any reason to do this secretly. One can be open about it. "Here is what we think is essential if you are not going to collapse." You know, do it quite openly and see what happens. Whereas, as I have suggested, in places like Korea, because of the security implication, and because of the Japanese connection, there might be greater restraints on what we can do with respect to bringing effective pressure on the regime. This is so even though it is my impression—though I know far more about Thailand than Korea—that the human rights situation is far worse in Korea.

In Thailand, I think there is a great deal we can do. As I said, they need us far more than we need them. I would urge us to try this kind of a new foreign policy approach.

Mr. FRASER. What you are faced with as you described it is an insurgency that is now significantly strengthened, by way of recruitment at least, and I assume doesn't lack or won't lack for supplies, given the nature of the regimes to the east?

Mr. MORELL. Also there has been a vast outpouring of weaponry into the countryside in the arms of the police. Most of the insurgents have been supplied with weapons captured from the police after overrunning their patrols and their outposts.

Mr. FRASER. The normal reaction for U.S. policymakers as insurgency continues would be to pump in military and economic aid to the Thai Government.

Mr. MORELL. Yes, sir. That has certainly been the normal record today, and we know what the results have been. As I said in my earlier statement, to me this action is akin to spraying gasoline on smoldering embers. We put military and economic aid into a situation in which the regime is simply going to use this equipment to worsen the situation, to escalate the level of conflict rather than to deescalate through dealing effectively with the underlying causes of the revolution.

These revolutions should tell us something. They symbolize profound social grievances in these societies. The sooner we realize this fact, the better we will be in terms of American policy.

Mr. MEACHAM. We had one of our Quaker international seminars in 1975 in the northeast, near a town called Loei, which is very close to a very large area that would be completely inundated if the Pa Mong Dam, the planning for which was about completed at that time, were to be built. It would have flooded out about 300,000 Thais and over on the other side of the river about 100,000 Lao. We had a seminar on the resettlement problems that would be connected with this dam. We had very distinguished people from the academic community. Dr. Puey,

who will be here, was at this seminar. We had people from the academic community, from the government, from the Ministry of Interior, from the Ministry of Agriculture. We had journalists and writers there. We also had people there on the receiving end, who would be on the receiving end of the development, people from the villages.

This was a rather interesting experiment for us to see how well they could participate in a discussion of this sort affecting their villages and their lives. The interesting thing to us, was that the seminar went along fine, it was a great experience, but the thing I wanted to share with you is that in the process of trying to recruit villagers to come to such a seminar it was very easy for us in Bangkok to go around in a half day and find people in Bangkok who would be very glad to be in such a seminar. But there were also Thai students, and one of our own people who is a Southeast Asian, not from Thailand but from one of the other countries, who went up and circulated around among the villagers, helping them in their fields, working closely with them, staying with them at night and discussing with them the possibilities of such a seminar and their participation. We ended up with participants who were actually drawn from the villages, chosen by the villagers.

The interesting thing was this: When our recruiters first went into this area up above Loei, up toward the Mekong River, they were told by the district officer of that area who they first checked out, when they said they are going to do this:

"It is OK to go in and talk with the villagers and so forth but don't stay overnight because there are terrorists and you know they will kill you. So don't stay overnight, get out before dark."

Then they went up into the villages and began meeting and talking with people and the villagers said, "You can stay in my house. You can stay in this one." They reported that gradually after they had been there a few days, and there was no terrorism, that they could perceive, they began to ask the villagers how was it with the district officer and the other officials that came in from time to time. They said, "Oh, they are terrible people, they hate us, they only come in to exploit," and so forth.

In our seminar these kinds of fears and apprehensions began to get exchanged directly, face to face, between villagers and some of the people in the government who were there. We had a rather remarkable side effect to the seminar where people said to each other "we ought to be able to see each other more."

We felt there had developed an enormous barrier between the people on the one hand and officials on the other. This is where officials, become appointed from Bangkok, during the democratic period, because it was supposed to be a particular emergency kind of area.

When we say to ourselves that we can't afford to have trade unions, village organizations, the government open to the people answering their needs and so forth because they are all Communists, we are getting it just backwards. What we should realize is that the failure to bring the people in generates the kind of hostility and suspicion that creates the kind of suspicion that our people ran into when the district officer on the one hand was saying "don't stay overnight" and the villagers were saying "these people rob you blind."

Mr. FRASER. That makes a lot of sense, Mr. Meacham, the only thing is that the United States should not instruct the Thais on how to proceed.

Mr. MEACHAM. I agree. We don't tell Thailand what it has to do. I think we have to tell Thailand what we have to do. I don't think in the world that exists today we can go around picking and choosing where we will support repression and where we won't. We either are not going to support it or else we are going to play politics with it. If we play politics with it we have destroyed the very ground on which we are asserting the principle.

Mr. FRASER. You might differ from Professor Morell then. I gather you would sort of pull back.

Mr. MEACHAM. No. I would go in rather strongly.

Mr. FRASER. And let the Thais work out their own problems?

Mr. MEACHAM. I would get a new team that could go in with something fresh, other than how do we hang on to our old relationships. We could begin talking in terms of new fresh relationships, in terms of this kind of perspective.

Now, it won't make any sense unless we can also say to Thai business that there are creative ways that financing and investment and transfer of technology can be made that are not going to be determined by the laws of the marketplace that is now being developed in Southeast Asia and that is a large order. It is the kind of social challenge that our Government rose to in the early days of the New Deal.

Now the question is can we rise to it internationally.

Mr. MORELL. The specific details of necessary reforms would have to be worked out by the Thais, in their own way, appropriate to their own situation. What I know about Thailand I have learned from Thais, from my research there, from reactions of Thais. What I am saying today is that the key to option four is to structure and make an American commitment around clearly articulated goals. This is not just dollars, but providing American legitimacy to an isolated regime facing some very tough neighbors.

As I said, the objectives fall into three basic categories: Decentralization of power, participation in public life, open expression of views. I don't believe that this necessarily means election of Members of Parliament. Maybe it means election of village headmen, or of various other forms of leaders who could then arrive at a consensus. Certainly one prerequisite is a less centralized political system than the one in place today, for this is one of the key causes of the insurgency. Open expression of opinion comes very close to at least part of the human rights debate. Some freedom of expression is needed for people on various sides, not only for the Village Scouts or the Red Guards, rightists who continue to use violence.

Mr. FRASER. What you are saying is that we should suggest to the Thai authorities we are prepared to help you provided you move along these lines. They say "great, great, that is what we need. Send some experts and we will work out a plan."

Mr. MORELL. I am reluctant to send experts.

Mr. FRASER. Such assistance would run for years with no substantive changes occurring in the villages. In the meantime insurgency grows and our involvement grows.

Mr. MORELL. A series of milestones would need to be established quite clearly if such a policy of foreign assistance were to be implemented. Promises alone clearly are not enough.

Mr. FRASER. I don't mean to be skeptical. I have been increasingly impressed with how much change has to come from within rather than from without society. Whether we can play even a modest role in that I don't know.

Mr. MORELL. I am skeptical myself. All I am saying is that we ought at least to try such an approach, rather than just the military-commercial linkage of the past. If not, we ought to let them sink in their own mire.

Mr. MEACHAM. One thing I would like to suggest is that this is a more complicated scene than just U.S.-Thai relationships. I am very serious at this point. You can always be wrong but I think everything now seems to indicate that if we were just a little bit more willing to forgive the Vietnamese indecency of winning a war against us and to let old scores be forgotten, and to move ahead now in a way that does take into account that they have need for certain kinds of aid that we have the capacity to give, and that we are prepared now to think in terms of the future and to help build—it is not that Vietnam is going to be saying to us "unless you do this we are going to start sending more guns to Thailand," but what we are doing, it seems to me, is fashioning the kinds of political forces that are predictable as far as results. I think the result here is heading in one direction; but we could give the Vietnamese assurances. They are prepared to operate on a noninterventionist way with their neighbors. They want a chance that does not leave Vietnam largely dependent on the Soviet Union for help.

I don't happen to be a member of the Committee on Present Danger. They have not even asked me to join so far as I know. But from their point of view it is difficult for me to see how they would see American interests now to lie along the lines of trying to isolate Vietnam and to in effect push it into the hands of the Soviet Union.

Mr. FRASER. I am not sure they have taken a position on that issue.

Mr. MEACHAM. Maybe they haven't.

Mr. FRASER. They seem to talk more in terms of the relevant military balance.

Mr. MEACHAM. I will withdraw the irresponsible use of their name. But basically of course there is a very strong tendency, very powerful tendency, here to carry out policies for whatever reason that has this effect. If we could help generate tendencies in the opposite direction at least we would have a chance of playing a creative role. Otherwise, we are just building the same thing over again with Thailand as a focus.

Mr. MORELL. It is not simply a bilateral situation between us and the Thais. There are a number of very important European actors in this situation: France, West Germany, Belgium, all of whom have a variety of relations with Thailand taking them back into the 19th century, as do ours, all of whom have been concerned but are really looking to what the United States is going to do as a key to what kind of behavior they ought to exercise.

Australia and New Zealand play an important and growing role in this region. The other four ASEAN states and the Japanese do as well. What will the Japanese do in this situation? How does our concern over a new foreign policy in Thailand relate to our relations with Japan?

These are obviously complicated relationships. It does seem to me one could make a serious try at doing something different in that part of the world. You have to bring in the other actors. The Thai generals are isolated at the moment. They are left alone. If it can be made increasingly clear to them that the way for them to get unisolated is to begin to take those actions which are essential to their own long-term survival as a non-Communist entity, then I think events can begin to proceed somewhat more productively. If not, then these generals ought to remain isolated, and alone. That is their right, their privilege. If they want to sink, let them sink.

Mr. FRASER. Mr. Smeeton.

Mr. Smeeton. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What percentage of the body politic would you estimate is politically conscious in Thailand, and in this context what is the current population of Thailand?

Mr. MORELL. Forty-four or forty-five million would be about the best estimate on Thailand's total population. Of course, we could spend some time defining what you mean by "politically conscious."

Mr. Smeeton. For the purposes of this discussion, let's say it means being aware of the rather bleak or sorry political situation that both of you depict.

Mr. MORELL. A very high percentage of Thais are quite well aware of the situation. However, an extremely high number do not know what to do about it. They are concerned to a great extent about order, and about reverence for their monarch as head of the traditional system.

One gets this picture in the literature of the apolitical Thai villagers, as nonparticipants. Yet look, as I have in some of my own research, at what happens when you begin to open up a political process, when you provide the possibility for true political change. This happened both in the 1969-71 and 1973-76 periods of open politics. I don't happen to call this "democracy." Instead, I prefer the terms "participation" or "open politics."

In the recent 1973-76 period, there was a vast outpouring of grievances from villagers and laborers. Their political concerns are not democracy, freedom, or human rights, in the way we articulate them. Rather, they are: "Somebody stole my land, somebody stole my cattle from me"; corruption, exploitation, police misbehavior. These kinds of grievances permeate Thai society, rural and urban.

To the villagers these concerns are "politics". Being able to do something about them is true, meaningful political participation. They eagerly pursued the chance to decide how the public works infrastructure funded by government money is going to be built in their area. In the traditional process, up until 1975, each Tambon Council—representing a group of 8, 10, or 12 villages, had about \$500 from the land tax to spend every year on roads, wells, and dams. One of the truly innovative reforms of the recent period of open politics was to increase that from \$500 to \$25,000, a fiftyfold increase.

You can be sure that there was a lot of corruption at the level of the village and Tambon headmen, and the contractors. This was clearly decentralized corruption. Yet, it was a very significant step toward providing people, in those areas, with some choice about their own future. A road goes to village A this year, and village A will support building a road to village B the next year. Such coalition building gives people a sense of the realities of politics. People in a Thai village are not terribly concerned with the global balance of power. They are, however, concerned with police exploitation, with land tenure and rent, with prices they pay for fertilizers, with going to a health center where the drugs are advertised under the government brochure to be free, and yet they have to pay 50 cents or a dollar for the drugs they need. That is the reality of rural Thai politics, which I think affects the vast majority of rural Thais.

The rapid growth in the recent open period of an institution called the Farmers Federation of Thailand in a number of provinces is indicative of the kind of grievances that come forth when you take the repressive thumb off in Thailand. But this open period lasts only 2 or 3 years each time. There have been four or five brief periods like this in the past four decades, and then the military repression returns once again.

Mr. Smeeton. How many experiments with democracy have there been over the years?

Mr. MORELL. The first elections were in early 1930. Then there were no elections again until 1946, after the end of the Second World War. At that time a civilian regime came into power, held elections, and formed a parliament which was ended by the military coup in November 1947.

There were two or three elections in the early fifties under military rule, ended again by another military coup in 1957. These are the brief periods of opening, and then closing again for longer periods.

In 1957 it closed, and closed tight. The next elections were not until 1969. Then there was an open period from 1969 to 1971, then it closed again. The explosion in October 1973 had something to do with the way people felt politically in that society after so many decades of military rule.

Then there was an open period from 1973 to 1976, and now closed again. So this latest period was by no means the only time. When present leaders of the regime—and perhaps we will hear some of this from the American executive branch next week—talk about needing more time, one must remember that it has been 45 years since the first attempt to begin to institutionalize participant politics in Thailand. But the system is never given much time in each increment, before it is closed down again for another 4 or 5 or 10 years of military rule and martial law.

Mr. Smeeton. Do you think the forces on both the right and left were rather impatient with the way things were evolving during the most recent period of openness? Can both sides be legitimately criticized?

Mr. MORELL. Absolutely. There is enough blame to be shared all around: Thais, Americans, left, right, center. There was a vast lack of leadership on all sides.

As I said in my opening remarks, the few reforms that were tried were too little for the left which had waited, from their point of view, forever for these modest changes. In their view, the new civilian governments were "throwing us a few bones." Yet what were bones from their point of view, was a massive, frightening skeleton to the rightists. To them, change was so rapid they could not stand it. In other words, there was a structural imbalance in which the reforms which were started were much too little for the left, but their implications were far too much for the right.

Everybody was impatient, after a process of rapid social and economic development in the sixties and early seventies. Growth rates in GNP and average per capita income, to the degree the statistics are valid, were 7, 8, or even 9 percent per year for a number of years. With all this socioeconomic change, there was political stagnation. Finally, after October 1973, you let the pressure cooker open, and it blows apart.

Mr. MEACHAM. Also during that period a growing gap between the rich and poor, that 7 to 9 percent is going into the pockets of very few people.

Mr. MORELL. The middle class was expanding rapidly as well. Then the middle class was very much involved in the October 1973 uprising. For them the corruption had become too much, the system of internal colonialism had become unacceptable. But for many doctors who had worked so hard for what they had, the nurses, the tension and chaos of the open period also were too much.

Three years later, by 1976, most of the middle class was silent. They realized there were few hard core Communists at Thammasat, despite what the Army radio station was saying. They knew that these were Thai kids concerned with the future of their country. But the middle class chose to remain silent.

Mr. MEACHAM. One of the things that has impressed me in just a few glimpses we had in our seminar program was the character and the quality of relationships within Thai villages which the foreigner from the outside, without too much knowledge of Thailand, can perceive.

It was our feeling, David, that even in the midst of a continuing very repressive situation, in many ways in the traditional life of the village, there was a fantastic amount of what you would call participation. The idea of village meetings and villagers coming together en masse, all of them to talk about anything that was a common interest to them all, is something that apparently had been written right straight through all of this, which means you can't look at Thailand and just say on the one hand the villagers who are in the great majority are in a completely chaotic situation. They are not. Their traditional structures go back before the advent of any kind of limitations on the monarchy, have long traditional practices, if those could begin to be built on today as resources for Thai democracy, I don't know of a country anywhere that would have stronger resources.

Mr. SMERON. During this last open period that you were referring to, the 1973-76 period, there seems to have been a rather marked increase in labor movement political activity. The students were very active. Now, we are seeing another closing period. What lasting effect do you think this participation on the part of labor and students has had on the political process?

Mr. MORELL. This activity during the open period must have had a profound effect on many. Farmers were beginning to aggregate their interests with those of others in a common cause. Laborers were starting to work together as a part of a union in pursuit of collective bargaining, in pursuit of changing a situation where, as was typical in that period, a laborer would work a 12-hour day for something like 60 cents, and if he or she missed a day's work because of sickness, illness injury or whatever, the penalty was a reduction in weekly wages of about a dollar.

Then for 2 or 3 years you began to get people who were expressing their political interests. These people will never go back totally to a passive state again. Right now, they are silent; but they cannot have remained unaffected by the processes of political change. Of course, no one else will be unaffected either. Those who were frightened and threatened by these events were affected too. So what I find so gloomy, so sad, for someone who cares very much about Thailand from my years there, is that the level of violence and polarization has come this far. Today none is allowed to form a progressive political organization. To the members of the Village Scouts, anything like that must be a Communist. Thus I think the future of Thailand bespeaks a very dangerous polarization. The minute you open up politics again, the situation will be violent at a much higher level than before.

Mr. SMERON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Meacham and Mr. Morell.

Mr. FRASER. My thanks to both of you. We will be taking some more testimony on this. You have been very helpful today and this has been a very informative session. Thank you very much.

[Whereupon, at 12:15 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned, to reconvene Thursday, June 30, 1977, at 2:30 p.m.]

HUMAN RIGHTS IN THAILAND

THURSDAY, JUNE 30, 1977

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met at 2:30 p.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Donald M. Fraser (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. FRASER. Today the subcommittee resumes its hearings exploring the human rights situation in Thailand and the response of the U.S. Government. As I indicated in the first hearing held on June 23, the subcommittee is especially concerned with the situation in Thailand because it has taken a significant step backward in the human rights area. From 1973 to 1976 Thailand had a democratic government with a reasonable adherence to human rights standards. On October 6 of last year a military junta seized power and serious restrictions were placed upon human rights.

The United States has maintained close relations with Thailand. We have extensive U.S. security and other assistance programs in Thailand. The subcommittee would like to explore what has been the nature of the U.S. relationship with Thailand; the effect of our policies upon political developments in Thailand; and the manner in which the new administration has sought to emphasize its concern for human rights both in terms of diplomacy and assistance programs.

Our witnesses today are Robert Oakley, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Department of State; Dr. Puey Ungphakorn, former rector at Thammasat University in Bangkok; and Prof. W. Scott Thompson of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University.

Mr. Oakley, we are delighted to have you here. Why don't you proceed in whatever manner you find most appropriate?

STATEMENT OF ROBERT OAKLEY, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY,
BUREAU OF EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT
OF STATE

Mr. OAKLEY. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. It is a pleasure to be here. I will read through my statement if you would like, and then I am prepared to answer any questions that you or others may have.

Several Asian countries as you well know, figure prominently in this administration's and this committee's commitment to improve human

rights worldwide. I, therefore, welcome this opportunity to discuss Thailand's human rights record, and to put that record into the context of the prevailing situation in Southeast Asia.

Given the widespread interest in the events surrounding the change in the Thai Government last October, it seems appropriate to begin with a description of those events. The 3 preceding years of democracy in Thailand were an anomaly in Thai political history which has had a series of relatively stable, military-backed governments since 1932.

Unfortunately, these 3 years were also marked by an unusual amount of social unrest, as the traditional patterns of political behavior were challenged by new ones. In this heady, uncertain atmosphere right and left wing elements fought each other in the streets. Thammasat University was attacked and burned by students of a rival school, and even striking police took the law into their own hands when they sacked the Prime Minister's own home. It was a period of political instability during which four separate Thai governments were in power. The Khukrit government, which survived the longest of the four, consisted of a coalition of no less than 16 separate political parties.

By October 1976, there had been a series of domestic political crises which began with the return of former Thai Prime Minister Thanom from self-imposed exile. There had been large scale student demonstrations. The Prime Minister had unexpectedly resigned when criticized by the leadership of his own party, later agreeing to reconstruct his coalition government. A reshuffled Cabinet under Prime Minister Seni was sworn in by the King on October 5. The Cabinet was, however, divided into mutually antagonistic factions. Numerous civilian and military groups and individuals of all political persuasions were attempting to foment and take advantage of the increasingly unstable political situation.

The vent which finally ignited this incendiary situation was a student rally at Thammasat University on October 5. Right wing groups organized large counterdemonstrations protesting what they claimed had been a gross act of student disrespect for the Crown Prince. On October 6, police units, at the order of the Prime Minister Seni Pramot, moved to arrest the leaders of those student demonstrations. The armed confrontation resulting from this police action was further compounded by fighting between right and left wing groups in and around the campus. The violence left 40 dead and approximately 3,000 persons, mostly students, arrested. Meanwhile, in another part of Bangkok later that day, a mob of some 50,000 people, drawn largely from vocational students and rural groups, demonstrated in front of the Prime Minister's office demanding the resignation of the Cabinet.

Prime Minister Seni appeared to have been overwhelmed by events and unable to deal with the situation. Six hours later, in the wake of this violence, faced with governmental paralysis and the possibility of further urban demonstrations and violence on a massive scale, the senior commanders of the Thai military took control of the Government.

Around the world, television and press photo coverage of the violence at Thammasat was reported simultaneously with the news of the coup d'etat. The resulting erroneous impression in the minds of many

was that the Thai military had brutally seized control of the Government. In fact, the coup was bloodless. The Thai military did not participate in the violence at Thammasat, nor were any members of the previous government injured, or, arrested. The commander of the police—who must bare some responsibility for the savage violence at Thammasat—was replaced by the military authorities. However, no disciplinary action has been taken against the police.

The senior Thai military officers who seized control of the government stated that it was not their intention to govern the country directly. Two days after the coup, the King appointed Prime Minister Thanin upon the recommendation of the military. On October 22, a civilian cabinet was announced and a new constitution promulgated. While the current regime is ultimately dependent upon the backing of the Thai military, the Prime Minister and his Cabinet have considerable independence. Senior Thai military commanders have statutory authority to act as the Prime Minister's advisory council, and it appears that that body sets the essential guidelines of Government policy, particularly with respect to matters affecting national security and foreign policy. The Prime Minister and his civilian Cabinet, however, significantly contribute to policy as well as administering the day-to-day operations of the Thai Government.

During the 3 years of democratic rule, Thailand had civil and political liberties comparable to our own. The military's action to end the Thai democratic experiment represented to many Thai, although not all, a necessary sacrifice if the country was to stabilize itself and successfully face the growing threat from hostile Communist neighbors.

In his April 30 address on human rights and foreign policy Secretary Vance defined our concern for human rights under the broad categories of integrity of the person, vital human needs, and political liberties. I would like to briefly review Thailand's record as it relates to that definition.

With respect to integrity of the person, there is no specific declaration of the people's rights and liberties in the Thai Constitution. Thai courts, however, continue to adhere to a legal code based on Western European models. In effect, those tried in Thailand are allowed basically the same rights as the accused in the United States.

There are, however, certain provisions of martial law in effect in Thailand since October 7 that can be used to supersede Thai law and these provisions present a problem of due process and individual liberty. Under Order 22, there are nine categories of violations which can be cause for arrest and imprisonment without recourse to normal Thai legal procedure. Six categories involve criminal activity while three categories potentially involve political conduct. Since the October coup, more than 3,000 Thai citizens have been detained under these nine categories. At present, there are approximately 1,000 persons in detention. The vast majority of these prisoners are considered petty criminals and are detained in reform centers for periods lasting 2 to 6 months. The detention of most of these people appears to be a genuine effort to reform a criminal element in Thai society. The Thai Government has, however, identified 64 of the prisoners currently being held as violators of one of the three categories of Order 22 that has a political basis.

We have no way of ascertaining the number of prisoners whose arrest may be politically motivated. However, political or not, all these people are held without due process. The cases of all Order 22 prisoners are reviewed every 2 months and releases made. The last was on May 11 when 613 were freed, 43 of whom Thai authorities identified as "political" prisoners. We know of no reports that those detained have suffered torture, cruel, or inhuman treatment, although they may have occurred in isolated instances of which the State Department is not aware.

Of these 3,000 persons, mostly students, arrested at Thammasat University on October 6 before the coup, all but 23 have been released or are free on bail. Formal charges of criminal activity against 110 of those persons arrested before the coup—most of whom have been freed on bail—are being considered, but the Department is informed that not all of them are likely to be brought to trial. In fact, we have just learned that charges against 37 of these people have been dropped from lack of evidence—which means there were 74 persons arrested on October 6 who will probably be brought to trial. Our information is this may take place sometime next month.

In response to an expression of concern by our Embassy in Bangkok, the Thai Government has assured us that normal Thai legal procedures will be followed for those brought to trial. Trial is expected sometime this summer. Summary justice under article 21 of the Constitution will not be employed, and the courtroom will be open to both press and public. We intend to have an Embassy officer present.

With respect to the second category of human rights outlined by Secretary Vance, the Thai Government has demonstrated a commitment to the provision of essential food, shelter, health care, and education for the Thai people. The Thai Government's budget provides for continuing efforts to expand primary and secondary schooling. Higher university education in Thailand is one of the finest and largest in Asia with 32 universities in operation. The Thai government is promoting land reform and rural development. There are special education and development programs for minority populations, including the King's hill-tribe project. There is a minimum wage law and a rice price subsidy for the urban poor. The Thai Government is appreciative of the modest U.S. aid program of \$14 million in fiscal year 1977 and accepts some assistance from other countries as well as international financial institutions. However, most of the funds and personnel for development projects in Thailand come from domestic Thai resources.

The third category of human rights deal with those civil and political liberties which we hold so fundamental to our own system. The current Thai Government is nonelective, and political parties have been disbanded, although there is a formal commitment to a complicated 12-year formula under which full democracy may be restored to Thailand. There are still elected village leaders that continue to administer government at the local level. Political interest groups no longer able to form political parties have reverted to the more traditional Thai network of personal contacts to influence Government policy.

Student organizations have been similarly barred, but unions continue to function although they are legally constrained from strike action. This limitation on labor is a serious constraint, and the Thai

Government is considering such alternatives as a board of binding arbitration, although we are unclear as to how this is going to come out.

There is no formal press censorship, but some newspapers have occasionally had their licenses revoked. Most papers which have had their publication suspended have resumed operation within several weeks. Some, curiously, merely changed the name of the paper slightly and received a new license.

The United States had made President Carter's views on human rights very clearly known to Thai Government officials, both here and in Thailand, including our view that a state of emergency cannot justify the commission of violations of human rights. It is our judgment that the Government of Thailand understands these views and that it is, for its own reasons, becoming more concerned about the issue of human rights. There has recently been increased emphasis upon rural development, as well as considerable reduction in the numbers of prisoners held under Order 22. Also, the few persons still charged because of their participation in the events of October 1976 will soon be tried while the rest have been freed.

Human rights in Thailand cannot be discussed in a vacuum, given its geographical location abutting the Communist states of Cambodia and Laos, its proximity to Vietnam—which has over 20,000 troops in Laos—and the history of antagonism between the Indochinese states and Thailand. A justification given for not returning to the open, politically effervescent, democratic system which prevailed from 1973 to 1976 is the threat posed by these states, including support for the Communist insurgencies in Thailand's north, northeast, and south. Thai feeling of vulnerability have been increased by the removal of the U.S. military from Thailand and the huge amounts of U.S. arms left in the hands of the Vietnamese—some of which have been sent to Laos.

One can draw one's own conclusions as to degree to which this situation has contributed to the nature of the present government. However, I wish to direct your attention to another important point—the effect which massive human rights violations in the Indochina countries has upon Thailand. This committee has already had hearings on Vietnam and will do so soon on Cambodia. Thus, there is no need to go into detail on the human rights problems in Indochina. Suffice it to say that over the past 2 years, some 12,000 refugees from Indochina have sought refuge in Thailand. They see Thailand as being so far preferable to the situations of poverty and repressions which exist in their countries that they take great risks to escape.

Despite the threat of arrest or death from troops who have orders to fire upon those attempting to flee, over 1,000 refugees a month continue to pour into Thailand. Despite the serious economic, social, and political problems caused by these refugees, the Thai do not turn them back, although they sometimes are tempted to do so. One group of refugees who recently escaped from Laos were told by a Thai official that they might have to go to jail since the refugee camps were full and Thailand could not accommodate the continuing flow. The answer was that detention in a Thai prison is preferable to freedom in Laos. They were somehow accommodated, in a refugee camp, along with all the other refugees.

Thus, in addition to the action it is taking to improve the welfare of its own people, the Government and people of Thailand are making a substantial human rights contribution to those who are less fortunate than they. Indeed, they are second only to the United States in providing assistance to Indochina refugees. They deserve our commendation and our financial support in this effort, one which they know must be continued for several years to come, given the sharply contrasting human rights situation in Indochina.

That is my statement, Mr. Chairman. I will be happy to try to answer whatever questions you may have.

Mr. FRASER. Thank you very much, Mr. Oakley. Are we providing assistance to Thailand to deal with the Indochinese refugees?

Mr. OAKLEY. We are assisting through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which in turn is assisting the Thai Government. They are sharing, the High Commissioner for Refugees and the Thai Government, much of the expense for the refugee camps which exist in the northern part of Thailand.

There is a problem in that the number of refugees being taken out of Thailand is at the moment lower than the number of people who are coming in. This is quite aside from the refugees we hear so much about who are coming out of Vietnam by sea who don't end up in Thailand. So, there is a problem which confronts the Thais which is the situation some Middle Eastern countries have faced which is how are you going to deal with people who will be with them for a long period of time if not indefinitely. So, it is becoming a bigger problem in the sense no one anticipated the flow out of Indochinese countries in the beginning which is brought about by economic and political conditions.

Mr. FRASER. It seems to me the United States has some responsibility not only because of our past history of involvement in Indochina but just from the humanitarian point of view. Are we doing as much as we ought to be to assist in the refugee problem?

Mr. OAKLEY. In my judgment, Mr. Chairman, we are not yet doing so but it is something we are actively looking into. We have made, the State Department has made some proposals that we hope will receive approval. If they do we want to begin consultation with Congress to see what more we can do in this general field because the problem of Indochina refugees is a continuing one that we had not anticipated.

Mr. FRASER. There was a report, I think of the Thai Government forcing a group of refugees back in Cambodia where allegedly they were all slaughtered. Does that ring a bell with you?

Mr. OAKLEY. No, sir. So far as I know they have not done that. They are always torn. I am not aware of any such—excuse me, Mr. Chairman, I was wrong. My expert, Mr. Smith, who has been following this situation more closely than I, tells me there was such an incident and that apparently local initiative—as best we can gather, a group of refugees was forced back into Cambodia and probably were killed. There is continuing difficulty along the Thai-Cambodia border.

As best we can gather this was not something that was ordered by the government in Bangkok but there was a fear on the part of the local commander that this was a group coming in for a raid, and there have been continuing raids. One of the problems that concerns us in Thailand, of course, is the use of article 21 which has been used to

execute six people arbitrarily in the last several months. One of them was a major narcotics smuggler. One was a murder-rapist. One was a general who led the abortive coup and who killed another general in the process, and three of them were people who apparently were involved in cross border activities between Cambodia and Thailand. So there is a problem of tension on that border and in this situation apparently a group was turned back, as you recall. This so far as I could tell from while I was out there and from what I have been told is not Government policy. The Government policy is although they don't like it very much to receive them—and the High Commissioner for Refugees just signed a second 1-year agreement with them covering refugees—one of their primary principles in this agreement is to make sure no one is forceably turned back.

Mr. FRASER. In a statement that we are going to hear later today—and I don't mean to confront you with this except it provides a basis for framing the question—by Scott Thompson of the Fletcher School, he says that in effect the United States failed to give adequate support to the democratically elected regimes during the 3 years that they were in power. He also argues in his statement that the United States in addition to doing that failed to be responsive to security concerns of the Thai military.

I think he argues this either forced the outcome or contributed to the outcome in October 1976. What would your view be about such assertions?

Mr. OAKLEY. Let me say first, as you know, Mr. Chairman, I was not working on the area at that time. Second, the point you made on June 23 in the first round of hearings on Thailand, the United States has, I think, for the past few years been less involved and attempted to do less than it has in the past to influence governments in other countries, to try to make or break governments, if you will.

I personally think that is a good thing. Not that we should not attempt to influence them, particularly on such things as human rights, but when it comes to trying to manipulate their internal affairs one way or the other, I would say I am personally concerned about the continuing reduction in economic assistance in Thailand because it seems to me there is something we can do there and maybe we should have been doing more in the past to try to encourage them along certain lines and induce them to pay more attention to certain basic needs. There may well have been a period where increased U.S. support—political, economic, other means—might have assisted that government. To what degree the United States can control political developments in other countries is a difficult one, as you well know.

I think that we were not very enchanted by the Government in Thailand and I think that is all wrapped up in Vietnam and the aftermath and the feelings there that the United States had suffered a humiliating defeat and that people were turning against us. So, I think, there was a problem in that area. How precisely one can affix the responsibility of the U.S. Government I would hesitate, as I think you would, in trying to say. But I think there was a problem there. I think our present attitude is a more balanced one. I think we have come to a more balanced relationship with Thailand where we both understand that sort of mutual dependency, psychologically as well as otherwise, that was built up

during the 1960's in particular, is no longer going to be the case but we are prepared to help in certain areas. There will be areas where we will be critical but we are no longer going to be so deeply involved in their affairs and I think they understand that.

Mr. FRASER. In your statement you suggested both the right and the left were equally culpable for violent acts prior to the coup. Is this an accurate description? I think we had testimony last week, which argument may not have been accurate, but the right wing paramilitary forces were considerably more responsible for the violence than the actions of the students.

Mr. OAKLEY. Mr. Chairman, I am not attempting to measure degrees of responsibility. I think it is quite clear from the political identities at least of the people dead and those arrested as to who suffered the most. Therefore, I would not question where the bulk of the force was coming from. My only point was, as I said, numerous civilian and military groups and individuals of all political persuasions were attempting to foment and take advantage of the increasingly unstable political situation and there was the behavior of the students who rallied at Thammasat University and provoked a right wing demonstration. The police units moved in and the armed confrontation resulting from the action was compounded by fighting between right and left groups.

The violence left 40 dead and 3,000 persons, mostly students arrested. I am told a few of the dead were police, or those you could identify as being from the right, but the bulk of them were those identified with the students who had been characterized as leftists. So I don't think I have necessarily any difference with the previous witnesses with respect to the way it eventuated, in terms of figures. However, specific responsibility as to who started the fight, that is hard to say.

Mr. FRASER. Another thing we were told last week was that as a result of this coup that there has been a significant or large fusion of recruits into the ranks of the insurgency forces which are carrying on the fighting in the northern area and wherever else they are. Does the Department share that impression? Do you have any information on that?

Mr. OAKLEY. I think that there have been probably several hundred people who have joined in one way or another, the insurgency. On the other hand, from the best statistics we have been able to gather, there have been more people in the last year who have left the insurgency, active guerrilla members who deserted to the Government side, than there have been in the past.

As best we can gather, the insurgency is at about the same level it has been. The notable difference since the events of October has been in the radio broadcasts. It has not been in the ranks of the fighting men but there has been apparently a change, I am told, in the nature of the propaganda and some of the broadcasts which indicates participation by some of the people who did indeed flee during the month of October. But apparently they have not gotten down, at least in any significant degree, into the ranks of those who are actually fighting in northern Thailand.

Mr. FRASER. Do you agree with the view expressed I think on page 3—our problem is we have different typings of your testimony and it was not clear which page we were referring to—but in any event on

page 3 of the version we have here you attribute to many. This is the view that the military's action in October may have been a necessary sacrifice if the country was to stabilize itself and successfully face the growing threat from hostile Communist neighbors. Is that a view that the Department would share?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes, sir. I say not all, but many. Yes, sir.

Mr. FRASER. In other words, through the coups Thailand is now in a stronger position to withstand the insurgency?

Mr. OAKLEY. No, Mr. Chairman, my point is—and this is the Department's view—that the instability, which had reached a peak prior to the coup was something that had caused a great many Thais to want a return to stability and many of them in our judgment were more interested in order and stability at that stage even if it involved a military coup than they were in the continuation of instability.

Mr. FRASER. I have no problem with that. Law and order is always appealing when there is instability and uncertainty. Does the Department now believe Thailand is in a stronger position as a result of the coup to withstand the Communist insurgency?

Mr. OAKLEY. I am not certain that one can measure it in that way. I would say that compared to the very unstable situation which existed in the weeks prior to the coup—that was a situation of extreme weakness so far as Thailand was concerned where you had a virtual collapse of governmental order—compared to that period I think, yes, obviously so. But if one is looking over a long period of time, if one is trying to measure the merits of a democratic system in resisting an externally backed Communist insurgency or the merits of the present situation over the long term, I would say it depends upon the degree to which the Government can meet the basic needs of the people which is not only law and order but also economic and social advancement and certain, at least minimal, liberties.

So it is hard for me to measure at this point in time one government versus another government. But compared to that very unstable situation which existed just prior to the coup I would say, yes, the present government is stronger. But over the long term I would say one cannot be certain although my trip out there about a month ago left me with the impression that the situation in Thailand is looking up, that there are improvements on the way, even compared to, say, January or something of that sort.

Mr. FRASER. Improvements in what sense?

Mr. OAKLEY. There seems to be more interest in the human rights situation, more interest in the economic and social development. It is my judgment there also seems to be a growing degree of self-confidence on the part of the Government, that it is able to look after itself in a new situation in Southeast Asia which is marked by the departure from Thailand of a large U.S. military presence and the continuing reduction in our military advisory group.

Mr. FRASER. Somehow I have the impression we are never destined to know whether democratic regimes are capable of withstanding these insurgencies since in one way or the other the democratic governments never appear or if they do appear they disappear before a final test is achieved. My own impression is that the Department of State, historically has always underestimated the ideological components of insurgency struggles and they think economic well-being and so on is

enough especially for the young people here for 3 years' experience in a relatively open and free system.

It has been an objective of American policy of two decades to achieve stability in countries leading as far as I can tell to total disaster in one form or another in most countries.

Mr. OAKLEY. I think one could hardly argue with the postulation that the United States has underestimated the ideological element. All we have to do is look at the history of our involvement in Vietnam where we assumed that material benefits or material punishments meted out by the United States or a government backed by the United States was going to produce an outcome favorable to us, yet the people on the other side were clearly more highly motivated.

Mr. FRASER. Throughout all of my years of fairly close involvement with Vietnam issues, things were always looking up.

Mr. OAKLEY. That certainly is a danger here in Thailand. I would be the last to assume that the United States is omniscient or able to make correct predictions. I do remember those predictions we made in Vietnam. I was there for awhile. Every 6 months we would say in another 6 months it will all be over and it will all turn out our way and we were wrong every time.

Mr. FRASER. In any event perhaps on thing we are going to learn, and I think you said that as well—I don't mean something you learned—our ability to influence what happens in other countries is marginal and our capacity to influence political change is often exaggerated. For the most part what happens in a country has to be the outcome of contending forces within those countries. The real question is what role we play in the ongoing process.

Mr. OAKLEY. On which side of the scale we put our weight.

Mr. FRASER. Are we giving full support now to the present Government of Thailand, military assistance?

Mr. OAKLEY. Full support. We are giving—this is the last year of MAP for Thailand. We made it very clear that this is the last year. We are giving some military credits, providing some military credits this year, and hope to do that in the future I think. We are encouraging the Government to do more in the field of human rights and to meet basic human needs. We certainly have correct political relations with the Government in Thailand.

We are doing nothing to undercut it, to weaken it. But I would say that our relationship is a fairly normal one.

Mr. FRASER. Do we regard Thailand as of strategic importance to the United States? Is the faith of Thailand a matter of considerable importance to the security of the United States?

Mr. OAKLEY. Generally, Mr. Chairman, we regard the non-Communist countries of Southeast Asia, all of them—ASEAN countries—as countries to whom we have had a long commitment, political, to some degree military, economic, perhaps too great a commitment in the past, too much of an anti-Communist crusade starting with SEATO which has now gone out of existence.

I think Thailand is considered along with the other ASEAN countries important to the United States, but vital to the U.S. security, that I don't know. We have under the continuing Manila Pact an obligation to consult with Thailand if there is some sort of threat and then to

see what assistance we might provide in accordance with our constitutional processes which now involve consultation with the Congress.

Secretary Vance said last night in his speech, as he has said in other public statements, and in our private conversations with countries of Southeast Asia that we would like to see a situation evolve where both Communist and non-Communist states in Southeast Asia could live in peace with each other and not intervene in each other's affairs, and there would be economic, social, and political exchange. We would like to see things move on that basis, and that is our policy, while continuing to have a security component.

So far as the non-Communist countries are concerned in Southeast Asia, our policies will have in the future and have now much more of an economic, social, human rights, human needs component than in the past and we would like to see things more in that direction.

The other side, we made the same point to the Vietnamese in Paris and in discussions with the Laotians in Vientiane. We talked about human rights with them and how the United States would like to see the same sort of evolution whereby the resentments and tensions and hostility that existed certainly in the last couple of decades—even some going back hundreds of years between Indochina and the other countries—would come to an end.

What influence we do have, which is an influence about which I think we have more realistic appreciations now than we did in the past, is being used to try to move things in that direction.

Mr. FRASER. Will the fact that the Thai Government is facing the Communist-backed insurgency automatically justify a significant flow of arms to Thailand no matter what else is going on inside Thailand?

Mr. OAKLEY. No, sir, I don't think so. I think the fact that there is a foreign threat as well as an active, foreign-supported insurgency does give them a need but I would not say that this is overriding so far as the United States is concerned. We try to look at this in the context of the overall situation in Thailand and in a direction that the Government and the country as a whole is headed in our judgment.

Mr. FRASER. What you are saying is that how the Thai Government deals with the number of issues, economic and social problems, civil and political rights, among other things, will influence the level of assistance that we will provide to them?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. FRASER. My thanks to you very much for your appearance. I think your discussion of U.S. policy, U.S. interest in Thailand, has been helpful to us. I appreciate the fact that the Department is, I think, being increasingly sensitive to a broader range of concerns than has been their experience in the past. From our vantage point this is a welcome development.

Thank you very much.

Mr. OAKLEY. Thank you.

Mr. FRASER. Our next witnesses are Mr. Puey Ungphakorn and Prof. Scott Thompson. Perhaps we could have both witnesses at the witness table and we will proceed as a panel.

Dr. Puey, we are delighted to have you here. I had the honor of listening to you in an informal meeting some weeks ago. It is a great pleasure to welcome you to the subcommittee and we invite you to proceed in whatever manner you would like.

STATEMENT OF DR. PUEY UNGPHAKORN, FORMER RECTOR,
THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY, BANGKOK

Mr. PUEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First I would like to thank you and the committee for having invited me to come before you today.

I have served various governments of Thailand in various capacities since 1949. My principal posts were: Governor of the Central Bank of Thailand for 12 years, member of the Executive Committee of the National Economic and Social Development Board, Budget Director, Director of the Fiscal Policy Office, Chairman of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, and rector of Thammasat University. My curriculum vitae is in appendix I of this testimony.¹

During my public service, I have worked with American diplomats in Thailand, Ambassadors, Embassy officials, USOM directors, et cetera. I have many close friends among American bankers, American foundation officers, American intellectuals and academics. My attitude toward the United States and regarding United States-Thai relations is well known to them. I feel, however, it is a pity that there is no representative from the Bangkok Government in this hearing. Although I understand that the chairman has extended the courtesy of inviting someone to come to this hearing.

Mr. FRASER. I interject here that for reasons that I think are probably evident normally it has not been appropriate for governmental officials from another government to appear but in the past we have notified embassies of our intention to hold hearings and invited them to suggest nongovernmental witnesses that they think would help to round out the testimony that we are going to hear.

You are right in this case, we did extend such an invitation to them.

Mr. PUEY. Thank you, sir. That is my point exactly.

My reason for saying this is that it would be better for you to hear both sides of the story.

In response to your query regarding the status of human rights in Thailand at present, I would say in Thailand at the present time there are numerous instances of gross violations of human rights. The violence in Thammasat University and the coup d'etat of October 6, 1976, marked the beginning of the severe repression that continues to this day. My account of the events in October 1976 is appended as appendix III.¹

The violations of human rights has taken several forms: Arbitrary arrests and detention, tortures, executions without trial; restrictions on the freedom of opinion and expression, and on the freedom of the press and other mass media; restrictions on academic freedom; suspension of normal judicial procedures; terrorization and other aspects of social control over citizens. Elected parliament and cabinet were abolished on October 6, 1976, and superseded by the appointed ones. Similarly, the armed forces coup leaders abrogated the 1974 constitution, replacing it with their "constitution" drafted by the junta.

There were more than 3,000 people arrested at Thammasat University on October 6, 1976, after the killings. After 5 or 6 months of detention, with many cases of tortures and assaults, most of them were

¹ Appendixes I through V are retained in the subcommittee files.

found innocent even by the Bangkok government and released without compensation or apology. The government, anxious to create a better image of itself abroad, especially in the United States, announced that only 110 of those arrested would be tried by court procedure. The Department of Public Prosecution has already washed its hands over these 110 accused by deciding that there was no evidence to prosecute 36 of them, and that the remaining 74 fell outside its jurisdiction because they would have to be tried by the military court, the charges brought against them by the police being those according to the anti-Communist law. When the military court tries them, these 74 accused will not be allowed any legal representation, nor, if they are sentenced, is there any opportunity to appeal.

In any case, there is always a possibility of the Government using article 21 of the Constitution in order to punish those whom the courts might free. By this article, the Prime Minister can sentence anyone to death, imprisonment, or any other punishment, without going to court. And since April 1977, the Government has used this provision several times already, resulting in a few executions and a number of imprisonments.

In order not to antagonize international public opinion, the Government has not openly announced many arrests since November 1976. It also avoids arresting well-known people in Bangkok or other big cities. But like other dictatorial regimes in other countries, it has resorted to secret arrests and detentions, and even executions, and it arms itself for this purpose with an administrative reform decree No. 22 by which those considered "endangering society" could be arrested and detained for long periods. The definition of "endangering society" is very wide and vague. Anyone disliked by the police or administrative officers or fellow citizens can be regarded as "endangering society." Detainees need not be charged by any specific activity and the authorities do not need any evidence. The charge is not brought to open court but is heard by committees of the local officials, leaving individuals defenseless against victimization by those officials because of personal vendetta, et cetera. A very respectable religious group in Thailand estimated that since October 1976, 8,000 people have been arrested under this charge; some 6,000 have been released after periods of detention ranging from a few days to many months. At present an estimated 2,000 people are still detained all over the kingdom, including many Buddhist monks, some of them having been summarily executed by their jailers—Congressman Fortney Stark, Jr., has details about them.

The ploy of secret arrests and detention serves the useful purpose of deceiving foreign observers, especially embassy people, into thinking that there is fair play in dealing with accused and defendants. The Government declares, in the same way as the dictators in the Philippines, the U.S.S.R., Chile, et cetera, that there are no political prisoners in Thailand, only crooks and criminals. In fact, among those detained as "danger to society" are doctors, teachers, students, monks, farmers, shopkeepers, and trade unionists.

The maltreatment of prisoners of the pre-1973 era has been reused in various ways: Torture, solitary confinement, long-term severe detention, and "tiger cages." An affidavit of a previous detainee on the tiger cages appears in appendix III.

The junta has outlawed political meetings of more than four people. The right to peaceful assembly is thereby denied. Laborers cannot organize themselves effectively. Strikers will be arrested. Discontented farmers likewise cannot collectively appeal for justice. Student unions have been abolished.

Newspapers and other mass media were strictly and formally censored. One committee was set up by the junta to screen and permit any newspaper seeking to publish; another committee to examine in detail the contents of the publication. Very few papers survived after October 6, 1976. Those that did were right wing, and even they have been periodically suspended or had their permits withdrawn almost without exception. At the moment of writing, ex-Prime Minister Kukrit's paper is suspended for criticizing a cabinet minister, however mildly. Is that what the committee or the State Department or even Mr. Oakley would call that there is no formal censorship of the press? Is that what you would tolerate in the United States?

High school and university teachers have been told to keep to patriotic themes, without mentioning political systems, not even democracy. Secret agents sit in the classes to check lectures.

Strict curfews have been imposed all through the kingdom for several months now and are unlikely to be lifted although the Government announces that everything is back to normal. I think Wall Street and the Japanese business communities also echo that everything is back to normal. Long period curfews harm rubber tapping and other occupations both in town and in the country.

Terrorization is rampant, as in other dictatorial countries. No one dares to speak his mind, except those who are lucky enough to be permitted to travel abroad.

Mr. Chairman, there are many factors which contributed to the failure of democracy in Thailand. There was no real reform in the period 1973-76; there were too many political parties which affected the strength of elected governments; the bad behavior of politicians, et cetera. All of these factors need time to right themselves, and there was a tendency for improvements in all respects during the free period. The most important factor, however, was the determination of those losing power in 1973 to regain it. They were backed by some large landowners and businessmen with vested interests. They were given the opportunity to organize, since mid-1974, various gangster groups such as the "Red Gauris" which were openly armed by the army, various psychological groups such as the "Nawapol," the "Village Scouts," et cetera.

Here I must interject a little bit because I think this is usually misunderstood, about the period of 1976. It has been alleged that the 1973-76 period was a period of chaos, that the students were mostly responsible for that. But my reading is this. In the face of so much social injustice which has been the result of a generation of dictatorship, since 1947, there had been a movement to try to solve those social injustices and this had been done in a peaceful way.

The students are normally not armed at all nor the trade unionists, nor the farmers, but on the other hand, the chaos that had arisen during that period, as has been said, rightly, caused by the paramilitary group that were openly armed, went in and killed anybody. On March 21, 1976, they killed, during a rally, seven or eight people, a peaceful

rally. They ransacked my own university without any punishment for them in August of 1975. They also hanged people and burned people with impunity, in front of my university on October 6, 1976.

I am not one of those who believe that the violence and coup of October 6, 1976, was the result of the U.S. interference. The factors among Thais were sufficient to bring about the coup and there is no evidence of immediate American mastermind, then. But the long years of Thai-United States association in the Vietnam war, in the ways of training, arming, advising Thai Armed Forces and police would have the indirect effect upon the events of October 1976.

Mr. FRASER: We have a vote in progress on the floor so we will take a brief recess.

[A short recess was taken.]

Mr. FRASER: The subcommittee will resume its hearing.

Dr. Puey.
Mr. PUEY: Mr. Chairman, you kindly asked me to give my opinion about the current U.S. policy toward Thailand.

As a non-American, I must first of all thank the subcommittee for allowing me to give my opinion on the U.S. policy. And I owe it to the subcommittee to state clearly my own political standing regarding my own country.

I firmly believe in democracy and the dignity of every human being. I may have learned this from the Fathers of the American Constitution, among others. I believe in freedom and human rights as defined in the U.N. proclamation, and in the right of every man and woman to participate in the determination of the fate of the society in which he or she lives. To deny them this right because they are poor, because they are ill-educated, is to me an outrageous thing to do. I abhor dictatorship whatever form and complexion it may take. And I believe in acquiring democracy by peaceful means because I want to avoid using this theme several times. As an example, my talk at Stanford University on January 25, 1977, appears in appendix IV.

My country is heading toward civil war. The events of October 1976 and subsequent measures taken in Bangkok vastly help the insurgents in a way never dreamed of before by either side. Not only the quantity, the number of the people that had gone into the jungle—and Mr. Oakley had quoted the Government figure of several hundred—I would say several thousand. I would say this because it bears on the fact that there were so many displaced persons among the universities and colleges and the farms and the trade unions, all over the country. There are 6,000 people missing at the moment. Divide them by three, you still have 2,000 people. But the number of people who joined the insurgents is not as important as the quality of the people. For the first time in the Communist Party of Thailand's history, we have doctors, engineers, trade unionists, educators, all sorts of academicians and students joining them. That is why you can see now that the fighting in Thailand between the Government and the insurgents had assumed a dimension which approaches the civil war that I had been talking about. To quote the Government figures alone—unfortunately this is in Thai—but it can be seen that for the first 3 months of this year the Government said alone is 554 people, soldiers and police, killed.

Last year for the whole year it was 460. The year before it was 420. And the year before—this is not too good—it is 522. As I repeat, for the first 3 months of this year—only 3 months—554.

Mr. Chairman, you were really right indeed in questioning the previous witness regarding the strength of the Thai Government and instead of saying that the Government is stable, I would submit to you, sir, that the present government in Bangkok is really unstable. There was a coup attempt already in March. There are rumors in Bangkok every day about new takeover by another military group, about changes of government, about the undesirability of certain administrators, about the discontent of the colonels in the army, which is a fact. So, instead of having the desired stability that everybody wants, you now have very precarious government in Bangkok.

You were also talking about economic well-being of the people. As someone who had with my own hands, an intellect, tried to build up investment of the country for the past 20 years I could say that you need not worry about the problem of the country as a whole. The country as a whole is rich. We have enough reserve and we seldom have crises. But the main problem in Thailand, economic and social, is a distributive problem which has been aggravated by the coup d'etat, by the dictatorship. Because the minimum wages that the Government boasted about in 1973 was 60 cents per day.

During the free period it was raised to \$1.25. The Department of Labor has submitted respectfully to the Government to increase the minimum wage very slightly and that was turned down. The Government boasts about the land reform that we had done in the free period but of course, as Robert McNamara used to say, the investment by propaganda is quite easy. The political will is lacking. So, you see that the investment process of the Government at the present time is in the wrong way. It reversed whatever we had done in the past.

Mr. Chairman, on the one hand you have a strong Communist insurgent people. On the other hand you have a fragile, precarious government. In this situation, the onus of avoiding the danger of civil war falls on every humane Thai. My friends and I, both inside and outside Thailand, are seeking the opportunity of advocating national reconciliation whenever it is possible to do so, and we are working, slowly, admittedly, toward that.

The best thing we would wish to see is that the chance of national reconciliation is not disturbed. Therefore, we must endeavor to seek abstention on the part of the superpowers from supplying arms to either side. I, therefore, ardently implore your Government and Congress to stop supplying arms to the Government of Thailand. See appendix V.

I am asking America not to send arms to Thailand, to the Government of Thailand, because, as Mr. Holbrooke stated recently, that there is no evidence in regard to the equipment from Vietnam going to the Thai Communist Party forces. Now, if the United States, or any other country, supply one side with arms the other side will have to seek arms from the other side and the loser will be the common man in my country.

Civil war will be longer and the suffering equally long.

If I may, I would submit that such an abstention will be in the interest of the United States, in order to avoid any commitment similar to those in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. You may think, and many Americans have asked me this question, that you are anxious about the American defense in that part of the world, Southeast Asia.

I would plead with you: Please learn whatever happened in the past decade in Southeast Asia. The Defense Department always assumes the amount of equipment, technology, computers, could replace alliance with a group of honest and patriotic people. Unfortunately, in the past the U.S. Government has the knack, in Asia, anyway, of backing the losing side. Not only do you back the losing side but you back the corrupt, the people who enlist themselves with narcotics and there are many in Thailand. There are people who are 5 percenters, out for commission of arms. So please be aware of this. And please advocate that the United States in any case should learn from the past mistakes.

Second, my humble prayer and suggestion is for the United States to continue in other ways to be friendly to Thailand, especially in the field of economic and social assistance. I would prefer that you make sure that such assistance should reach the poorer sections of my compatriots, and not the richer bureaucracy, military or civilian, nor the landowners, big farmers, or business people.

Third, out of the friendship that you show to Thailand, I hope that you would be able to use your influence to bring the Thai authorities back to the right path on the human rights issue. The stand that the new U.S. administration and Congress are taking on these issues have heartened us all over the world. You may not be able to apply your ideal everywhere; but the lesson from the Philippines recently is very encouraging. Thus the Thai Government and military groups are sensitive to American opinion. This is a country where you can save a good number of lives and spare a great deal of suffering. Don't be deceived by the benign appearance of the dictators; they always hide something from you, and the best of your Embassy in Bangkok could easily be deceived.

Mr. FRASER. Dr. Puey, there is another vote on. It will take another 8 minutes. I think that is the last vote so we will be able to continue after that without interruptions.

[A short recess was taken.]

Mr. FRASER. The subcommittee will resume its hearing. Dr. Puey. Mr. PUEY. Mr. Chairman, I apologize for the length of my statement but I hope I shall finish before you have to have another recess.

I was going to say that I had only three suggestions to make regarding the American policy, but listening to Mr. Oakley—unfortunately he is not here—I hoped he would be here because I would like to talk in front of him rather than behind his back—listening to Mr. Oakley's statement I find he keeps on quoting the Bangkok government several times. I am puzzled whether he really believes everything that the Bangkok government has told him directly via the Embassy or the facts as independently acquired by the U.S. intelligence coincide with the government of Bangkok. I wonder.

What about the constant coup rumors? He did not say. What about the crimes that appear every day in the newspaper, however censored? What about the bombing? How about the curfew? All this should be brought in in order to enable the committee, I think, this distinguished committee, to assess more fairly and to the advantage of the United States.

Because Mr. Oakley has no chance of replying to me I shall have to go away without hearing his answer.

Well, I made three suggestions. One is that you should abstain from supplying arms to the Bangkok government. Second, that you continue to help us in economic and social matters and most important of all, that you should try to influence the Government of Thailand to become more humane. How you should act, if you agree, on these three points, on the human rights issue in Thailand, I need not presume to make suggestions, but if it is your wish I stand ready to supply further facts and advice upon being called upon to do so.

Thank you, sir.

Mr. FRASER. Thank you, Dr. Puey.

We will turn now to our final witness for the afternoon, Prof. W. Scott Thompson of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University.

STATEMENT OF W. SCOTT THOMPSON, PROFESSOR, FLETCHER SCHOOL OF LAW AND DIPLOMACY, TUFTS UNIVERSITY

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate the chance to be here in the company of so distinguished a Thai as Dr. Puey. I want to say a few words first about the general problem of human rights which I think can only be approached in its historical and geographic and philosophical context. I think it is self-evident any American would like to have the rest of the world adopt a high standard of human rights. I would also add that it would be very unlikely for a political scientist to applaud the present regime in Thailand given the reports that come out that academics and particularly political scientists are harassed and intimidated more than any other group.

But I take it we are not here today to compete for marks of virtue and to see who can be "more for" human rights. That is a cherry pie and motherhood campaign approach and I propose to avoid that. I assume we are all for human rights. The question is in what kind of context and where is it pertinent and where do we have the tangible sources to achieve anything.

The question as I see it, after a dozen-plus years of research in and about Third World countries, is whether human rights are an abstract absolute, independent of time and place, or are they products of specific political and economic and sociological structures. Do they have to grow in their own soil or can they be exported?

I think we have to look at what gives rise to the concern for human rights. The problem in the Third World seems to be less the wrong sort of government—although that is the case, too—than that, in most countries, there is too little government. Third World leaders are concerned about making their unit run. This is an age in which leaders are concerned about decay rather than development, about centrifugal forces rather than bringing political development to bear on bringing their countries together.

There is not a great deal of excess money and jobs to pass around. The winner gets it all, so there is incipient rebellion. Loser tends to rebel at which point they can be sent abroad as ambassadors. But there are only so many embassies. Leaders get intolerant. They throw out parliament or sterilize it and leave it as decoration for public consumption.

In the Third World, there were no democratic traditions on which to build; the leaders are impatient and usually thinskinned. They thus do what more than one American leader of recent memory might well have done, had democratic traditions not been strong enough to counteract imperial tendencies: They throw their opponents in jail.

To demand that such states not do so of course confuses cause and effect, symptom and disease. One can hardly ask an authoritarian government not to behave autocratically. It is a contradiction in terms. We could send in the marines and install a "democratic" government, which would empty the jails at least for a short time, until the next constitutional crisis or coup d'état. But rampant American interventions are surely not what the Congress or the Executive have in mind.

In short, low standards of human rights in the Third World are the end product of all the other deficiencies—low political development and a lack of national unity.

Consider the extreme case of governments faced with actual anarchy—not all that rare: Can one ask such a government not to imprison its dissidents, any more than such could have been asked of America during our civil war? Even relatively developed states in less distress, like Argentina, have been unable to find a legitimate basis for civil order. Lecturing states like that on civil rights, rather than trying to help them through a delicate period, as might be expected of an old friend and ally, only ends up embittering the atmosphere. It may even lead the regime to behave in a still more beastly manner to their opponents, to avoid appearing to give into foreign pressure.

The alternative would be for them to lose face—something more important in Asia than anywhere else—and possibly then lose power to another, probably similar, group. But I take it that the object of this exercise is not to bring down foreign governments. Or is it? Has, in fact, the spirit of John Foster Dulles and Teddy Roosevelt been rekindled?

It has recently been claimed that the "human rights" campaign has been yielding results. I would like to separate tactical or cosmetic from strategic and substantive gains. A government not under stress can make tactical concessions for cosmetic purposes—to placate the superpower, get his aid, and get him off his back by releasing a few political prisoners. There are several recent examples of this. But I know of no historic example in an essentially unstructured state when a government has had a change of heart and decided genuinely to reform its practices, under compulsion and duress from a great power. Nor can I envisage the circumstances in which such would indeed bring anything but self-defeating substantive results.

Now, let us go to specifics—the case of Thailand. The first thing is to remember the sequence of events as they concerned the United States. An ineffectual dictatorship, which we had buttressed and supported from its inception, was brought down by students in October 1973, to the general astonishment of observers around the world—as well as to the students themselves. It was a noble experiment, though not one given much support by us.

Washington was slow in the extreme to appreciate the problems the nascent democracy was having. Mr. Kissinger, always able to contain his enthusiasm for dealing with Third World democracies, was known, along with his staff, to have made disparaging comments about the

Thai Government. Having used Thailand as our unsinkable aircraft carrier, we failed to nurture her institutions, inspired in some measure by ours, when we had the opportunity.

Thailand's problems during these 3 years went further, of course: They were both internal and regional. Though the several successive democratic governments made great strides in some areas, they were never fully successful in containing the youthful enthusiasm on which they had ridden to power. Public order and, more broadly, political coherence, became an increasing concern to the military, who, for at least 700 years, had been a critical foundation of Thai society in a way difficult for an American to envisage.

Externally, they were witnessing the success of the three Communist Indochinese conflicts. The Thai military had permitted the United States to maintain bases in Thailand after the 1973 cease-fire on the prospect that these were the guarantees of the settlement. From their point of view we then proceeded not to use that capability, but to sell our allies down the drain and pack our bags. They not only saw growing anarchy at home, partly—though not primarily—Communist inspired, but revolutions next door, eroding not only their own positions but the prospects for survival of the kingdom. I think it would be accurate to say, from what we know, that the King himself, a man of wisdom and moderation, shared this view.

After Vietnam's fall, the democratic Thai Government had to find a new basis for the existence of American bases on Thai soil—which they wanted to do. But the appearance of Thai sovereignty was crucial, in light of the growing student agitation.

The Thai military was becoming desperate. They felt betrayed by us and clung to the residual thread of security which the remaining American military presence offered. For our part, there were increasingly important reasons—strategic and intelligence-collecting—for maintaining at least part of the base structure.

In the base negotiations in early 1976 our house was not in order. Our negotiators and positions were uncoordinated; the State Department seemed determined to use every legalism possible to delay and obfuscate matters. It was apparent that in Washington there was no will to hold onto the bases. This is despite their vital role as a strategic staging post in the Middle East, in case we were unable to resupply Israel, for example, via Europe. In the final analysis we were unwilling to give the Thai the appearance of real sovereignty on the bases and, in the words of an American diplomat, we "forced the Thai Government to ask us to leave in order to keep peace in its own house."

It was the Thai diplomats who skillfully negotiated with the Americans—and it was the diplomats whom the Thai military incorrectly blamed for the failure of the negotiations. But the Thai military, accustomed to ruling fairly directly since 1932, now saw their last security link in shreds. They thus determined to take the reins of power back, which, after a number of false starts, they did in October 1976.

The line of causation is thus reasonably clear. We failed on the one hand to nurture the budding Thai democratic institutions, and we failed on the other hand to appreciate the sensibilities of the Thai military's concern for security, especially ironic after the decade of intimate relations with them in security matters. Thus the precipitant, if not the cause, of the coup had two sides, democratic development

and security, and our involvement was central on both. After the October coup it was hardly a propitious time to be lecturing the Thai about human rights.

Democracy and human rights may be a long time in coming to Thailand. It is not something to which the Thai people are accustomed, however high are the aspirations for it on the part of the talented Thai intelligentsia. With barbaric regimes bordering the kingdom and supplying insurgencies within it with arms, and with the alliance on which the Thai depended for a quarter century, now in effect renounced by us, the Thai military are determined not to lose their grip. I do not know whether this particular group will succeed in remaining in power; but the Thai military will play a large role in the manner of their ancestors for a considerable time to come, as a result of the domestic and external threats.

It seems to me that we had our chance to do something about human rights in Thailand—between 1973 and 1976—by sustaining a democratic regime—and we "blew it." But, Thailand and the United States have been friendly for over a century, and that is worth something. Gratuitous campaigns which fail to take the circumstances of present low standards of human rights into account will hardly develop those relations further, and will not build a basis for encouraging the Thai military to relax its grip and develop sustainable democratic institutions.

I would like to make a final point about the human rights campaign; there isn't enough time to hit all the targets, so one is selective.

What targets have been hit? Mostly allies of ours. That's not surprising, for one heats a lot in Washington these days about America's "burden" in having so many badly behaved allies, the alliances with whom many would like to scuttle in consequence. But there are several minor points worth making. Virtually every democracy in the world—absent a few European neutrals who in any case identify with the West, and India—is an ally of the United States. Every Soviet ally and every Communist state is totalitarian, with human rights so bad that, oddly, we usually barely bother to talk about them.

Alas, the United States does have several allies in addition to Thailand whose record in human rights is bad by American standards. Why is this so? With each of these, a policy of martial law followed precisely on the tail of the American withdrawal from Indochina and—to the leaderships—the horrifying power vacuum which that created. As America's will flagged further, domestic and international opponents became bolder, as the fear of American retaliation became dimmer and dimmer. Is it sensible that the main thrust of our human rights campaign be directed at states like those? Or might we address more of our concerns to the Cambodians, for example, who seem to have exterminated about a fourth of their population, as compared with our allies who have stashed away a small fraction of 1 percent?

In the case of Thailand, there is in any event much freedom of several sorts: economic, for example, which prevents the Government from becoming excessively authoritarian. The press is more open than in most Asian countries; indeed in Southeast Asia I would rank Thailand second of all states in its human rights standards. So if we are truly concerned about human rights, ought we not hear more about truly totalitarian states and less about the domestic affairs of

a friendly country like Thailand, for whose development we bear so much responsibility?

The respected Far Eastern Economic Review sees Washington's human rights campaign as an attempt to salvage credibility "from the depths of the Watergate era." Isn't it time we ceased trying to impose our view of the world on others particularly when it is a reaction to an internal problem of our own? My guess is that the human rights situation in Thailand, insofar as we can do anything about it, will vary inversely with the amount of pressure we exert to change it.

Thank you.

Mr. FRASER. Thank you very much, Dr. Thompson.

Mr. Thompson, what countries do you have in mind that it would be useful to hold hearings on?

Mr. THOMPSON. Cambodia, which I gather you are doing.

Mr. FRASER. We have had.

Mr. THOMPSON. And Indochina?

Mr. FRASER. Any others?

Mr. THOMPSON. Vietnam, Laos.

Mr. FRASER. We held hearings on Vietnam. We have more coming up.

Mr. THOMPSON. Are we going to have an impact?

Mr. FRASER. On them?

Mr. THOMPSON. The point is it is not symmetrical. Allies are sensitive to what we say. Sometimes in the wrong way. I don't think that in Hanoi they are terribly concerned, so one has to be all the more forceful in his examination of this and one has to devote all the more attention to it to compensate for their greater insensitivity.

Mr. FRASER. I think you understated the problem with those countries. They are not only insensitive; they are determined to proceed in a manner in which they aggravate societies. This is one of the problems. We, generally speaking, are not giving them economic and military aid. Our leverage on them is considerably smaller than so-called allies.

I was just curious as to your view on that matter. We held hearings on North Korea, too, although we had trouble finding competent witnesses on that score.

Maybe just for a beginning, you have heard Dr. Puey's description about the general state of affairs in Thailand now since the last October coup. I don't mean to pin you down here but do you have any basic disagreement with him about what has transpired or how things are?

Mr. THOMPSON. I would think he had overstated—I would respectfully say he overstated the extent of the decay. I think there are rumors of coup in Thailand, yes. But I have never been in Thailand when there have not been rumors of coups. I have been there off and on since 1969, so I think that is the way the Thais do things, at least that has been true since 1932. So that would not be surprising.

I do not think what he calls a civil war is yet really what I would call civil war. Incidentally, one of my fields is in that area. I teach a course entitled, "Low Level Violence." I would not have proposed to "stop selling arms" as he proposes, because I don't think there are two sides in that sense yet. I don't think the Thai society is that divided.

Thailand has three insurgencies and they get some of their support from external sources. They have also been joined by a certain number

of students as a result of the October coup. I think that is a marginal fact. I would have thought that is a concern but it is nowhere near as central as the greater liberty the Thai neighbors have now for sending in arms with impunity and providing as they see fit.

Mr. FRASER. Dr. Puey, do you have any thought on that?

Mr. PUEY. Professor Thompson and I disagree about the facts. I wonder what his source of information would be. Every letter that I receive from Bangkok and the newspaper which was allowed to be published in Bangkok also talks about rumors. It is true we have rumors about a coup all the time but the recent one is more intensive. Would you agree with that?

Mr. THOMPSON. I would but I think the pertinent point is what is going to happen as a result of that. There will be another military government and what difference is it going to make.

Mr. PUEY. If you look at it in an indifferent way, O.K., but I cannot be indifferent to my own country.

Mr. THOMPSON. You are an economist. Don't you have an indifference curve between authoritarian—

Mr. PUEY. I am not speaking as an economist. I am speaking as a Thai citizen.

Mr. THOMPSON. Wouldn't one have an indifferent curve as between the various military governments that might come to power now?

Mr. PUEY. Various people have various different curves as you well will be teaching to your students. So let us leave it at that. I also feel that foreigners normally say, with a wave of the hands, "The marginal number of students had gone into the jungle and therefore the civil war that I was talking about"—by the way, I am talking about heading toward it, not that the civil war has started, and I have supported that by figures.

Now it is a matter of guesswork. As to myself I feel that I am a bit more on the solid side because not only I took the trouble to take the people missing from their usual home since October 1976. I also have correspondence with my friends and students and so—of course, one should not believe them all—but I feel that this particular exodus of scholars and students and liberal people into the jungle is very significant indeed.

Now we can neglect that at our peril. I do not like it at all because it reinforces the Communist regime in the jungle. I do not like it but I must take this into account in order to assess what we should do.

Mr. THOMPSON. I would just say we academics in Bangkok or Boston have a terrible tendency to overemphasize our own importance. I get a lot of letters from Thailand, too, and most of them would confirm your general line. Most societies can survive despite the defection of some academics, however.

Mr. PUEY. Perhaps Professor Thompson forgets that I also was a realistic Governor of the Central Bank for 12 years.

Mr. THOMPSON. I appreciate that—but I wasn't referring to you. I am saying right now that the people that are bearing the largest burden from the present Thai Government, are academics and that would be my impression and I think one does not want to blow that out of proportion to the problem as a whole.

On the whole my impression is that the average Thai is, as Mr. Oakley suggested, relieved that the country is back in the hands of military. I am sorry it is that way but that would be my impression. Would you disagree with that?

Mr. PUEY. I disagree because if you don't terrorize the common people and allow them freedom of expression, would they flatter the Government in this way or would they say they are content in this way. It is not a fair assessment at all because whatever you say freely you can be held up for it being a danger to the society.

Mr. THOMPSON. Societies have different dangers. In the fall of 1973 or early 1974 when the new Thai Government drew up its list of priorities I think there was a list of 13 or 14 or 15, not one of which was the insurgencies. Thereafter there was a period of real neglect during which the insurgencies got worse because the Government did not take them seriously. That is one of the concerns.

In other words, I am saying one cannot be too focused on any one thing. I am not in the position here as an advocate of the present Thai Government, and I thought I made that very clear. I am distressed by the same things that you are distressed by. I would see them as having a different order of importance in relation to the overall scheme of things and particularly in relation to American interests.

I am sure if I were a Thai in exile my position would understandably be a very different one.

Mr. FRASER. Dr. Puey, you were in Bangkok at the time of the October 6 events?

Mr. PUEY. Yes; I left Bangkok under threat of being lynched in the evening of October 6.

Mr. FRASER. Who was threatening to lynch you?

Mr. PUEY. The paramilitary group that we were talking about.

Mr. FRASER. Why were they going to single you out?

Mr. PUEY. They said I was responsible for the unrest in Thammasat University.

Mr. FRASER. Were you?

Mr. PUEY. If you ask me a direct question I will say that I was not. On the contrary, I was the one to try to contain the students.

Mr. FRASER. What gave rise to the students' demonstration?

Mr. PUEY. I beg your pardon?

Mr. FRASER. What was the cause of the students' demonstration on October 5?

Mr. PUEY. The students started the demonstration in various ways. Since field marshals arrived back in Bangkok, since September 19— on the 4th of October because the Government then did not do anything—so the students together with the people demonstrating moved into my university. As soon as they moved in, I as rector, informed the police. I informed the Prime Minister and I informed the minister in charge of the university and I evacuated my office into the national education council office because at that time it was examination time.

If you did not declare the university closed then you run the risk of having fighting inside Thammasat. In the previous time when Field Marshal Prapat came in Thammasat quite a few people were hurt and some even died because of the bombing inside my university so this time we learned the lesson and then we moved out. I talked to several of the organizers of the rally and tried to persuade them

that Thammasat was not a suitable place for them to demonstrate and that is true because once the police moved in, and anybody could shoot them, then there is no escape.

I tried to dissuade them. I asked the police to come—of course you cannot use this brutal force—to try to protect Thammasat University but the crowd was so big that in the evening of the 4th the chain and the gate were broken down by the crowd and they moved in.

Mr. FRASER. What was the enrollment at the university at that time?

Mr. PUEY. The university was not involved at all as a university. It is only the National Center of Students of Thailand that organized this. It was not merely a Thammasat University affair. It was the national body of students. They chose Thammasat because of historical reasons, because of geographical reasons.

In 1973 they gained power. They gained freedom at Thammasat University, and Thammasat is quite near the various government departments including the Prime Minister's residence and quite near what we call the Hyde Park where political rallies usually take place.

So they chose always Thammasat, my own university, as the place to demonstrate. But it is not Thammasat versus field marshal at all.

Mr. FRASER. In your judgment was there an intention on the part of the military to take control of the Government? In other words was there a plan in effect or did it happen spontaneously?

Mr. PUEY. The coup d'état had appeared for several months before October—I don't mind saying that myself, I had to have my suitcase in the car every day and decide before I go home whether I should go home or stay with my friends or relations because if there is a coup d'état definitely I was the target, one of the targets, because I have been against military dictatorship all the time.

Mr. FRASER. You have worked under prior military governments?

Mr. PUEY. Yes; but even so, even while I was serving under dictators I did not limit myself in my criticism of the military when they do wrong. I am not really against military as military, but I am against narcotics, corruption, corruptive practices. I cannot stand that and in my 3 years as budget director—as you know, a budget director has always many enemies—but in my 3 years as budget director I have created many more enemies than the ordinary budget director might have created.

So all this made me very careful, especially after 50 or 60 people had been assassinated during that period including one of the Socialist leaders, Dr. Bonsonong. So we had to be careful all the time. That is why I had to be careful, because of the coup possibilities.

In fact, there were many coup attempts during that period. Now, Mr. Chairman, when you ask about the 6th of October, whether it was spontaneous or it was planned before, I would say, in general the coup leaders had planned before to stage a coup. The timing was right for them on that night. That is why they staged a coup.

Mr. FRASER. Dr. Puey, what is your view—I think Dr. Thompson has perhaps referred to it—but what is your view of the idea that the notion of democratic liberties, civil and political rights, particularly, are something that are valid only by the intelligentsia and for most of the peoples especially in Third World countries this is not a matter that lies either within their experience nor is it a matter to which they attach great importance?

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Mr. PUEY. Well, Mr. Chairman, sir, civil liberties is a funny thing. It is only when you yourself are deprived that you feel the pinch. You can always say that other people can live under repression. If you are a farmer and if your son had been taken away by the police without provocation, without anything, without charge, then you will feel very hard. So I don't think that it is really a matter for intelligentsia to worry about. All the small people that had been hit by the lack of liberty, but the bullying that they had at the hands of this tyrant, then they suffer.

It is only the intelligentsia who can speak out. Farmers do not know how to speak out, but they feel strongly. I would like to remind you, sir, that the word "Thai" means free and we Thais, living in Thailand, must be free, whether we are poor, whether we are Third World, whether we are illiterate. I don't see any way of living for my own compatriots except to be free, reasonably free.

Mr. FRASER. There is a view that no matter how much or how many international communities would like to live under general conditions of freedom, free press, the right to elect a government, that sometimes there is lacking in the society a degree of coherence, lacking the traditions, in other words, that it may not be ordained from on high that self-government will always work or provide an adequate level of governing competence so as to enable society to function.

What would your view be of that? In other words, maybe this 3 years was destined to fail.

Mr. PUEY. I would agree in the view that conditions may not be ripe in order to benefit fully from democracy, from full freedom, but my conclusion after that is quite different from those advocated that you were quoting. I would say that let us work for it rather than let us have a dictatorship. Democracy takes time, certainly, and we must work toward the establishment of that.

It cannot be taught in the classroom at all. I don't particularly care in what form democracy takes place in my country. It has got to suit the condition and the cultural background of my own country. Western democracy, parliamentary democracy in the Western way may not suit us. I would agree to that.

But let us be free to research into this and after all I would like to have two things, one is the freedom, normal freedom, and the other one is the right to participate in the fate of the society. After all, these two things are not exclusively a Western concept. In the concept of Sangha in the Buddhist teaching, we have consolidation and representation in the concept of Sangha, only that we neglect that and we thought that democracy is beyond our reach and therefore we tend to think that we must look for the stability of dictatorship.

Mr. FRASER. Dr. Thompson, you wanted to interject?

Mr. THOMPSON. I wanted to raise the question of whether in fact the word "Thai" in its sense of meaning free didn't refer more to the state of the Kingdom in relation to its environment: That it was free of colonial oppression, that Thailand survived as no other country in Southeast Asia survived independently, rather than "free" in any relation to the Western sense of freedom of the individual and so forth. I had a sense that when you were talking about the Thai people as reacting now against the tyrant that somehow for many generations

they had lived in a state of democracy and I was struggling, other than the past 3 years, to remember, what those periods were. I am sure under Marshal Sarit you would not argue they were in a springtime of freedom. Or before 1932 obviously there was a traditional order that accorded much better with the times than the period thereafter.

It is a complex question on which it is difficult to shed light on. I wonder if we can come back to the question of what we can do about this in reference to what Dr. Puey just said. If we stop selling arms to the Thais, does this in fact alter their practices? Do they in fact become so vulnerable and so desperate that many worse things could happen?

If you look at the order of battle, compare Thailand and Vietnam, it is really quite pathetic. Thailand is just unbelievably vulnerable. It is partially their own fault. That does not change the situation. I am wondering why Dr. Puey would want us to stop selling arms to Thailand?

Mr. PUEY. If I may. The reason I want the United States to abstain from selling arms is from Thai point of view, in order to minimize suffering. I stated that if the Thai Government in Bangkok take arms from the United States, the people in the jungle will certainly be pushed hard into accepting or seeking the arms from the other side or from the other superpowers. This is the mere reason from the Thai point of view.

Mr. THOMPSON. But they are doing that anyway aren't they?

Mr. PUEY. I quoted Mr. Holbrooke as saying that there is no evidence in regard to equipment coming from Vietnam.

Mr. THOMPSON. He may not know of any but I do.

Mr. PUEY. Can you cite evidence?

Mr. THOMPSON. Yes, I think there is abundant evidence that equipment has come. I think it is available in this town.

Mr. PUEY. Did you know that the arms that the Thai Communists are using are mostly American arms?

Mr. THOMPSON. Sure, but that was true in Vietnam also. You know that does not mean—

Mr. PUEY. I said mostly.

Mr. THOMPSON. That is the exaggeration. Don't worry, if we stop selling arms to Bangkok the insurgents would still manage to get arms. If not from us they would get them from their friends.

Mr. PUEY. From the black market in Bangkok.

Mr. THOMPSON. They would get American arms from the leftover stockpiles in Vietnam; from their friends there. I am asking what you seriously expect would happen if the United States were seen not only to have pulled the rug out completely from under the Thai Government as it has, in so many ways in the last few years but then, then committed the final insult, of not selling them arms. Do you think the Vietnamese would then refrain from the temptation of launching more than the kinds of operations they have in the past, supplying arms and the like: do you think they could resist the temptation?

Mr. PUEY. My information at this moment which may disagree with you, is that North Vietnamese have other things to consider—apart from supplying arms—to the insurgents—they first of all wanted formal relations with their neighbors including Thailand. Is that right. If that is right then—

Mr. THOMPSON. On their terms.

Mr. PUEY. On whatever terms. When you negotiate you negotiate on your own terms.

Mr. THOMPSON. They were not prepared to make any concessions.

Mr. PUEY. Let us not quarrel. The fact remains there is no—at this moment anyway—

Mr. THOMPSON. Do you seriously believe there are no Vietnamese arms going to the Thai insurgents?

Mr. PUEY. I would not say no but I would say very little.

Mr. THOMPSON. You feel there is no direction and support, important morale-building support at all, along with the various other things that motivate insurgents?

In other words, can you really see the Vietnamese, who certainly found it difficult to resist the various temptations between 1973 and 1975 which were there, and with their longer experience in not resisting temptations, they would be able to resist this temptation in Thailand if we completely scuttled our alliance with the Thai state, the Thai nation. This is irrespective of the regime, quite apart from the merits or demerits of the regime—and in large measure, I am in agreement—but from the point of view of our alliance which transcends the present Thai Government. It is with the Thai state.

Mr. PUEY. Mr. Chairman, Professor Thompson and myself will have to agree to disagree on this. Professor Thompson's information may be from some sources but my own information is from another source, that the Vietnamese have told everybody that they wanted the principle of "Panja Sila." Panja sila means noninterference with their neighbors. Now, you may say that the Vietnamese are big liars.

Mr. THOMPSON. Is that why they have 6,000 troops in Laos?

Mr. PUEY. Whatever it is. We may disagree about this, but I think that they are very anxious to appear to the world as one of the good neighbors in Southeast Asia. So from that point of view, I don't think that they are as anxious as you said to send arms to the insurgents in Thailand. I don't see that.

Mr. FRASER. Dr. Puey, during the 3 years of democratic rule, the insurgency was active.

Mr. PUEY. They were less active as my figures show. There was less fighting.

Mr. FRASER. If the then Government had asked the United States for assistance in dealing with whatever level of insurgency continued, would you have thought that the United States should provide military arms?

Mr. PUEY. No, I would not have. I would advise against it similarly because I feel that the solution of insurgency in my country cannot be solved by armed forces alone. Of course, I cannot stop them fighting at this moment. Nobody can stop them fighting. But I believe that the way to do away with insurgency is to try to develop the country in the right way and have the artificial barrier removed.

Now, what I am saying here is that we should learn from the lesson of combating insurgents a la military. In 1964 when we started we had three provinces as insurgents provinces of the whole Kingdom—we poured money and arms. We asked U.S. advice and so on

in order to combat insurgency. At this moment we have 32 provinces already declared by the Government as sensitive provinces. There may be some fallacy there but whatever fallacy there might be it just showed that armed fighting with the insurgents does not produce the result you hope to.

Mr. FRASER. There is another example in Southeast Asia and that is Malaysia which went through an insurgency which did not succeed. There were arms used against it.

Mr. PUEY. They are still contained.

Mr. THOMPSON. But it was defeated. You are right, there are 500 or so CT's but would you argue that if nothing had been done since 1964, if there had been no arms, no combat, no CSOC, no ISOC, et cetera, the insurgency would be less?

Mr. PUEY. If there is nothing else there is insurgency. The insurgency will be more but the Government does not pursue the right policy.

Mr. THOMPSON. I can agree with that. The main thing that one would say about the Thai Government's attitude toward the insurgencies was, whether they took a military or a political approach, they did not take enough of either. The insurgencies were always an extremely low priority. It was very difficult to convince the Bangkok-minded elite in Bangkok that anything beyond Bangkok mattered anyway. You know that if it was up in the northeast, they would say that those are Lao-Thai anyway; "who cares." It was difficult to combat this attitude.

If one wanted to do something in Bangkok to convince people it was important, then they should try to apply a combined military-political approach with the emphasis on a political solution.

Mr. PUEY. Again, I disagree with Professor Thompson because in 1964—when I talked about the three provinces, the budget allocation was baht \$30 million and 10 years afterward the budget allocation was nearly baht \$1 billion. It is true the military did not get the support in fighting from the budget. I personally feel that those moneys had been wasted.

Mr. THOMPSON. Judging from the results, I think you are right.

Mr. FRASER. Do you have evidence of torture that you believe exists since the October 6 coup and is that fairly solid evidence?

Mr. PUEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. FRASER. How extensive is it?

Mr. PUEY. That I cannot say. But, certainly there was evidence of torture and execution; summary executions as well.

Mr. FRASER. Without the benefit of a trial?

Mr. PUEY. Without the benefit of trial and not by the Prime Minister but by the local police. Three Buddhist monks in Pippon District in the south, just were detained and disappeared and a local priest also reported that. There was an instance of a school headmaster in the south by the name of Mr. Udorn Pakakrong who was arrested with 10 others. They were thrown into sacks and thrown into bundles until they confessed. Many instances of torture appeared in the report that Congressman Stark had details about.

People are willing to testify on this provided their names should not be revealed. You have also an affidavit of someone who had been detained so it is quite substantial, I think.

Mr. FRASER. That is the so-called tiger cage?

Mr. PUEY. Yes.

Mr. FRASER. The affidavit describes cells 1½ meters long, 1 meter wide and just over 1 meter high.

Mr. PUEY. If I may add a personal note. On the 6th of October 1976 in the evening when I was about to leave the country a policeman came and arrested me and he detained me for 3 hours until the coup leaders ordered him to let me go. I asked him why he arrested me. He said that three students had implicated me in the plot to upset the monarchy. I said who are they and how did they say so. The policeman, whether he is stupid or not, he said these three students would not admit anything at all until they were burned by cigarette butts. Then they implicated me. This sort of thing. Eyewitnesses could be called for the 6th of October but after the October event those people who had been free can testify to the kinds of tortures that they themselves had undergone or have seen other people undergo.

Mr. FRASER. Dr. Thompson, is it your view that how the Thai Government conducts itself in relation to Thai citizens may have an effect on the outcome of the incipient struggle in Thailand?

Mr. THOMPSON. Marginal one. Obviously if it goes around behaving nastily in the provinces it is not going to engender support but I don't think that is the issue. The question in the provinces is whether they can find the right mix of policies, sociological, military, to diffuse the insurgencies and that does not have anything to do with the fate of the regime in Bangkok. It is more likely that certain types of regimes will find that mix but it isn't going to be a civil rights campaign in Udorn that is going to stop the insurgency there. It is going to be some combination they found like, for example, was found in Malaysia and the problem with military regimes is they usually overreact on the military side. One would hope that this government would not do so.

Mr. FRASER. Well, they seem to have made a beginning here by whatever numbers enlarging the recruits to the insurgency.

Mr. THOMPSON. Yes. I would again say that is probably, in the overall military balance of the thing, fairly marginal; although I think it probably does have morale effect that is deleterious. I am not trying to define it out of existence. I am just saying that was considered to be a very major factor after the coup. The military analyses I have seen of the effects 6 months later would tend to suggest that it evanesced a bit.

Mr. FRASER. You heard Dr. Puey cite the increased level of violence.

Mr. THOMPSON. That has nothing to do with the students joining it as far as I can see. That separates right out.

Mr. FRASER. What does account for it? He cited figures that suggested the first 3 months—

Mr. THOMPSON. Dramatic increase in the first several months.

Mr. FRASER. By whom, by the Thai military?

Mr. THOMPSON. More Thai casualties as I understand it.

Mr. PUEY. Thai police and military.

Mr. FRASER. Why should the casualty rate be as low as it was in 1976?

Mr. THOMPSON. Because it was heating up. It has been heating up all along. I would disagree during the 3 years of civilian rule that in fact the level of the insurgencies calmed down.

There were a few little turndowns on the graph but the trend has been up since 1965 generally. I would say it would be quite predictable

at the beginning of a new military regime's power that the insurgency would launch a tough thrust to try to send them a message to knock it off. Precisely the way the Viet Cong did in several stages when we were thinking of escalating in Vietnam. There are a number of precedents. A lot of people were predicting that—at the time of the coup in Bangkok the insurgency experts in town here were saying if there is a military coup in Bangkok you know what will happen, the Communist territories will heat up the battle very rapidly in the next few months. That is precisely what happened.

As Dr. Puey correctly stated, there was a 300 or 400 percent increase in casualties. It has been on a low to gently rising level and it is now at a new level of magnitude. I would expect it to continue to accelerate until the Thai polity in its totality finds a way of dealing with the insurgencies that works. They have not found it. They didn't find it under civilian rule. They didn't try.

In the previous military government they had some good formulations. They unfortunately were not of indigenous derivation and that was probably the main problem. I think there were good formulations. But they were not credible, and nobody really believed in them.

Mr. FRASER. Dr. Thompson, what is the ultimate interest of the United States as to what kind of government rules in Thailand?

Mr. THOMPSON. I would take it with any ally we would hope for as many shared beliefs as possible with the way we govern. We would hope that every country in the world shared our approach to things but we learned we don't have the power to go around enforcing that and with our allies in distressed situations, I think we have even less. Our interest in it is that Thailand is still strategically situated, and highly vulnerable.

Mr. FRASER. Vulnerable to what?

Mr. THOMPSON. Vulnerable to Indochinese and possibly—

Mr. FRASER. Say a Communist government takes over, it probably is not vulnerable anymore.

Mr. THOMPSON. Sure, Western Europe can fall and then—

Mr. FRASER. I am talking about Thailand.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thailand can fall.

Mr. FRASER. Thailand won't fall, it will have a change of government.

Mr. THOMPSON. It will have a change in government.

Mr. FRASER. It won't disappear. We won't lose it.

Mr. THOMPSON. The Government would fall.

Mr. FRASER. The Government would fall just as the last one did in October.

Mr. THOMPSON. It is more basic when you go to a Communist government.

Mr. FRASER. Much more durable.

Mr. THOMPSON. In a hard and harsh sense.

Mr. FRASER. What is our interest in that?

Mr. THOMPSON. The same as our interest in preventing Communist governments from appearing anywhere.

Mr. FRASER. That does not help me. What is our interest in Thailand?

Mr. THOMPSON. How can you say it doesn't help you?

Mr. FRASER. Because I would like to deal with a concrete specific.

Mr. THOMPSON. The concrete specific is that it would add to this sum total of human misery. It would strategically be deleterious to our interests.

Mr. FRASER. In what way?

Mr. THOMPSON. The sense of this is strategic air space, this is—

Mr. FRASER. You mean the overflight?

Mr. THOMPSON. More than that. It is an air crossroads of great importance. It is a listening post.

Mr. FRASER. Listening to whom?

Mr. THOMPSON. Listening to the Chinese for example.

Mr. FRASER. But we have many opportunities for that.

Mr. THOMPSON. We did have and we could well have again.

Mr. FRASER. What do you want to listen to the Chinese for?

Mr. THOMPSON. Why not?

Mr. FRASER. It could be convenient. We have lots of mechanisms for listening to them, satellites.

Mr. THOMPSON. Our best intelligence, technical intelligence, we gave up. Fortunately. That was the Ramuson facility in Thailand.

Mr. FRASER. Are you saying our interest in the question of which government rules Thailand is based on the fact it would be convenient for us to listen in on Chinese activities?

Mr. THOMPSON. No; you asked me what the specifics were and I was listing them in descending order of importance.

Mr. FRASER. Start at the top. What is the most important thing?

Mr. THOMPSON. The most important reason for our having an interest in what kind of government is in Thailand is simply the abstract one. We don't want a Communist government in Thailand because it would add to the overall power of Communist governments in the world, however many branches of the "church" there are.

Mr. FRASER. In other words, you see this as an addition to the aggregate Communist power to attack the United States or—

Mr. THOMPSON. Not to attack the United States.

Mr. FRASER. Vital interests of the United States?

Mr. THOMPSON. No.

Mr. FRASER. Then what are you talking about?

Mr. THOMPSON. To weaken the Western international system. I am saying that there was an international system constructed at the conclusion of World War II that had the World Bank, the IMF, United Nations, and such other institutions at its core. The rules of the game were organized largely by us, perhaps one could say for our convenience. This system has been under steady erosion, you may have noticed in recent years, with attacks at the United Nations on us and so forth and so on. We are not in the same position we were in the immediate post-war era. The addition of more governments to the general cluster of governments that are not open to free enterprise, not open to our institutions, not open to trade, not open to the free exchange of people and ideas, simply diminishes the—do you see what I am getting at?

Mr. FRASER. Yes; I see. You say not open to trade. That is not right. We have traded with quite a few.

Mr. THOMPSON. We don't have much.

Mr. FRASER. You are talking about ideas and institutions. These are concepts that I tend to put under human rights considerations.

Mr. THOMPSON. Maybe we construe human rights as different things.

Mr. FRASER. I am really interested in this. It may be one thing for us to have shared concern about how people are forced to live under governments in which they may have very little voice as a matter of our concern about their future, sharing a common market. It is another thing to say we want to have something to say about this because it affects the economic interests of the United States. In other words we don't worry about the Thai people but we worry about the United States. It seems to me there is a fundamental difference here. The fact that we may not be able to share values with the Thai people, I would think is a concern to us because we see it as a deprivation to the Thai people but it seems to me that is a qualitative difference from saying loss of Thailand as a loss of Vietnam is a significant factor in our security or our economic well-being as Americans.

I am not clear where you come out on this.

Mr. THOMPSON. You are drawing a distinction without a difference.

Mr. FRASER. It makes a lot of difference in what we do and how we are prepared to go about it. If American interest is at stake we don't care what happens in Thailand as long as we protect our interests. If we are concerned about the Thai people we might want to think somewhat more sensitively.

Mr. THOMPSON. You are concerned about the Chinese people in China. There are a lot more of them than there are Thai, if you want to go at it by this approach.

Mr. FRASER. That is right. I remember the Chinese increased in population every year by the total population of Vietnam over which we expended an enormous treasury. I never understood the argument you advanced.

Mr. THOMPSON. What argument?

Mr. FRASER. That there is an incremental shift in the world climate because now they are lost to us. We are going to have another voice attacking us in the United Nations.

Mr. THOMPSON. You don't think there has been a shift in the world climate since 1975?

Mr. FRASER. Yes; I think there has been. However, I don't see that these countries which are relatively powerless add or subtract importantly to this and I am wondering exactly what price we are prepared to pay there in terms of just human misery that we may perpetuate in our efforts to serve our interests rather than serving the interests of the people.

Mr. THOMPSON. Where are we perpetuating misery?

Mr. FRASER. I don't want to reargue the whole Vietnam debate but I thought it was a useless war although I supported it for 6 months. But I don't see we have learned anything. What I am interested in is how much we have learned from the Vietnam experience. Enormous misery caused by the United States in Vietnam.

Mr. THOMPSON. We caused it?

Mr. FRASER. I think it is fair to say we caused it.

Mr. THOMPSON. You don't put any responsibility on Hanoi's side?

Mr. FRASER. They won the war against the French and were entitled to the freedom. We decided we didn't like their ideology and we set up a train of events.

Mr. THOMPSON. That is why refugees were going away, how many thousands in 1968 and 1975? Why didn't they go north?

Mr. FRASER. They didn't like the regime.

Mr. THOMPSON. Why are refugees now coming to Thailand rather than going from Thailand to Cambodia?

Mr. FRASER. Because they don't like the regimes. Do you think a loss of several million lives and 50,000 of our own, an expenditure of over \$100 billion to delay the outcome by 20 years was a worthwhile undertaking? I think we imposed a lot of needless misery on these people.

Mr. THOMPSON. Who could have said in 1954, 1955, that it inevitably was going to end up that way?

Mr. FRASER. If we listened to the French we might have understood.

Mr. THOMPSON. If we tried to learn anything from the French—which we made no effort to do—we might have seen its futility.

Mr. FRASER. In other words, it seems to me our interest in Thailand ought to be based on the Thai people. It seems to me beyond that, the U.S. strategic interests, commercial interests, have to be marginal.

Mr. THOMPSON. I would disagree profoundly with that. I would be interested to know what you mean by the Thai people.

Mr. FRASER. We have a belief that such ideas as freedom of expression, right to be free of arbitrary governmental interference in one's life, that these are important values and that we have an interest in that because they are shared values and that our belief is, that in the long run, where we can promote decent governments that do respect these kinds of rights, in the long run perhaps environment for our values worldwide is going to be improved.

Mr. THOMPSON. Do you do that in Thailand by cutting off their military aid right now?

Mr. FRASER. I have not reached that point. I am puzzled as to what we do. But what is not clear to me is that no matter what that Government does, if we feed it military aid we are pursuing a destructive course but this goes to the question of whether they are going to hold the loyalties, especially of the young people if they pursue the course that they seem to be on. Now my problem is that this is not a judgment for me to make. It is a very difficult judgment to make. Dr. Puey, who lived there a long time, seems to think we should discontinue military aid. He seems to think that would be true no matter what kind of government exists there.

Mr. THOMPSON. He is very consistent. He was known to be one of the few people courageous enough during the period of the Prapat-Thanom dictatorship who spoke out forcibly within government counsels, and was well known for his views so this is not a sudden change in views.

Mr. PUEY. Mr. Chairman, if I may remark upon your interchange. I wish very much in my country people like you and Professor Thompson could do the same. I admire the United States for having this.

Mr. FRASER. None of us contests that, Dr. Puey. What is it the United States constructively can do that will increase the prospect that you and I or Dr. Thompson and I could go to Thailand and have this kind of dialog. Where do we come out on this?

Mr. PUEY. That is more difficult. But, my main purpose at this moment is to minimize suffering and to save lives in Thailand, unnecessary loss of life.

Mr. THOMPSON. Isn't one of the things we learned from Vietnam that we not be messianic about our feelings? I think right now around the world people are getting the feeling the United States is on another one of its virtue kicks. John Foster Dulles all over again. Take out the old editorials. We are using the same jargon except it is not about nonalignment; it is about human rights. Same thing as Teddy Roosevelt. We have done it throughout our history.

Is it going to be useful for us to have a "virtue kick" so soon after Vietnam? I really wonder whether this is terribly useful. I think governments like Thailand should get some private criticism. I think they know what we feel about them but I think they are entitled to some understanding in the circumstances and we would hope that within a reasonable period of time the situation would calm down and that they would improve their image and so forth in their own interest.

But I am wondering if the way to do that is by virtue crusade. I am not addressing that to you, needless to say. I think this is ceasing to be very constructive from what I hear, but the problem is of its getting out of hand with everybody competing to be on the power curve of virtue.

Mr. FRASER. As one member of the State Department, who has been interested in human rights said, for 3 years there was a rain dance to promote human rights and now they are drowning. It is a flood. I agree. I think my own view is that public confrontations on human rights issues are normally not productive and the only thing, though, that I have sensed about American policy is an insensitivity. One of the reasons I think an interest in human rights is important is simply to have a better understanding of the dynamics of our society.

You made the point which I agree with. I think sometimes human rights violations are often the symptoms of underlying malfunctioning societies. That may be a poor choice of words but they reflect the stresses that are in societies.

Mr. THOMPSON. Another thing we could do, which I indirectly pointed out here, is in cases where there are good performances, we could do more to strengthen them.

Mr. FRASER. That in my view is clearly the way we should be going. For one thing, you cannot lose doing that. If you find governments moving in a direction we think is helpful to their own people and to our interests, we give them help. We don't say we caused it. Simply where we find friends—I wish we could define "friends" as people with shared values rather than military alliances—but where we find friends we should back them, give them help when they need it and want it.

Mr. THOMPSON. For example, were there any congressional exchanges with the Thai Parliament during the 3 years—I would have thought that sort of thing would have been reinforcing and could have been done in the few places in the Third World where there are democratic institutions.

Mr. FRASER. Those parliamentary exchanges can never compete with those in Europe.

Mr. THOMPSON. But they would have more effect.

Mr. FRASER. Mr. Smecton.

Mr. SMEETON. I will pose these questions to both of you. On the specific subject of human rights in Thailand, one of the things that I have taken note of with respect to foreign press reports emanating from Bangkok—at least the datelines seem to be Bangkok—is that a number of them have been quite critical of the regime's human rights record.

From that, am I wrong in deducing that there is not much of an effort, if any, by the current regime to censor foreign press reports?

Mr. THOMPSON. Then they threw out Norman Pigan.

Mr. PUEY. I guess, and they threatened to ban his Far Eastern Economic Review. In the days immediately after October 6 last year, any foreign newspaper sent into Thailand that had news about Thailand was cut off. One of my nephews was very cross because he found his newspaper all mutilated and he could not read about Thailand at all. The present Minister of Interior said that all Western foreign correspondents in Bangkok tell lies. Every one of them without exception. So that is still the attitude.

Mr. SMEETON. But at the same time he allows these reports to continue to be disseminated from Bangkok. There appears to be no effort to stop them from being sent out to their home offices.

Mr. PUEY. The Economic Review, Far Eastern Economic Review, has to be very careful. I know that a reporter of the New York Times and the Guardian in London had been warned several times about sending news on Thailand. Some newspaper had—referring to the newspaper that I read in London—used pseudonyms for their reporter in order to protect their own reporter. That is a practice at this moment.

Mr. THOMPSON. I would say in terms of the other oppressions of the present Thai Government it is relatively loose in the press side. You would have expected it to be tougher.

Mr. PUEY. Inefficiency in Thai dictatorships is our saving grace.

Mr. THOMPSON. I would say a neighboring very small country which will remain nameless may be overall a slightly easier country to live in but its press policy is much tougher than in Bangkok now.

Mr. PUEY. I admit.

Mr. THOMPSON. Because it is more efficient.

Mr. PUEY. I would not put it nameless either.

Mr. SMEETON. Turning to some of the other freedoms, is it pretty easy to travel around Thailand? Are there any restrictions placed on travel within Thailand?

Mr. PUEY. I think foreigners can travel.

Mr. SMEETON. I was thinking of natives.

Mr. PUEY. There are certain areas where they are not allowed to be free. There was a story which we can substantiate about a group of villagers in the south that had been evacuated from their village and told by the police without giving any reason that they were not allowed to go out. Well, after a few days the villagers thinking about their harvest, the rice is ripe, they went out without the police knowing and they were all killed, most of them were killed.

I would not say all. Most of them were killed by gunfire from helicopters. They are thinking this is a Communist group.

Now in Thailand you are told not to go anywhere in the evening, in sensitive areas. In the daytime you can travel but do not go into official cars, transport.

Mr. SMEETON. By sensitive areas do you mean those 32 areas you talked about earlier?

Mr. PUEY. Thirty-two provinces but otherwise they are still free to travel.

Mr. SMEETON. How about property rights? Are there any restrictions on owning or moving property?

Mr. PUEY. Move property?

Mr. SMEETON. Or continue to own property. Has there been any confiscation of property?

Mr. PUEY. No.

Mr. SMEETON. Personal property and so on.

Mr. PUEY. That is all right.

Mr. SMEETON. That has not been touched?

Mr. PUEY. No.

Mr. SMEETON. Dr. Puey, I think you alluded to the factionalism within the military and I gather some of that factionalism reaches into the Royal Palace.

Could you elaborate a little bit on what lies behind the friction that seems to be developing?

Mr. PUEY. I think there are always rumors about the King favoring this group or that group of officers. So far I don't think that the rumors have been substantiated and I believe that the King himself tried to be really neutral. Whether he had any part in the event of the sixth at all I do not know. And I have no evidence to say one way or the other.

Mr. SMEETON. Would you say the King remained neutral?

Mr. PUEY. Between the factions?

Mr. SMEETON. Did he remain neutral at the time of the October coup?

Mr. PUEY. I heard the same stories about the King.

Mr. SMEETON. I got the impression that maybe for the first time in history the royalty had sided with one faction.

Mr. THOMPSON. That is my understanding. This is really of quite enormous importance to Thai developments although it is a difficult one to discuss with Thais because their attitude is so reverential with respect to His Majesty that it is almost impossible to discuss. Yet something has happened.

Mr. PUEY. I must say the Government has denied so far that the King had any interference.

Mr. THOMPSON. I think what is assumed is that sometime between January of 1976 and October 1976 the King let it be known he would not be displeased if the military came back to power. This was quite surprising to most students of Thai politics to put it mildly.

Mr. SMEETON. One final question, Mr. Chairman. It has been noted by a number of people—those who have been described as veteran observers of the Thai political scene—that during this last period of democracy, the 1973-76 period, neither the left nor the right had much patience with the democratic experiment and this led to the showdown of October of 1976.

I would be interested in getting both of your comments. Is that an on-target observation or an exaggerated claim as to what happened during this democratic interlude?

Mr. THOMPSON. That is true but it is a necessary but not sufficient part of the explanation of what happened.

Mr. SMEETON. You would say it is more peripheral than anything else?

Mr. THOMPSON. It was not really central. To me the central issue was the growing domestic anarchy, in the context of the revolution next door, that made the Thai military feel that it was a hopeless situation. They simply could not have threats, both externally and internally.

Historically the Thais always tried to balance the two and have made alliances with great powers to balance off difficulties internally or vice versa. To have threats on both fronts was considered more than they felt could be tolerated.

Mr. PUEY. I would agree with Dr. Thompson as far as to say that that was a necessary condition but not sufficient condition. But I would not agree with the rest of his statement. Considering that even with Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam remaining as before, not being Communist governments at all, I think that the event of the 6th of October would still occur because, in my opinion, the most important factor is that the military want to come back to power. It is as simple as that. And they have been preparing this—while we were drafting the constitution in 1974, they have been preparing all the time. And in 1974 you must admit that Vietnam had not become Communist yet.

Mr. THOMPSON. Yes, but the question is would the plots have succeeded. Why didn't they succeed until 1976 and until after the Americans had let them down and vacated the bases? They were plotting; they were always plotting, but I think there was fair knowledge among Thai observers that what really finally precipitated their willingness to go "whole hog" was the collapse of their security arrangements in the region. We ran out on them. I think here again we agree to disagree.

Mr. PUEY. I agree with you but I think the weight we put to each factor is different.

Mr. THOMPSON. It is possible there would have been a coup any way but the particular coup that occurred happened as a specific part of a logical sequence of events in 1976 and all the coups attempts previously, between 1973 and 1976, had not been able to generate enough enthusiasm because the Government was not strong enough. The Government could not provide the kind of strength that the military felt was necessary for the country to have.

I didn't mean military strength, I mean the combined assets of economics, sociological stability, and internal security. I don't think countries can really concentrate on developing when they don't have their security clear in their own minds. This was certainly the case in Thailand the latter part of that period.

Mr. SMEETON. Thank you Dr. Puey and thank you Professor Thompson. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. FRASER. My thanks to both of you. I apologize for the hearing running so late but this has been very constructive. We appreciate your responses to the questions. The subcommittee stands adjourned.

APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN FRASER PRIOR TO HEARING AND RESPONSES BY THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Question 1. Please describe the status of human rights in Thailand. What changes have occurred since the Department's issuance of its report on Thailand as part of the Congressional Presentation documentation for the fiscal year 1978 security assistance requests?

In that report, you indicate that decree order No. 22 calls for the detention of those "considered dangerous to society." What sorts of people have been detained under this decree? Based on the government's practice since October, 1976, what appears to be the Thai Government's concept of activities or individuals which it considers "dangerous to society?"

In the Department's human rights report it is stated "The lack of constitutionally guaranteed human rights has not altered the structure and practices of Thai courts which continue to adhere to a legal code based on liberterian European models." In view of the fact that persons may be detained for up to 480 days, is the above statement accurate? Would you please explain what is meant by the statement.

Answer. The current status of human rights in Thailand is the subject of Deputy Assistant Secretary Oakley's opening statement before the Subcommittee investigating Human Rights in Thailand.

Question 2. Did the United States Government express concern regarding the events, particularly the killings and arrests, at Thammasat University on October 6th? What was the Government's response? Why did the United States Government not publicly express its regret at the demise of democracy in Thailand?

Answer. With regard to the question about the extent of U.S. comment on the October 6, 1976, *coup d'etat* in Thailand, the State Department Spokesman stated on October 14 that "The United States Government, whatever Administration—has always favored—if we had our druthers, we always prefer a democracy or a democratic form of government". Since then, the Department has repeatedly expressed concern over human rights situations which have their roots in the termination of democracy in Thailand.

Question 3. What is the status of the trials of some 100 or more people? Will the U.S. Embassy send an observer to those trials?

Answer. The status of prisoners facing trial is contained in Mr. Oakley's remarks.

Question 4. Deputy Supreme Commander Kriangsak made a visit to Washington recently. Did U.S. officials raise the question of respect for human rights, including civil and political rights, with General Kriangsak? If so, what was his response? If not, why not?

Answer. As is common practice with respect to foreign governments, U.S. officials have raised on several occasions with senior Thai Government officials in Washington and in Bangkok the U.S. Government's concern about human rights developments. General Kriangsak is among those officials.

Question 5. In 1974-75 three conservative groups developed in opposition to the students and other forces pressing for political and social reforms—the Nawapon, Red Guars and the Village Scouts. It is reported that these groups, though officially non-governmental, were supported by senior military and police officers. Consequently, for instance, equipment owned by the armed forces and police was provided to these groups. These groups were responsible for physical attacks against students and other progressive groups. The Red Guars, and Village Scouts, for instance, were two of the groups which led the attack against the students at Thammasat University on October 5-6, 1976.

What evidence, if any, does the Department of State have that U.S. equipment and training provided through U.S. assistance programs was used by the above-mentioned groups? What efforts has our government undertaken to monitor the use of our equipment and ensure that it has not been used or is not being used by such groups?

Answer. We have absolutely no evidence that U.S. equipment provided to the Thai Armed Forces through the Military Assistance Program has found its way into the hands of any group or individual for which it was not intended. The U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group (JUSMAG) in Bangkok is responsible for constantly monitoring the end use of U.S. equipment provided to the Thai Armed Forces.

Question 6. One of the units which was engaged in the attack against the students at Thammasat University was the Thai Border Patrol Police. What were the justifications for the Border Police being present in Bangkok? Since 1970 what forms of assistance, including the narcotics assistance, have been provided to the Border Police? Is it known, or is it likely that U.S. equipment was used by the Border Police in their attacks against the students at Thammasat University?

What efforts has our government undertaken to monitor the use of U.S. provided equipment under the narcotics assistance program? What assurances do we have from the Thai government that the above-mentioned equipment is not used for purposes other than the prevention of narcotics traffic?

Answer. The Border Patrol Police (BPP) is a unit of the Thai National Police Department specifically charged with the security of Thailand's border areas. One of the objectives of the U.S. anti-narcotics program in Thailand has been to assist the Thai Government interdict the illicit flow of narcotics across its borders. Consequently, we have provided radios and related equipment to improve BPP communications and effectiveness in the difficult terrain of Thailand's border areas. We have not provided arms to the BPP. There is no evidence that any U.S.-supplied equipment was used by the BPP at Thammasat University. U.S. provided helicopters are used by the BPP but are the specific property of the Thai National Police Aviation Division. With respect to end use monitoring of U.S. anti-narcotics equipment, our Embassy in Bangkok is staffed with an Aviation Advisor to the Thai Police Aviation Division and two AID Narcotic Advisors. These officers have specific end use monitoring responsibilities. However, every single officer of the U.S. Mission in Bangkok is under instructions to report any infraction of the United States-Thai agreements on the use of U.S.-supplied narcotics control equipment.

Question 7. According to a Thai counter-insurgency expert, Dr. Somchai Rak-wijit, who has worked with the U.S. Department of Defense, Thai military personnel have used helicopters for dropping from the air alleged communist suspects. He believes such measures will be used again. Are such helicopters likely to be provided under U.S. assistance programs?

It is reported that recently the ASIAN countries met in Thailand to discuss counter-insurgency tactics. The United States sent an observer. What can you tell us about this meeting? Should the United States be so closely identified with such activities?

Answer. We have had no confirmation of the report that people have been dropped from Thai aircraft and no reason to believe that the report is accurate.

With respect to the counter-insurgency conference at Lop Buri, Thailand in early 1977, U.S. military observers were invited and did attend. The United States and Thailand continue to cooperate on security matters and our attendance at that conference was entirely consistent with that relationship.

Question 8. Over the last several years U.S. bilateral development assistance has declined to Thailand. At the same time, Thailand had established a democratic government one of the very few in East Asia. Why didn't we show our support for Thailand's democratic system by maintaining or even increasing the development aid levels?

Answer. As pointed out in the question, U.S. development assistance has declined over the past several years, including those years when Thailand has a democratic government. This decline represented a judgment about relative need in relation to appropriated funds.

Question 9. It is reported that the current Thai Government is not concerned with possible military or economic aid cuts since the amounts are small, and grant military aid is being phased out. Rather, they are more concerned with providing a favorable investment climate in Thailand, and are willing to take such measures as are necessary to provide this climate even if it means taking

actions which would bring the administration or Congress to impose military or economic aid cut-outs. Is this an accurate view of the Thai Government position?

To the contrary, Thailand continues to attach great importance to United States assistance in both the economic and security field. This is not only the conclusion of the Department of State but also of the Report of a Special Study Mission to Asia by members of the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of the House International Relations Committee, published on June 19, 1977. Moreover, the RTG is showing greater, not lesser, interest in rural development and other programs which require assistance from foreign governments such as the United States and Japan as well as international financial institutions.

Answer. The end of the war in Indochina marked the beginning of the "new Basis" for United States-Thai relations of which Mr. Oakley spoke in his Bangkok press conference. The termination of the Indochina conflict altered fundamentally the U.S. interest in Thailand as a base for U.S. activities directed against Communist forces in the area. From a high of 46,000 American troops, seven American air bases and hundreds of American combat planes in Thailand in 1969, all U.S. military forces were withdrawn by mid-1976, and the size of the Military Assistance Advisory Group is rapidly declining, reaching a level of no more than 40 during fiscal year 1978.

With the decline in the importance of the United States-Thai security relationship, a more balanced, normal and constructive relationship than that of a decade ago is developing. We no longer seek nor do the Thai desire the previous degree of mutual dependence. The United States has an important general interest in a sovereign, independent Thailand, free of significant external influence inimical to the United States. Such a threat to Thailand is most likely to be from the Communist States of Indochina. Specific U.S. policy interests which have gained greater attention in the post-Indochina war environment include human rights, anti-narcotics cooperation, Thai support on multilateral issues of significance to the United States, general cultural and educational exchange activities, economic development and United States-Thai trade. Thailand's constructive role in regional (particularly ASEAN) economic cooperation and development is also of importance to U.S. interests, as well as to those of Japan, Australia and the EEC, all of whom are consulting with ASEAN.

The importance of Thailand and Southeast Asia to the United States is set forth in the report of the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of the House International Relations Committee, published on June 19.

Question 12. Another question and response by Secretary Oakley was as follows.

How would you describe the new approach in terms of Southeast Asia at this point?

How is the Department pressing for economic and social rights in Thailand? What areas of progress do you see in this area including, for example, the right to form trade unions, bargaining collectively, and to strike.

Answer. I would say that the new approach, in a sense, is both a continuation of the past support that we've had in addition to trying to do what we can to work for a longer-term stability in the area, with a greater emphasis on improvement of the human situation throughout the area. In other words, a new accent on human rights in the broad sense, including economic and social development, as well as in the political area.

The Department has made known repeatedly its interest in the furthering of economic and social rights in Thailand. We believe that progress in this area is important to the future of Thailand. By means of our diplomatic contacts as well as the direction of our modest assistance program, we are trying to encourage greater emphasis upon human rights, individual liberties and due process as well as upon improving the lot of the poorer segments of the population.

APPENDIX 2

THAILAND: DOMINO BY DEFAULT?*

INTRODUCTION

Military rule has now been reestablished in Thailand, after a turbulent three-year period of open politics. In pursuit of political stability and national security, and in the name of "Nation, Religion, King and Anti-Communism," current Thai leaders have decisively rejected representative political institutions and detente with their new socialist neighbors. Can effective stability now be established, or will Thailand prove to be the next Domino? And what are the implications of these events for Thailand's traditional close ally, the United States?

This essay is an attempt to provide a constructive framework for formulation of American policy towards Thailand in the coming years. The dramatic events which occurred in that country in October 1976, on top of the creation of a new political order throughout Indochina in April 1975, demand a thoughtful reexamination of U.S.-Thai relations.

The essay is divided into three parts: (1) an analysis of the social dynamics and political forces which led to the 1976 military coup; (2) an outline of the most probable course which events in Thailand might be expected to follow over the next few years; and (3) an assessment of American interests and options.

American contacts with Thailand go back many decades. The Chakri Dynasty, whose present monarch is King Phumiphon Adulyadet (Rama IX), was established in Bangkok four years before America's Declaration of Independence. Early in the 1800s, American sea captains visited Bangkok in search of trade. They were followed by Protestant missionaries seeking converts, and then merchants, machinists and saloon-keepers in search of pleasure and easy money. In 1856 Siam, as it was then known, and the United States signed a formal treaty regulating trade between the two countries.

Even then, however, American and Thai interests ran in both directions. During the American Civil War, King Mongkut wrote directly to President Lincoln, offering to send elephants to help the Union cause. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a series of American advisors to the King played a central role in negotiating treaties with the British and French, guaranteeing the territorial integrity of Thailand. During World War II, when Thailand was officially allied with Japan, her ambassador to Washington, H.R. Seni Pramoj, refused to deliver his government's declaration of war to the State Department; and Free Thai paratroopers trained in America and the United Kingdom made secret landings in their homeland to assist the Allied campaigns. As a gesture of this long-standing friendship, America was influential in having Thailand's war debts excused at the close of the conflict.

*This essay is the joint product of four individuals: William Bradley, president, Edwin W. Hazen Foundation; David Morell, research political scientist and lecturer, Department of Politics, Princeton University; David Szanton, anthropologist and staff associate at the Social Science Research Council in New York; and Stephen Young, lawyer with Simpson, Thatcher and Bartlett.

Post-World War II relations between the two nations have remained very close and will be discussed on Part Three. But even these brief paragraphs should give some sense of the long-standing interest which the United States has had in Thailand, the only country of Southeast Asia which maintained its independence -- and a friendly stance towards the United States -- despite all the political and economic pressures of the last two centuries. Today, with American foreign policy-makers stressing interdependence in a pluralistic and multi-polar world, Thailand's continued independence and the constructive friendship of our two countries take on a special importance. Despite the frank criticism of past and present policies in both nations, it is these mutual goals to which this essay is dedicated.

PART ONEPOLARIZATION AND CONFLICT IN THAI POLITICS*

The abrupt end on October 6, 1976 to the latest attempt at installing representative forms of governance in Thailand came as no real surprise, except for the extremes of brutality. Almost exactly three years earlier, an unprecedented spasm of popular animosity to military rule had forced the country's generals to relinquish the political power they had held through most of the past four decades. The intervening months had witnessed increasing polarization between the forces committed to change -- political, economic and social -- and those determined to protect the system of the past. By October 1976 the vast majority of the Thai population desired a return to stability and a merciful end to the turmoil and political violence which the rival antagonists of right and left had taught them to associate with open politics.

II

This political violence emerged in a land of traditional political passivity. The genesis of this conflict in a political system reputed to abhor such behavior began with events of late 1973, which engendered a climate in which reforms were demanded by some but resisted increasingly by others.**

On October 6, 1973, twelve activists from the university community were arrested by the Bangkok police for handing out leaflets demanding a constitution. Over the next few days, response to these arrests challenged and shattered the balance of power so long and so heavily weighted toward the military. On October 13 thousands of university and vocational students, joined by ordinary middle-class people, left the relative safety of the Thammasat University compound for a massive but well-controlled demonstration march through central Bangkok. Soon the tense and uncertain situation became violent. Anti-riot police and soldiers turned on the demonstrators, first

* An earlier version of this part appeared as "Thailand: The Costs of Political Conflict," Pacific Community, January 1977, pp. 327-339 (by David and Susan Morell).

** Detailed accounts of these events and their meaning are presented in David Morell and Chai-anan Samudavanija, "Thailand Since October 1973: Dissolution of a Revolution," Pacific Community, July 1975, pp. 575-594; and David Morell, "Political Conflict in Thailand," Asian Affairs, January/February 1976, pp. 151-184.

with tear gas and then with hand grenades, rifles and machine guns. Whether the decision to attack the protestors was motivated more by design or by panic will never be known. Tanks rolled into the streets, but the protestors did not cease their pressure. For the first time in Thai history, they were willing to die for a political cause.

By October 14, 1973, with several government buildings in flames, some 75 demonstrators dead and many hundreds injured, the King intervened. To end the bloodshed and re-establish calm, he ordered the nation's three top political rulers, Field Marshals Thanom Kittikachorn (Prime Minister) and Praphat Charusathien (Deputy Prime Minister), and Thanom's son (Praphat's son-in-law) and heir-apparent, Colonel Narong Kittikachorn, to leave the country. That same day, in an extremely emotional atmosphere, the King appointed Sanya Thammasak to be the country's first civilian Prime Minister since 1957 (and then only temporarily). As Rector of Thammasat University, Sanya was acceptable to the students; as a close personal advisor to the King and former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, he had impeccable credentials. However, he was not an advocate of rapid reform, nor was he eager to take on the responsibilities of his new office.

The city was jubilant. Though the police, discredited by their role in the abortive attempts to suppress the demonstrations temporarily disappeared from the streets, Boy Scouts took over directing traffic. Hundreds volunteered to help clean up the battered city. The aspirations of many had been awakened to the possibility of change, of "power to the people" instead of just to the politico-military elite. Students and their allies expected rapid change now that the "tyrants" had been ousted. Overlooked was the fact that despite the removal of the corrupt leaders the fundamental power structure remained basically unchanged. Given this gap between expectation and reality, polarization and conflict began their steady growth and came to dominate Thai politics in the months ahead.

Sanya, a man whose integrity and sincerity were never in question, moved slowly, communicating with the student activists but responding to the elitist and royalist groups in which he had moved all his life. Months passed while the new constitution was drafted and reviewed, scrutinized and revised. Meanwhile, members of the old regime -- though circumspect -- remained very much in place. Students were ready to make the country over, from the rice paddies to Government House, but the government couldn't even prepare a new constitution. It was nearly a year, in fact, before the new document was passed by the indirectly elected Provisional Assembly and promulgated by the King. The date of January 1975 was set for the long-awaited national elections to the House of Representatives.*

Although the campaign proceeded peacefully, and with little violence, the bases for subsequent chaos had been established: 42 political parties had been formed, espousing unclear and overlapping platforms; the student movement had become fragmented, disillusioned with electoral politics; and polarization of conservative and liberal elements of the society was well underway.

* The last previous election had taken place in February 1969, introducing an elected House into an era of continuing military dominance. Thanom and Praphat headed the government's political party, which held a majority of House seats. This House was dissolved in the military coup d'etat of November 17, 1971, returning the country to martial law and setting the stage for the October 1973 uprising. The 1975 election was Thailand's ninth in 43 years.

III

Parliamentary leadership under the new constitution then became the province of two unusual if unlike brothers. As leader of the Democrat Party, which gained the largest bloc of seats in the new House -- though far less than a majority -- Seni Pramroj formed a coalition government on February 13, 1975. A respected if aging and indecisive aristocrat, Seni had been Prime Minister for a few weeks in 1945 after his return from Washington, and had been his party's leader since the 1950s. Unable to obtain the House support he needed, Seni was defeated on a vote of confidence eight days later. Parliamentary instability already was evident.

After the fall of Seni's coalition, three major parties on the right (Social Justice, Thai Nation, Social Nationalist) combined with the relatively centrist Social Action Party (SAP) to support Seni's younger brother M.R. Kukrit Pramroj as Prime Minister in a new coalition. A dynamic, eccentric intellectual publisher and journalist, Kukrit had entered active politics in 1975 for the first time in 30 years, as leader of SAP.* In a masterful personal show he defended his Cabinet and its proposed policies and won his vote of confidence in the House. Kukrit then retained control over the shaky coalition for over a year.

The overall strengths of the 1975 parliament were considerable, and the quality of its members was higher than ever before in Thailand's considerable if erratic parliamentary experience. However, the parliamentary device failed to incorporate the students and intellectuals, labor and farm organizations, new social elements produced by 20 years of rapid economic growth, into the traditional power structure comprised of generals, aristocrats, senior bureaucrats and businessmen. The problem, and the failure, was to draw the new elements into an evolving system, to convince both the old and the new political groups that each had a real chance to achieve what it wanted from the government through elected representatives. Suspecting that such a prospect was illusory, pressure groups on the right and left increasingly took action outside the parliament and the parties; and as they did so, the system's ability to respond effectively diminished inexorably.

Sharp demands on one side provoked a strenuous response from the other. Polarization replaced consensus as the basic characteristic of Thai politics, and the Thai people -- including Kukrit and his coalition Cabinet -- could only hang on and try to ride out conflicts that appeared beyond control. Spokesmen for the right and left publicly deplored the situation and blamed each other for it. However, there were also those on both extremes who encouraged further conflict as a means of forcing the political system towards the more drastic changes they desired.

During 1974 and early 1975, university students were highly visible. Through their National Student Center of Thailand (NSCT) they pressed their demands for reform with street demonstrations and protests, which though normally non-violent gave the appearance of continuing instability. Thousands of students went to rural villages to attempt to instill the ideals of "democracy" and political participation. Teacher-training students did this as well, creating a new Center for the Protection of the Rights of Teachers, while in the villages many students preached "socialism" and "power to the people," pointing to the lessons they felt had been learned in Bangkok in October 1973. The most effective students, however, worked on local grievances over land tenure and rents, corruption, and so on.

* Kukrit had formed Thailand's first political party -- the Progressive Party -- in 1946, but then removed himself for nearly three decades from any direct involvement in electoral politics. This party a year later became the foundation for the Democrat Party, in which Seni was to be so active.

A new Farmers Federation of Thailand (FFT) emerged in many of the villages where student activists were most successful in serving as catalysts for politicization of genuine local grievances. Led by farmers, not students, the FFT was most active in North Central Thailand, expressing long-latent villager demands for land reform, tax improvements, better agricultural credit... and political power. Farmers marched on Bangkok. One group protested government inaction on land reform and usury by burning their identity cards, in effect symbolically renouncing their Thai citizenship.

The demonstrations by the farmers attracted the support of several Buddhist monks who joined protest marches. A number of high-ranking members of the Sangha Hierarchy called for the disciplining of these monks on the grounds that monks should not be involved in political activities. In response, a movement of monks calling themselves the "Young Sangha," demanded the institution of reforms in what they said was a highly autocratic Sangha leadership. In late 1974 and early 1975, a mass demonstration involving several thousand monks was organized to protest the inaction of the Sangha hierarchy on the request that two monks who had been stripped of rank during the Sarit regime be restored to their former positions. During the demonstration, a number of monk-leaders went on a hunger strike and their collapse after several days without food finally moved the Supreme Patriarch of the Sangha to announce that a favorable decision regarding the two disgraced monks would be reached within a few weeks. Although no such large demonstrations again occurred, members of the Young Sangha movement kept up agitation for reforms in the Sangha and for making monks more responsive to the plight of the poor and weak in Thai society.

By mid-1975 the conservative forces had recovered considerably from the multiple shocks of October 1973 and its aftermath. In many ways they were still on top with money, physical force and bureaucratic power. Their interests required that what was left of the traditional economic, social and political system be maintained. With their futures threatened by the students, the FFT organizers and with a rift in the Sangha itself, people on the right began to organize their own popular movements. Principal among these were the Red Gaur, Nawapon and the Village Scouts, all supported by senior military and police officers attempting to exercise their traditional political influence through new outlets.

Nawapon,* founded in 1974, is an organization which operates principally through the bureaucracies and business communities which constitute the middle-class beyond Bangkok. It is dedicated to suppression of the left in the name of anti-communism and "Nation, Religion, King." Correctly perceiving that most Thais continue to view "politics" and "political parties" as tainted institutions, Nawapon's leaders termed their group a "Movement" rather than a political party. Many observers believe that Nawapon received financial and material support from elements of the Army, police and Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC), at least from leading individuals if not officially from these institutions themselves. Nawapon, like the NSCT, reached well beyond Bangkok; however, its principal targets were provincial and district towns, not villages. Its organizers used mass meetings to whip up support, combining the emotional appeals of nationalism and anti-communism. In addition, they employed a cellular type of organizational structure similar to that of the communists. Potential leaders were selected for special political and motivational training at district, province and national levels.

* Nawapon might best be translated as "new force," or the "ninth power."

By the end of 1975 they claimed to have over one million active members. Although this figure may well have been exaggerated there was no question that Nawapon had become a very powerful new rightist political organization.

The popular appeal of the right-wing message promulgated by Nawapon was greatly strengthened by the public advocacy of Kittivuddho Bhikkhu, a very well-known monk. Kittivuddho sees himself as the true interpreter of Buddhism and derives his authority from being seen by many, and perhaps by himself, as a Buddhist saint or even a messiah-like figure. In mid-1976, as the tensions which ultimately led to the October coup were beginning to increase, Kittivuddho publicly declared that killing communists brought more merit than merit since communists were less than human. Killing communists, he said, was comparable to killing a fish to feed a monk. While widely attacked by intellectuals both inside and outside the Sangha for this position, Kittivuddho succeeded in conferring a type of moral legitimacy on those who sought to destroy so-called communists.

The Red Gaur* organization, composed primarily of vocational students, stands as a symbol of the fragmentation of the student movement after the heady days of October 1973. The Red Gaur is committed to aggressive anti-communism, which has translated directly into violent actions against university students. Susceptible to manipulation on grounds of status envy and patriotism, vocational students were organized and supported as Red Gaur by some senior officials in the Army and ISOC (the nation's center for anti-communist suppression activities), and in the national police hierarchy as well, especially the Metropolitan Police in Bangkok. For example, during a large anti-university student demonstration held in Bangkok as part of the election campaign on March 20, 1976, a number of Red Gaur cadres were seen using police walkie-talkie radios to communicate with each other, and police trucks and station wagons were employed to transport Red Gaur from one area of the city to another. On that occasion, when violence broke out, with Red Gaur openly throwing plastic bombs at university students, members of the Metropolitan Police stood aside and watched. Again, in October 1976, it was the Red Gaur who led an attack on Thammasat University, this time accompanied by units of the Border Patrol Police and the Army's Airborne Brigade.

The Village (Neighborhood) Scouts were organized in the early 1970s under royal patronage. Based on a South Vietnamese model and initially intended to help track and gather information on communists and insurgents, the Scouts number over a million young people and adults throughout the country. They, too, proudly proclaimed the motto "Nation, Religion and King," and pursued eagerly anyone identified as a communist or anti-monarchist. Supported through the Ministry of the Interior and locally by wealthy citizens, with their continuing anti-communist rallies and broad popular base, the Scouts by 1976 had become a major political force in the country. Wearing a bright red bandana to mark their patriotism hundreds of Village Scouts participated in the October 6 attack on Thammasat.

Fostering and building upon the belief of many Thais that the pace and style of changes advocated by the left were excessive, even anti-Thai, the conservative elite responded to the new politics of participation by mobilizing their own mass organizations. The Army, ISOC and the police -- neither as coherent institutions, nor as organized conspiracy, but rather as a loose amalgum of many powerful individual officers with general common interests -- encouraged these groups.

* A "gaur" is a mythical bull of great ferocity and determination.

They realized that their prestige as military leaders had been undercut deeply by the events of October 1973 and that this inhibited their ability to take direct action against the university students, the FFT, the labor unions and their supporters.

IV

With both the left and the right organizing outside the parliamentary arena, violence escalated. Between April and July 1975, political assassins killed 21 leaders of the FFT in separate incidents. In August, drunken policemen sacked Kukrit's private home and thousands of Red Gauris attacked Thammasat University with guns and "bottle bombs," destroying books and smashing windows. There were no casualties in these latter incidents only because the campus had been cleared of university students in advance of the attack, and because Kukrit chose not to provoke the situation further by calling out the police to try to quell the disturbance. He allowed the attack to play itself out instead.

Violence subsided somewhat in late 1975 as both sides returned temporarily to parliamentary maneuvers pressing their incompatible demands on Kukrit. But by January 1976 he had had enough. Rather than face a possible vote of no-confidence, he dissolved the House and called for new elections to be held in April. This became by far the most violent election in Thailand's history, approaching at times some of the extremes of behavior that were typical in the Philippines prior to martial law. Thirty or more people were killed in sporadic acts between the opening of the campaign in early February and its end some two months later. Dozens more were injured and of course many thousands were frightened. Grenades were thrown into crowds of people listening to political speeches, especially those of socialist and leftist candidates. Precinct captains in some rural areas -- again those affiliated with progressive party candidates -- were shot to death. The headquarters of the reformist Palang Nai (New Force) Party in Bangkok was attacked with fire bombs and partially burned and the attackers were acquitted by the court. Fear began to develop a dynamic of its own, ironically with most people blaming the left for having provoked the trouble rather than the right which employed the violence.

The most shocking act of political violence took place on the evening of February 28 when assassins murdered Dr. Boonsanong Punyodyana, Secretary-General of the Socialist Party of Thailand. As he was driving home from a reception given by an Australian Embassy official at about 2:00 a.m., Boonsanong's car was apparently forced to the side of the highway by another car at which time a motorcyclist rode up and fatally shot him. Boonsanong, in his early 30s, was a former lecturer at Thammasat University with a Ph.D. in sociology from Cornell University. He had been popular with the Socialist Party's many youthful supporters and had taken an active political role immediately after the October 1973 uprising, advocating far-reaching but non-violent social reforms.

University students reacted to Boonsanong's assassination first with numb silence and then with furious anger. They drew parallels between the assassinations of Boonsanong and of Chile's Allende, both of whom had pursued radical change through a democratic system and had died ignominiously at the hands of right-wing assassins. The students' demonstrations after Boonsanong's death further alienated the mass of the citizens, especially in Bangkok, people who already were frightened and dismayed by the escalation of political violence. The students' behavior did not produce sympathy for the dead politician, nor for their own cause. This occasion proved to be a major turning point, however. Many students and intellectuals

retreated thereafter into political passivity while others redoubled their commitment to social change and went into the hills to join the insurgency convinced that they had no choice but to pursue revolution outside the "bourgeois" electoral arena. And indeed from that point, the frequency of strikes and student demonstrations declined very sharply.

V

The election results on April 4, 1976 provided a number of major surprises but confirmed the growing strength of the right. The electorate displayed traditional conservatism in its overall orientation and a preference for "safety" over political development. Seni's Democrats and their several rightist party competitors carried the election. Leftist party candidates, personally intimidated and under a continuous barrage of right-wing attacks in the media, suffered a humiliating defeat. The two socialist parties and the progressive New Force Party dropped from 37 to 6 seats, or in percentage terms from 15% to 2% of the House as a whole.

Thus the perceived "radical alternative" touted in the months after October 1973 was eliminated by the results of an open election. Socialists had held more seats even in the House elected under military rule in February 1969 than they won in April 1976. The remaining reform groups were further isolated, reduced in strength but intensified in their belief that they might have to pursue change outside the parliamentary arena. By 1976, their rightist opponents were fully prepared to respond in kind and violence continued to accelerate.

Kukrit himself was defeated for reelection. Since the Constitution required the Prime Minister and at least half the members of his Cabinet to be selected from the membership of the elected House, Kukrit's personal defeat in his Bangkok constituency brought his career as Prime Minister to an end. Again it was his brother's turn. Kukrit's departure, however, made retention of the elected parliamentary system in the face of military pressure even more difficult, for Seni was less able than his younger brother to cope with the chaotic political situation.

While the political forces committed to the maintenance of the status quo continued to batter the declining forces committed to change, most citizens longed for the stability and security of an earlier, easier era. As they reflected on the extremes of violence that had become commonplace over the preceding months, many Thai in April 1976 were asking old questions: "Can representative political institutions really serve Thailand under these pressures?" And, of course, "When will the Army finally intervene?"

The reform groups had wanted change, rapid all-encompassing change: in political institutions, in patterns of taxation and land ownership, in foreign policy, in relationships between government officials and villagers. Their opponents considered such changes unacceptable to Thai society. With a heritage of hierarchical paternalism and a political culture imbued with passive acceptance of royal and bureaucratic leadership from above, the reformers were, in effect, suddenly proposing to change the rules of the game, to open the political system to voices and demands from below. This was a challenge to the very basis of legitimacy. The reformers were proposing -- if implicitly -- to replace (or at least supplement) the traditional legitimacy based on the monarchy with new legitimacy based on the expression of the popular will. Such a change was threatening to all but the

most politically self-confident at every level of Thai society. Activities directed at such ends were easily labeled "communism," a code word for almost anything that was not traditionally Thai. The emotional fervor that characterized the McCarthy era in America was easy to provoke among middle-class Thais in the mid-1970's, especially with aggressive, very real communism consolidating its power throughout Indochina. Lao and Cambodian refugees streaming into Thailand from mid-1975 on brought vivid examples of what a communist victory would mean.

For the middle class and many others, the exile of Thanom and Praphat in October 1973 had been a positive event; but the kinds of social disorder that followed their departure were much greater than anyone could have anticipated. Suddenly, demonstrations were not only permitted but pervasive. Every day, it seemed, there was a new demonstration about something (seldom anything worth bothering about, many felt); and strikes, too, where before there had been no labor unions at all. Bus strikes, then hotel strikes, then construction strikes; Bangkok was in a state of chaos by the standards of the last 40 years. Democratic politics turned out to be very "noisy," and the political inexperience and frequent divisions among the reform groups hardly helped to calm the situation. Vocational students, having had a taste of "freedom," became unruly and disrespectful, carrying on gang wars with each other and then, inexplicably it seemed, with university students, after initial 1973 united efforts against the common foe of "tyranny." People recalled the constant refrain of former military leaders that a nation with problems cannot afford democracy.

Ironically those who advocated social and economic reform and were now the target of violence, were easier to identify than the silent right-wing bomb-throwers and secret assassins. Therefore the reformers were viewed by many as the chief instigators of the current crisis of stability. Had there not been increasing agitation for reform, violence would have been avoided. What was needed was a return to the earlier fusion of royal legitimacy and military power characteristic of the 1957-73 period of military rule.

Kukrit, and later Seni, both engaged in a timorous but sincere effort to institute social and economic reforms through the representative process, seeking to accommodate the left without alienating the extreme right. Minimal land reform efforts were instituted; a modest corruption suppression program was begun and active labor unions were encouraged. A major effort was begun to channel central government resources into rural areas to be allocated by local elected decision-makers rather than by bureaucrats in central ministries.

Foreign policy changes were also undertaken. Kukrit had visited China in 1975. In the first half of 1976 the government's foreign policy was shifting toward more open dialogue with Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Kukrit and his advisors hoped that Thailand's security could best be protected by such a shift, and that this would induce a lessening of external support for the insurgency within the country. It was thought, moreover, that a stronger voice for the mainland countries in ASEAN -- Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore, joined (perhaps) by the three Indochina states -- would help balance the influence of the island powers of Indonesia and the Philippines. Moreover, all US military forces -- except 270 advisors -- were ordered withdrawn in the last days of Kukrit's tenure. The Thai military, not surprisingly, was disturbed at these developing foreign policy trends.

Although these efforts at reform were symbolic of a vastly different vision of the future than had existed under the many years of military rule preceding 1973, they were soon blocked by ideological conflict. Because elected cabinet leaders were

constrained by the inherent weaknesses of their shaky governing coalitions, the reforms were far too slow and too limited in scope to satisfy university students, labor and farm leaders, and other liberals who pushed harder and harder for increased reform frequently resorting to street demonstrations and village organization to bring pressure on the government. At the same time all reforms -- whether relating to domestic or foreign policy -- were viewed with suspicion and anger by those with interests in the existing structure of power and privilege. They devoted time, energy and financial resources to Nawapon, to the Red Gaur and Village Scouts and, when the time was finally ripe, to the skillful if brutal carrying out of armed intervention to restore a more traditional system of government. The sudden death, in April 1976, of General Kris Sivara who both unified the Army and played a continually moderating role, only hastened events.

In August 1976, Praphat attempted to return to Bangkok, but was driven away by massive demonstrations led by university students, protests which achieved a good deal of public support. At any rate, the waters had been tested and found not quite ready. When Thanom made his return the following month, a very different strategy was employed. He was ordained as a Buddhist novice in a Thai temple in Singapore and he entered Thailand for the express purpose of becoming a monk in order to make merit for his gravely ill father, an act which is greatly respected by Thai Buddhists. Immediately on arrival in Bangkok he was taken directly to Wat Bowornivet, a particularly important royal monastery whose senior monks command great popular respect. (Before ascending the throne, King Hongkut had been chief abbot of this Wat and began there his major reform of Thai Buddhism. The present King, his father, grandfather and great-grandfather were all ordained as monks in Wat Bowornivet.)

Here Thanom was ordained in a private ritual from which the public was explicitly prohibited, thereby making it impossible for anyone to challenge the ordination at the point in the ritual where this is provided for. By becoming a member of the Buddhist Sangha, Thanom assumed a role which made it difficult for the students to gain public support in their protest against his return. The members of the Young Sangha who became very upset by what they viewed as a clear political manipulation of the Sangha also gained little sympathy. The high-ranking members of the Sangha had obviously been co-opted in the effort to reassert the establishment image of Buddhism.

Two days after the ceremony, the King and Queen visited Dhikku Thanom in the wat to "pay their respects." Thanom revealed to his fellow monks that His Majesty had encouraged him to return; and Samak Sunthornvej, a right-wing politician particularly close to the palace, announced openly in Seni's last cabinet meeting that His Majesty had wished Thanom to return and stay.* Thanom, Praphat and Narong had been exiled to calm a threatening situation. Now that the threat of student power had been quelled, apparently there was no reason that they should not return. Royal legitimacy had once again fused with military power.

The 36 months of representative government following October 1973 now appeared as an aberration from the traditional pattern of political alliance between palace and garrison, rather than a turning point toward freedom after 40 years of military dictatorship sanctioned by an unwilling monarchy forced to agree to military hegemony as the price of dynastic stability. Later in September, when Crown Prince

* Samak, Minister of Interior in the post-coup government, later proclaimed proudly that the King had asked him personally to accompany Thanom from Singapore to Bangkok, which he had done.