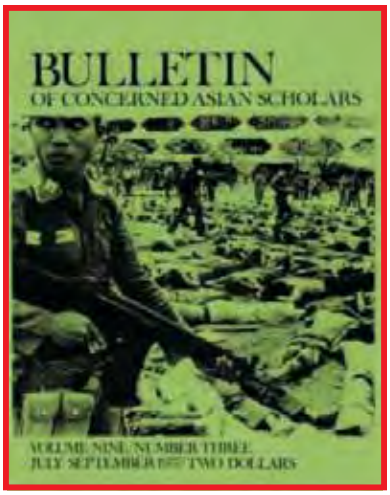

BCAS/*Critical Asian Studies*
www.bcasnet.org

BULLETIN
OF CONCERNED ASIAN SCHOLARS

CONTENTS

Vol. 9, No. 3: July–September 1977

CCAS Statement of Purpose

Critical Asian Studies *continues to be inspired by the statement of purpose formulated in 1969 by its parent organization, the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars (CCAS). CCAS ceased to exist as an organization in 1979, but the BCAS board decided in 1993 that the CCAS Statement of Purpose should be published in our journal at least once a year.*

We first came together in opposition to the brutal aggression of the United States in Vietnam and to the complicity or silence of our profession with regard to that policy. Those in the field of Asian studies bear responsibility for the consequences of their research and the political posture of their profession. We are concerned about the present unwillingness of specialists to speak out against the implications of an Asian policy committed to ensuring American domination of much of Asia. We reject the legitimacy of this aim, and attempt to change this policy. We recognize that the present structure of the profession has often perverted scholarship and alienated many people in the field.

The Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars seeks to develop a humane and knowledgeable understanding of Asian societies and their efforts to maintain cultural integrity and to confront such problems as poverty, oppression, and imperialism. We realize that to be students of other peoples, we must first understand our relations to them.

CCAS wishes to create alternatives to the prevailing trends in scholarship on Asia, which too often spring from a parochial cultural perspective and serve selfish interests and expansionism. Our organization is designed to function as a catalyst, a communications network for both Asian and Western scholars, a provider of central resources for local chapters, and a community for the development of anti-imperialist research.

Passed, 28–30 March 1969
Boston, Massachusetts

BULLETIN
OF CONCERNED ASIAN SCHOLARS

VOLUME NINE/NUMBER THREE
JULY-SEPTEMBER 1977/TWO DOLLARS

Subscriptions

P.O. Box W, Charlemont, MA 01339

The *Bulletin*, like all publications, is faced with ever-increasing printing and mailing costs. For example, the cost of our paper has risen rapidly this year, and in July the rates for bulk mailing and single-issue mailing went up by nearly 25 percent. The result is that we must raise the price of a subscription to the *Bulletin* in 1978 and increase the price of a single copy to $2.50. (Institutional rates will be going up in 1979.) However, if you renew before January 1, 1978, you may purchase a subscription (new or renewal) at the 1977 rate. May we suggest that you renew for two or three years? You can determine the present expiration date of your subscription by looking at your address label. The number after your name refers to the volume and number/issue when the subscription will expire.

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Graphics

Surely you have noticed that the *Bulletin* has featured more graphics this year. They serve many purposes, the most important of which is to reinforce visually points made by an author. In other words we are looking neither for "pretty pictures" nor for unrelated, sensationalist ones. However, if you have materials—charts, maps, photographs, slides, cartoons, sketches, etc.—that "say something" about Asia, please share them with the rest of us. Help us to build a file for the future.

B.C.A.S., P.O. Box W, Charlemont, MA 01339

Contributors

Benedict O'Gorman Anderson is a professor at Cornell University.

Thadeus Flood teaches at the University of Santa Clara, California.

David Millikin, a graduate student at the University of Massachusetts, is also very active in the work of the Union of Democratic Thais (UDT).

Puey Ungphakorn now lives in exile in England. He recently toured the United States giving talks on Thailand.

Carl Trocki recently joined the History Department, Thomas More College, Kentucky.

Jayne Werner, University of Arizona, Tucson, became Associate Editor for the *Bulletin* this past spring.

Rex Wingerter is with the School of International Studies, the University of Denver, Colorado.

Communications

Institute of Asian and African Studies
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
July 27, 1977

To the Editors:

I would like to correct an error in the review of my book *Individual and State in Ancient China* (*Bulletin*, Volume 9, no. 1, Jan-March 1977, pp. 68-69). Professor Paul Ropp writes that I was dismissed from my position in the Institute of Oriental Studies in Moscow because of the anti-Soviet character of my book and that I applied for repatriation to Israel because I was unemployed. This statement, however, is in complete contradiction with the facts. I applied for an exit visa to Israel not because I was unemployed; just the opposite, in Soviet circumstances, my situation was very good. But I felt it to be a humiliating slavery to live under a totalitarian and anti-Semitic regime. I was forced to resign my position and becamse unemployed as a result of my intention to apply for an exit visa to Israel.

Sincerely,
Vitaly Rubin

July 28, 1977

To the Editors:

The Berkshire Conference of Women Historians will award its 1978 prizes to the best book and the best article in any field of history written by a woman and published during 1977. Inquiries and nominations, including two copies of the book or article, should be sent to Dr. Amy Hackett, c/o Professor Mary Hartman, Department of History, Douglass College, New Brunswick, N.J. 08903.

Sincerely,
Amy Hackett
Chairperson, Prize Committee
Berkshire Conference of Women Historians

Most of the photographs in this issue were gathered or snapped by David Millikin and by Mah Sze-ching. The map of the Indian Ocean Region is reprinted with permission.

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Special Focus:

October, 1976

The Coup in Thailand

Introduction to the Supplement

by Jayne Werner

The return of the generals to power in Bangkok last year, after only three short years of civilian rule, brought fears that Thailand would be Asia's Chile. Political repression was harsh and swift, and the international circumstances surrounding the coup pointed to at least partial United States responsibility.

According to the U.S.-based Union of Democratic Thais,* over 10,000 students, professors, political figures, labor and farm leaders have been arrested since the coup, accused of having communist affiliations. U.S. military aid to Thailand has increased over the last five years (from $68 million to $83 million) in an apparent attempt to strengthen the position of the right-wing military. The new junta used CIA-trained forces to crush student demonstrators during the coup, and two of the right-wing terrorist squads suspected of responsibility for political assassinations have been tied directly to CIA operations.

The special supplement on Thailand in this issue focuses attention on several aspects of the reversion to military rule. The essay by Dr. Puey Ungphakorn, with an introduction by David Millikin, describes the events leading up to the coup and establishes the conspiratorial role of the military and police in triggering the coup. Puey Ungphakorn, the former Rector of Thammasat University in Bangkok, is now in exile.

The military claimed the following justifications for their action: student confrontations and violence, internal and external communist subversion, parliamentary ineptness and stalemate, and deprecation of the ancient trinity of "king, religion, and country." But what were the underlying sources of the coup? The essay by Benedict R. O'G. Anderson is a detailed and original analysis of the political consequences of the rise of new groups in Thai society over the last two decades. Incidentally, Anderson prefers the use of "Siam" instead of Thailand, as this has been the choice of some democratic and non-rightist elements in the country.

Thadeus Flood turns to a consideration of another aspect of the change to military rule—the presence of a Vietnamese minority in Thailand. What is the history of their presence in Thailand? This issue has been an important one in Thai right-wing justifications of military rule, and of course in U.S. propaganda. It also carries an added dimension—what will be the long-range implications for political and diplomatic change in Thailand as a result of the victories of the Indochinese revolutions?

Finally we have a tribute written by Carl Trocki to Boonsanong Punyodyana, one of the thousands of victims of the conspiratorial violence which led up to the coup and the subsequent repression. Boonsanong, a Cornell Ph.D. graduate in Asian Studies who was known personally to many of the *Bulletin*'s readers including this editor, was Secretary General of the Socialist Party of Thailand and the author of numerous scholarly articles on the sociology of Thailand. Boonsanong studied in the U.S. during the early days of the anti-war movement, which were also, of course, the formative years of the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars and the *Bulletin*.

* Persons wishing to correspond with the Union of Democratic Thais which, aside from political organization, also puts out the *Thai Bulletin* and *Thai Information Center News Brief*—the latter a weekly compilation of news accounts—may write to U.D.T., P.O. Box 17808, Los Angeles, CA 90017.

Introduction to "Violence and the Military Coup"

The sound of the people's songs echo
Against the enemy.
Bare hands and death,
Blood soaks bodies and soil.

by David Millikin

The student movement for a democratic constitution played a leading role in the overthrow of the Thanom-Praphas regime in October 1973. For the next three years of heightened civil liberties under the nominally civilian government, these students fanned out through the country to give aid and support to the poverty stricken farmers and the powerless and exploited factory workers who had been forbidden even minimal expressions of opposition to their worsening situation by the repressive military governments which had ruled the country for over thirty years.

By early 1975, largely as a result of the activities and legal education programs of the students, the farmers and workers of Thailand had organized themselves to represent their interests to the large landowners and employers for the first time in the history of the country.

The students, committed to building a more equal and democratic country, served as a guiding force and an inspiration to people all over Thailand. Although the immediate hopes of these people were crushed by the re-imposition of martial law and military rule on October 6, 1976, the humanitarian and democratic ideals of the student inspired movements live on in the liberation struggles which the students and other activists have joined in the jungles of Thailand.

Dr. Puey Ungphakorn, perhaps more than any other man, represented and inspired these libertarian and humanist ideals among the students of Thailand. Dr. Puey has long embodied and fought for the ideals of a democratic and egalitarian Thai society, and is still honored by friend and enemy alike for his impeccable honesty and sincerity.

First as professor of economics, then as Dean, and finally as Rector of Thammasatt University in Bangkok, Dr. Puey was an important inspiration for hundreds of the country's best students, including many who were destined to become some of the most active and important, progressive student and political leaders. The most famous and respected economist in recent Thai history, and a brilliant administrator, Dr. Puey had previously used numerous government appointments to reform and develop the Thai economy. In these posts, including offices in the Ministry of Finance (1949-59), Chairman of the Economic Advisers to the Prime Minister (1974), and Governor of the Bank of Thailand (1957-71), Puey promoted land reform, income redistribution programs, the organization of farmer cooperatives, and the development of truly democratic political institutions. He also played a leading role in writing Thailand's first democratic constitution after the October 1973 'revolution.'

Although himself born and raised within a privileged environment, Puey used his advantages and education in efforts to democratize the Thai economy and improve the lives of the Thai farmers and working people who make up the vast majority of the population. This active dedication has constantly placed him in clear opposition to the feudal Thai ruling class and the military generals who have protected the system's inequity for decades. Puey's attack on the pervasive personal and bureaucratic corruption of these "leaders"—by now a trademark of the Thai military—further antagonized the nation's rulers and resulted in his having lived in constant danger while in Thailand and to his ultimate exiles, first in 1972 (by the Thanom-Praphas regime) and, then again, after the October 6 coup. (Exiled in 1972, Puey returned after October 1973 to become rector of Thammasat University.)

This scenario is an all too familiar one, played out from South Korea and the Philippines, to South Africa and Chile. But the exile of political leaders rarely means the end of their activity, and it certainly hasn't for Dr. Puey. Despite the crushing personal setback of seeing his lifelong work and dreams destroyed, and of having to flee his homeland in his sixtieth year, Puey continues to devote himself to the fight for democracy and human rights in Thailand. Now living in London, he has travelled extensively in Europe and the United States, meeting with expatriate Thai communities, general western audiences, and influential business and government officials. In his talks and discussions, Dr. Puey has stressed the need for all people to express opposition to the Thai military's illegal seizure of power and to demand, through their governments, the restoration of civil rights and the freedom of all political prisoners in Thailand. In the U.S. in particular, he has asked that pressure be placed on Congress to halt all military-related aid to the junta. At great personal risk, he also has taken this demand to the U.S. Congress in April and July 1977.

Although Puey expresses understanding and solidarity with the Thai people who have chosen armed struggle with the Communist Party of Thailand as the only possible road to liberation, he continues to work toward a "third path." He believes that political and economic change could be attained without violence and human suffering. Countless attempts to follow this path have been made before in other countries; the period from October 1973 to October 1976 in Thailand represents merely one example of such democratic efforts. But like its predecessors in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Chile, the Thai democratic "experiment" was ended by a military and ruling elite strengthened by the United States and its global interests. In effect the might of imperialism has crippled the peaceful, humanitarian polity which the "advanced" nations themselves profess to honor—and which Puey Ungphakorn shared with them. The damage done was clearly exhibited by Dr. Puey in a letter sent to Thai friends immediately following his exile last October: "I feel that what I have written is sad and mournful, the future is dark. Whoever sees light in the future, please tell me." ☆

Violence and the Military Coup in Thailand

by Puey Ungphakorn *Edited by David Millikin*

On the evening of October 6, 1976, a so-called "National Administrative Reform Council" declared a military take-over in Thailand. On the following days the menacing, jowled faces of the military junta appeared, counterparts of their like in Chile, Greece, and elsewhere. A bland B.B.C. announcement spoke of the return to normality in Bangkok, and the indifference, or even satisfaction, of the majority of the population. It seemed that the horror of a few hours' barbarity in Bangkok's Thammasat University had happened in a blink of the world's eye, of little interest in an international media accustomed to tragedy, and of little importance in the process of affairs. But one cannot study the photographs of those terrible hours on October 6th without questioning the hatred that broke out. Just three years before, identical almost to the day and place, the military had gunned down seventy-one students and others: the price of the overthrow of the dictatorship of Thanom Kittikichorn and his deputy Prapas Charusathiara. In those days the students were acclaimed heroes of the people. In 1976, the actors changed their clothes. Prapas and Thanom reentering respectively as a self-professed invalid and a Buddhist monk, while, as the government media repeated endlessly, the "people" turned on the students with inhuman savagery. What had happened in the interval?

Up to the present the military coup has taken the accustomed course: massive arrests and houses searches, military courts without right of counsel or appeal, the burning of books, suppression of criticism by censorship, with the police in jubilant control. Law and order are the values of the day and weighty edicts define penalties for urinating in public or hanging out the wash where it can offend the eyes of the genteel rulers. But to see the true nature of the new rulers, the manner of their coming to power must be examined. A careful comparative timetable of the events of October 6 can be compiled from a wide range of newspapers which came out within hours of the events and which escaped the rapid police seizure. Despite the confusion and partisan coloration of the press accounts, the irrelevant detail and occasional contradictions, a reasonably accurate outline of events can be constructed on the basis of the broad underlying agreement which all the accounts reflect. After the timetable has been presented, I will conclude with some personal comments.

The Events Leading to the Coup

Many persons have long intended to demolish the strength of the students and people of Thailand. After the October 1973 incident which re-established a democratic government, it was said that if Thailand could be rid of 10,000 to 20,000 students and other people, the country would be orderly and peaceful. During the April 1976 elections, several

political parties proclaimed that "Any type of socialism is Communism," and Kittiwutto, a monk who was also a co-leader of the Nawapol group, told the press that it was not sinful to kill Communists. There were other public statements from September to October of last year that the slaughter of the 30,000 participants at the anti-Thanom rally would be a "cost-free investment."

Certain factions of the police and military lost their political power during the October 1973 changeover, and there were others who feared that, under democracy, they might lose their economic power. They used radio, television, handouts, rumors, anonymous charges, and unsigned letters to attack and intimidate their opponents. The basic method of these vested interest groups was to create a fear of communism in Thailand. Anyone with whom they disagreed was branded a communist. Even Prime Minister Seni Pramoj, Kukrit and certain other ministers were not exempted from these accusations.

On August 17, 1976, during a period of relative calm in the country, Prapas Charusathiara suddenly returned from exile in Taiwan. After slipping through airport customs with the help of military figures, he declared his reason for returning to be ill health and the need to obtain medical treatment for his ailing heart. Massive protests by student and other groups soon persuaded him to avail himself of the excellent facilities available elsewhere. With greater subtlety than his henchman Prapas, Thanom Kittikichorn next appeared, already wearing the yellow robe of a Buddhist novice.

Within hours he was installed as an ordained monk in the Bangkok temple where the king himself had stayed as a monk. Thanom's declared intention was simply to fulfill the filial duty of making merit for his ailing father. In the days that followed, a circus was enacted with the former dictator making early morning begging rounds accompanied by a massive police and military escort. Public reaction was at first restrained for fear of appearing to oppose religious values, but the emptiness of the stratagem was evident and soon students were holding mock processions of the monk and his gun-toting entourage. Posters demanding his expulsion were distributed and mass meetings organized. On September 24th, in an early omen of what was to come, two labor activists were found garroted on the outskirts of Bangkok. It appeared that they had been taken and beaten to death while posting demands for Thanom's expulsion, and their bodies hanged nearby. It was later openly admitted that the police were involved, an admission that increased the momentum of the protests.

The members of the National Student Center of Thailand (NSCT) were joined by the "Heroes of October 14, 1973" (the wounded from the October 1973 clash in which some were permanently disabled), and by relatives of those who had died in an anti-Thanom demonstration. In early October (1976) the heroes' relatives protested by going on a hunger strike in front of the Prime Minister's office building. They were harassed by the police, and, with the cooperation of the Buddhist and Cultural Association of Thammasatt University, moved onto the Thammasat campus to continue protesting on Sunday, October 3.

At noon on Monday, October 4, things went as planned. There was a public gathering of students from Thammasat, and from other universities, plus a variety of other people. The demonstrators discussed the issue of Field Marshal Thanom's return and the murder of the two workers. At the demonstration, the brutal murders were reenacted realistically, and newspapers widely publicized a photograph of the mock hanging. Immediately, right-wing groups began to point out that the actor playing the part of the hanged activist closely resembled the crown prince who had just previously been summoned by the King to return to Thailand from military training in Australia. While a certain resemblance between the actor and the prince was clear from the newspaper photographs, several of my staff members who had gone to watch the demonstration had returned simply to tell me that the players had acted very well. None of them had thought that the actor's face or the costume or the make-up made him resemble the Crown Prince. Furthermore, there is no reason why this aspect should have been exploited by the students who had always rigorously avoided any criticism of the monarchy or the royal family. Students accused right-wing newspapers of touching up the photographs to inflame the situation, and strongly reasserted that their only aim was the expulsion of Thanom, who was still following his pious rounds nearby. But the right-wing had already found the spur it needed to bring about the mob violence that followed.

The Protest of October 4, 1976

The NSCT had been planning a public gathering at the parade grounds in front of Thammasat University since Friday, October 1. According to the students, the demonstration in part was to be used to evaluate their strength in demanding Thanom's expulsion and the arrest and punishment of the lynching murderers. Finally, since there was a weekend market on the parade grounds on October 2 and 3, the demonstration was set for October 4. I had heard from the students that they wished to organize this demonstration at the beginning of October because they had found out that the imminent retirement of several high-ranking officers and the annual shuffling of significant positions in the military might cause such dissatisfaction among several groups in the military as to lead to a coup. In short the students thought that a demonstration of their strength might preclude a possible coup. At the same time they hoped to urge the government to take action on the two issues of Thanom and the hangings. The Labor Council of Thailand joined the students by scheduling a one-hour general strike for Friday, October 8.

Several newspapers wrote to Premier Seni Pramoj and asked his opinion about the public gathering organized by the NSCT at the parade grounds and about the plans to move onto the Thammasat campus. Seni replied that these plans would be fine. Therefore the demonstration took place and, when it began raining, the demonstrators moved onto the campus at approximately 8:00 p.m. The participants remained inside the grounds of the university until Wednesday morning, October 6.

A Timetable of Events: October 6, 1976*

Hours.

00.00 (Midnight) About two thousand students and others (workers and rickshaw drivers are mentioned) were gathered in Thammasat University holding a discussion, with plays and music. Some hundreds of people gather outside the gate with newspaper photographs of the alleged "prince-hanging" incident. Wall posters are torn down and burned, and a show made of entering the university. Some police are present to assess and control the situation. Army controlled radio urges police and people to break in. To encourage civilians it said that 300 of their number were actually out-of-uniform police.

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* The sections of the timetable printed in *italics* came anonymously to several members of the editorial board of the *Bulletin* via intermediaries in Singapore and in Paris. (The rest of the chronology is by Puey.) An introductory paragraph accompanied the material:

> *It was a hell of blood and bullets. We could do nothing to stop them. After all it was deliberate. They wanted to kill all of us who were there.*

That was a comment about the bloody clash on the morning of October 6, 1976, between students and police forces at Bangkok's Thammasat campus in which over 100 people died or were seriously injured. Several eyewitnesses and reporters were there filing their stories for Thailand Information Center's news and features services. Here are their accounts about the events during the night of October 5 and on October 6.

The very crude map of Thammasat University which we are reproducing came from the same sources.—The Editors.

01.00 a.m., October 6, 1976. *The police director general abruptly called a meeting with other senior police officers at Bangkok's police department. The meeting lasted over an hour. Later, all of them went to the Thammasat campus where about 4,000 students and other people were holding an anti-Thanom rally. The National Student Center of Thailand (NSCT) had organized the rally.*

The right wing Armour Radio called for stern police action against the NSCT. It went so far as to mourn police who had remained indifferent over the radio's directives. Village scouts and other "patriotic elements" were told to gather together for a [pro-government] counter-rally in front of the Parliament house 9 o'clock the following morning.

02.35 a.m. *Police stationed in areas where the electricity, telephone and water plants were located were told to be on alert. Several members of the right-wing militant group, the Red Gaur [named for the wild ox] asked the NSCT's security guards to enter the campus, saying that they have changed their minds toward the NSCT. They burned their Red Gaur membership cards. However, once inside, they are said to have subverted the rally.*

03.00 a.m. Special police forces or anti-riot police completely encircle the university, including three police boats on the [Chao Phraya] river that forms the rear boundary of the university. A police headquarters is set up at the nearby National Museum, indicating the seriousness of the operation envisaged. When the Police Chief arrived with other key officers at a nearby station, he declared his intention to clear the university at dawn and to arrest the culprits of the alleged *lèse-majesté* incident. Questioned on the responsibility for such a command, he replied that it was his own. Crowd at gate set fire to a rubbish cart and try to stir up the situation by throwing burning objects into Thammasat. No reaction from the students.

04.00 a.m. Police report seeing armed students near river bank and warn boats not to aid escape. Incidents at gate increase, led by right-wing paramilitary Red Gaurs. Sentry box burned and burning objects thrown. Numbers increase. Some gunfire in the area reported.

04.00 a.m. *The first shots came from outside the university. A special unit of parachute police were called in from outlying provinces in the south. They were airlifted by helicopters, but did not arrive at the campus until about 8 a.m.*

05.00a.m. Serious shooting breaks out as Red Gaurs and others make attempts to break in. Missiles including explosives and handgrenades thrown in. Explosion occurs where students are gathering and many injured, some seriously. At this stage Red Gaurs lead the armed offensive with police acquiescence. Students hold off attack by firing and one man shot in chest. (He later died as he was taken to hospital.) Students take cover in the buildings of the university.

05.40 a.m. *Police began to fire from the M79 rocket launcher [near the museum]. There was a big explosion in front [part] of the campus. As a result, 16 people were simultaneously injured, eight seriously wounded, and one killed. The Red Gaurs, police and soldiers tried to enter the campus. The crowd of 4,000 which have been in the campus since October 4 began to disperse, rushing to several buildings which surround the rally ground. The crowd was even more frightened when firing followed, apparently from M16 and AK33 assault rifles. The NSCT's security guards resisted by firing back.*

05.50 a.m. *Some members of the Red Gaurs and the village scouts tried to break through the campus gate by using a bus that they had hijacked several hours earlier. Police, Red Gaurs and soldiers followed suit by climbing the iron wall which guards the university. Some of them managed to get in. The Armour Radio, meanwhile, called for a total surrender on the part of the NSCT. It also claimed that police had been injured by the students' firing. Apparently the crowd in the campus were not aware that they had been under attack from both the police and the Red Gaurs. Their impression at the time was that the NSCT's security guards were fighting with the Red Gaurs who had tried to come in as before. Seeing that firing had become intensified, they tried to get out. However, all the exits were blocked.*

06.00a.m. A small number of wounded are brought out by ambulance, two by boat. Further evacuation by boat stopped by police. Sounds of automatic rifles heard. Police sharpshooters begin to fire. Police in boats claim that students had opened fire with handguns, later they claimed heavy weapons such as M-16s and AK-47s were used. Navy police reinforce river. Simultaneous firing from river and other side of the university by both police and Red Gaurs. Student leaders, realising the scale of the attack, consult persons at the rally; they declare that they must fight back having nothing further to lose. Speaker announces many may die but appeals to students who survive to transmit their anger.

06.00 a.m. *Realizing that the situation had become worse, the NSCT's leaders tried to contact the Prime Minister's secretary to ask for a negotiation with the Prime Minister himself. The NSCT's leaders also reported on what had been going on. The secretary, however, reported that his sources had told him that it was the NSCT security guards who opened fire and that it was the police who were wounded, not the students. He agreed to arrange for a meeting with the Prime Minister under the condition that the student, who, a few days earlier had played a part of the lynched activist and happens to have a face quite similar to the crown prince, were to come along. The NSCT said it needed time to think about the proposal.*

Meanwhile the death toll had increased to four persons. In an attempt to escape from the shooting, students retreated to the river bank behind the campus. Some of them escaped into the river only to find that the navy patrollers fired on them. Those students who tried to take the wounded out [of the campus compound] to the hospitals were not allowed to leave. The police had blocked all the exits.

06.15 a.m. *The fighting kept on. The NSCT appealed for a cease fire and said that they were willing to surrender before more died. There was no response from the police.*

06.20 a.m. *Border-patrol police and police from every other station in Bangkok were mobilized to the campus.*

06.30 a.m. *Another three students died as the M-79 rocket launcher was fired from near the museum. The NSCT again appealed for a total ceasefire and added that the wounded should be sent to hospitals. Not only was there no response; the Red Gaur and police again attacked students who tried to get out of the campus. The NSCT leaders again called the Prime Minister's secretary to say that they were willing to disband the rally and ask for police protection. The secretary reportedly agreed.*

07.00 a.m. Firing continues, police numbers increase. Some police injured. Three of the injuries (including one case in which a policeman's fingers were blown off) were caused by a Red Gaur car bomb that misdirected and exploded. Police claim that student weaponry is more efficient than their own. They call for reinforcements. Right-wing groups use two buses to crash through gates but back out as police fire from behind them continues. Police order all escape routes blocked and forbid boats to respond to appeals.

Sutham Saengprathum, leader of the National Student Council of Thailand, and five student representatives, including the student who had acted in the controversial hanging incident, come out in ambulance and go in police car to the Prime Minister's house. They report many students are wounded. Their request to speak with the Prime Minister is denied and they are arrested by police.

The Prime Minister later told the press that the NSCT leaders had offered themselves to the police. In an interview to the press later that morning, the NSCT's secretary denied the Prime Minister's story, saying:

> *We have been cheated. They first told us that we could talk things out; but when we went there for a talk, they arrested us. What does this mean? We again confirm that what we have done is a right thing. We ask the people to judge the whole thing.*

Police in front of the campus were quoted as having said that they would kill as many students as possible: "When they see students killed, they appear to be happy."

07.10 a.m. *The NSCT's political secretary, together with security guards, asked the police at one of the exits for permission to take the wounded out. No success. The shooting went on without interruption, and deaths were on the rise. The student rally's announcer who was announcing "we are willing to surrender" was killed immediately by an M-16 rifle shot.*

07.30 a.m. "Free fire" orders given to police "to defend themselves." Police reinforcements arrive including over a hundred Border Patrol Police with heavy weaponry, hand grenade launchers, etc. Police paratroopers from Hua Hin also arrive. Bangkok police come, including Bangkok Police Chief who, declaring he is "ready to die," joins in the shooting. Police began invasion of Thammasat. Many students wounded and killed. Student appeal to evacuate girls ignored. Some police wounded by student fire.

More students tried to escape from the fighting by jumping into the river. Police navy patrollers shot at them indiscriminately. Several hundred others were arrested. With their shirts taken off, they were forced to lie down with their hands on the backs of their heads. Many were severely beaten. Many drowned [in the river]. The right-wing Armour Radio called on police to search carefully on the campus and in the nearby temples. Police started shooting from every side of the campus.

07:45 a.m. *Police on the southern side of the campus warned people to stay out. An explosion erupted and one policeman died.*

08.00 a.m. Police estimate seeing 20 students armed with handguns and rifles. Appeal to evacuate 50 wounded across river ignored.

08.15 a.m. Massive attack by Border Patrol Police and Red Gaur groups. Explosions every minute, probably from M-79 grenade launchers carried by Border Patrol Police. Rounds from heavy weapons carry over to food shops outside. Villagers on roof tops encourage police, saying students have no heavy guns.

08:20 a.m. *Parachute police who had been airlifted from the south arrived. It was reported that a United Press International photographer had been shot and that the students who had escaped into the river had been fired on.*

08:35 a.m. *Fighting was particularly intense.*

08:37 a.m. *Students who had been arrested on the opposite bank of the river continued to lie on the footpath with their shirts off and their hands on their heads. They were to remain in that position for three hours. Those who had sought refuge in the nearby shops were told to give up, or else the police would fire indiscriminately into the shops which refused to open their gates.*

08:50 a.m. *The right wing groups began to hold a rally in front of the Parliament House. They were joined by Village Scouts who had finished their mission in front of the Thammasat University campus.*

08:55 a.m. *Students who tried to escape through the front gate were greeted by right-wing militants, the Red Gaur, and scores of police and soldiers who began to beat, club and fire at them. One student, his head severely beaten at the front gate, was shot in the presence of policemen. The student was later hung. A woman, apparently shocked by the outright brutality, asked: "Why must we Thais kill each other? Have we forgotten how many lives were sacrificed driving out the tyrant trio three years ago?" No sooner had she finished speaking when a man rushed out of the crowd, pointing a finger at her. He threatened her and said: "Do you want to die? Are you Vietnamese, you social scum?" Students and others in the campus were herded by the police onto the football grounds and forced to lie down with their shirts off. Both boys and girls.*

09:00 a.m. Period of heavy fighting as police attack individual buildings and student bases. Two police killed. Many students wounded and killed. While police use heavy weaponry, Red Gaurs, Village Scouts and right-wing groups, having seized ten to fifteen wounded or escaping students including two girls, beat, mutilate, hang and burn them, occasionally with police watching. One girl stripped and shot repeatedly. Large numbers of students try to escape but are arrested.

09:06 a.m. *The Red Gaurs began to pour kerosene on and to burn four people, one of whom was still alive.*

09:20 a.m. *Four students, their hands on their heads symbolizing surrender, came out through the front gate and were brutally beaten and shot by the Red Gaurs. One was hung. A girl, who had been shot to death, was sexually abused by plainclothes policemen; they used a stick on her vagina. At a nearby site, a man was severely beaten and burned. Another person was hung while he was still alive.*

09:30 a.m. *Meanwhile a Cabinet meeting was going on. Right-wing factions demanded the the three alleged communist ministers be dismissed. Prime Minister Seni Pramoj, saying that the Cabinet had just been apppointed by the King 24 hours earlier, refused to do so. At a press conference, the Prime Minister tried to dissociate himself from the violence at Thammasat while admitting that he had ordered the police to clear the campus. He said, "It's up to the police to decide whether to use violent methods or not."*

10:00 a.m. *Students were taken to prisons in big buses. On their way they were occasionally beaten or robbed of their valuables as right-wing hooligans entered the buses. Several students who tried to escape from the buses were shot by the police.*

10:00 a.m. More students are brought to football field as they are arrested. Right-wing groups wander about kicking bodies, tearing off Buddhist emblems saying, "these communists are not really Buddhists." Atrocities continue outside Thammasat. Units of special action police stand and watch as two are hanged. Bodies dragged out, mutilated and burned. Large crowds watch. Several wounded or arrested students dragged from police and beaten or lynched. Police try to stop this action by firing in air; they manage to rescue one girl.

10:30 a.m. *Police began searches in the university; right-wing elements followed suit. Fighting began to cease. Meanwhile, the crowd in front of the Parliament increased.*

11:00 a.m. *Renewed fighting in Thammasat. Police ordered to clear completely. Efforts by youths to seize wounded on way to hospital. Events tail off.*

13:00 p.m. *As rain poured down, the whole area in front of the Commerce Department building, where the heaviest fighting happened a few hours earlier, turned red with blood.*

18:00 p.m. *The crown prince addressed the Village Scouts who had moved on to the government house. He asked the crowd to disperse. An announcement was made that the country was being taken over by a group of military officers calling themselves "the national administrative reform council." Martial law was introduced and Bangkok's three years of experiment with a parliamentary system came to an end.*

Note: According to figures released by the new regime, 41 persons died and several hundred people were injured. About 3,037 persons were taken prisoner of whom about over 600 were female. However, sources at the Chinese Benevolent Foundation, which transported and cremated the dead, it was revealed that they had handled "over a hundred corpses" that day.

Certain key aspects of the outline of events may be noted:

a) The meeting in Thammasat was no different from many others which had been organized at the return or Prapas or since the coming of Thanom. Students were well aware that they could expect little protection from police if attacked by armed right-wing groups. They would certainly have organized some defence. A Red Gaur attack during an anti-Prapas rally in Thammasat some weeks before had resulted in two deaths.

b) During the assault on Thammasat, the Armoured Brigade Radio had been exaggerating and playing up the rumor that there were heavy weapons inside Thammasat. It claimed that there were grenades, heavy machine guns, and other heavy arms. This was a totally false accusation which had been used ever since 1974. But whenever time comes to prove the truth, such as the Red Gaurs' assault in August 1975 and the search after the rally against Gen. Prapas, the police have been unable to produce evidence to show that any weapons were hidden inside Thammasat.

This time, what the police could produce to the public were only two rifles. There were no heavy arms such as machine guns. The accusation was unquestionably made up out of thin air.

Ever since the end of 1974, politicians and some student leaders had found it necessary to carry arms in order to protect themselves. At that time, the Red Gaur units, police, and soldiers had already started to impose physical harm on worker leaders, peasant leaders, student leaders, and occasionally politicians. And the police have never apprehended the murderers. (But in similar circumstances when a policeman killed another policeman, or someone tried to kill a politician who belonged to the Government's party, the police were able to arrest the murderers without hesitation.)

From the night of Monday, October 4, to the morning of Wednesday, October 6, the students and civilians had opportunities to bring those weapons inside the university. Both the protesters and the Red Gaurs had an equal opportunity.

c) There were three most critical stages in the course of events: 1) the police refusal to listen to student appeals for a ceasefire between 6:30 and 7:00 a.m.; 2) the "free fire" order at about 7:30 a.m.; and c) the invasion by Border Patrol Police with heavy weaponry after 8:00 a.m.

The overall sequence of events may be summarized as follows. Police allowed right-wing groups to take the initiative in provoking a critical situation around a lawful student gathering which they sealed off so that no escape was possible. As defensive student action developed, police began an attack which culminated in a massive onslaught with heavy weaponry by combat units, causing heavy student casualties. Police allowed—or made ineffective efforts to prevent—brutal and savage mob attacks on helpless students. Thirty-nine students died, while hundreds were wounded. Police casualties were two dead and about thirty wounded. Clear photographic evidence of details of the events accompanied published news stories.

Some background events also derived from first newspaper reports help one to understand what occurred. Right-wing groups were mobilizing continually to initiate and to support the police attack. As the hours went by, Village Scouts and others gathered from the city and countryside to join in the massive blow to student activity. By 9:30 a.m. a crowd of 30,000 had already gathered at the equestrian statue of King Chulalongkorn, coming by bus loads from as far off as Ayutthaya.

The radio of the armed forces (Free Radio Group and Patriotic Peoples Group) played a major part in stirring up hatred against the students. During the night of the 5th and 6th it broadcast all night long a series of violent and emotional speeches, at times calling out to "Kill them . . . kill them."

The order for the police invasion of Thammasat was given by Police General Sisuv Mahinthorathet. The invasion was said to be the consequence of an order given by the Prime Minister to arrest those involved in the alleged *lèse majesté* incident of two days before. Both the Prime Minister and the police later declared that the "clearing" action was made necessary by attacks on the police as they attempted to carry out the arrest. The Prime Minister replied to reporters' questions that the decision to use heavy weaponry was the affair of the police department. However, police later produced a copy of the Prime Minister's arrest order. It bore the time 7:30 a.m. on October 6th. Moreover, newspaper reports indicate that police sharpshooters had begun to attack much earlier, while the students directly involved in the supposed *lèse majesté* incident—those who had come from Thammasat to parley with the Prime Minister—had already been arrested soon after 7:00 a.m.!

Two Comments

Student and labor forces have perceived the successive returns of Prapas and Thanom to be deliberate probes by coup manipulators. As no issue touching the short-term interests of the majority of the population appeared to be at stake, students were drawn into a stance of virtually isolated protest. Aware of the strategy of the coup-makers, they still hoped to prevent it by the threat of massive demonstrations and national strikes. Before October 6th it was indeed difficult to envisage any possible way in which a junta could survive the reaction that seemed inevitable. The events of the few hours on the morning of October 6th created a situation in which further protests were impossible. Students were stunned by the horror of what they had heard and seen. Many could not sleep the following night, and as they scattered to avoid further retaliation they lost contact with each other. Considering the manner of the coup, it appears logical to conclude that the events of October 6th were a carefully planned drama leading to a long-prepared conclusion. The circumstances recall the remarks of CIA director William Colby when he said that the bloody executions which accompanied the military in Chile in September 1973 had done "some good" because they reduced the chances that civil war would break out in Chile. American advisers have long directed Thai anti-insurgency operations and their methods stand out clearly by contrast with the more direct tactics of the Thai military who have shot up whole villages, or burned their victims in tar barrels. During the past year a "Phoenix"-like programme bearing every resemblance to its original Vietnamese version has operated to eliminate popular peasant, student, and political leaders. One American anti-insurgency officer admitted to me that in the period following the withdrawal of American armed forces their anti-insurgency operations would continue, mainly at the political level. Thousands of "advisers" would remain at every level of government, military and police activity. CIA coup-making experience needs no further comment.

On an ideological plane, action against the students had been prepared by labeling them as "a communist threat." On October 6th the government spread ridiculous charges about Vietnamese infiltration; they claimed that there were non-Thai speakers among the students at Thammasat, or that eight armed Vietnamese were seen entering a temple. One dead body was identified as a Vietnamese sapper. As evidence, the police produced an amulet bearing the words "Oriental Horoscope" and another with some letters that "might be Vietnamese." Proof didn't really matter because, for months before, right-wing groups had been imbued with the idea that the students were communists. As counter-insurgency "experts" had learned in Vietnam, it is not enough to muster forces against the adversary. Also any attempts to instill a fear of losing either liberty or economic advantage had little effect on people who had neither. Therefore it was considered far more necessary to create a powerful emotional appeal to the population at large. In Thailand strong popular attachments to "King, Religion and Country" were used as a wedge to alienate people from the students. These ideas were instilled in various organizations such as the Nawapol, Red Gaurs and especially the Village Scouts, which were under the direct patronage of the royal family. These groups are the "people" whose rejection of the students is being repeated *ad nauseam* by radio, television and newspaper.

Right Wing Groups and the Military

The Red Gaurs

The Red Gaurs is an organization set up by the Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC) of the Thai military (itself the product of American CIA counter-insurgency planning in Thailand). Some of the members of the Red Gaurs were vocational students who have graduated, some who haven't graduated, and some who did not attend school at all. ISOC set up this organization in order to negate the student movement after the October 1973 incident. Ever since the time we were drafting the Constitution in early 1974, the foreign press had been reporting and naming Col. Sudsai Hasadin as the main organizer and supporter of the Red Gaurs. There has never been a denial by him of this allegation. ISOC was the organizer, trainer, arms supplier, and funder of this group. As a result, ever since the middle of 1974, the Red Gaurs' units have been publicly armed with various types of guns and grenades. No policeman or soldier would arrest or give these armed civilians warning. No matter how peacefully the other students might stage a demonstration, the Red Gaurs would always threaten them with these weapons. In the protests against some articles in the newly written constitution in 1974, against the American military bases in 1974-1975, in the assault on Thammasat in August 1975, and during the protests against the returns of Field Marshals Prapas and Thanom, the armed Red Gaurs were responsible for numerous casualties. Newspaper photographers who tried to take pictures of the Red Gaurs carrying weapons were frequently attacked and injured. In the election of April 1976, the Red Gaurs harassed candidates and assaulted some so-called "leftist" political parties.

Nawapol

Besides instigating Red Gaur violence, ISOC played an important role in forming other groups and units useful to the military during this period of civilian rule, such as Nawapol. Nawapol is similar to the Red Gaurs in some ways, but it is more like a psychological warfare unit; its mission is to cooperate with the Red Gaurs. The organization has attempted to rally together the merchants, businessmen, and monks who do not wish to see social change and development along democratic lines, and who were against the student and labor movements. By publishing articles and convening conferences and rallies, Nawapol's central method has been to convince the privileged that even a change toward democracy might deprive them of possessions. Mr. Wattana Kiewvimol, the Nawapol director, was asked by General Saiyud (the head of ISOC) to come back from America to teach psychological warfare techniques at ISOC. At times some people have been misled to believe that Nawapol aimed to build a new society through the use of cooperatives, but in reality its purpose has been to preserve old conditions for the benefit of the businessmen and landlords.

Village Scouts

Another important organization, the Village Scouts, were allegedly set up to be non-political. Actually, they have been political tools of the business and landlord groups. Their true nature was observable in the April 1976 elections, at which time they campaigned heavily—and with some success—for right-wing and military candidates. The overall organization of the Village Scouts claims primary loyalty to the Nation, Religion, and King. The Ministry of the Interior played an important role in organizing the Village Scouts, and wealthy businessmen and merchants supported them financially. The role of the Village Scouts as the "outraged mob" on October 6 was clear evidence of the true purpose of this organization.

Aside from the Red Gaurs, Nawapol, and the Village Scouts, ISOC and the Ministry of the Interior also used many other groups with different names. Some are affiliated with, or are simply front groups for, Nawapol and the Red Gaurs, such as the Thai Bats, Housewives' Club, Thailand's Protectors, etc. The operational tools of these groups were anonymous cards, leaflets, flyers, and phone threats.

In addition to the open operations of these groups, political assassinations had begun in 1974 as well. Peasants' and workers' representatives were ambushed one by one throughout the country. Student leaders were killed in Bangkok and other cities, and politicians such as Dr. Boonsanong Poonyodyana, the Secretary General of the Socialist Party, became the victims of these assassins as well. Each time, the police failed to find the murderers, perhaps because they took part in each murder.

Violence in Thailand

It might appear that the gentle and non-violent tenets of Buddhism would hinder the build-up of hatred exemplified in these assassinations and in the violence by the "mob" on October 6th, but a spokesman for violence was found in a monk called 'Kittiwuttho Bhikku' (Kittinak Jaraensathapawn). In an interview published in the liberal magazine *Jatturat*, this favorite consultant of right-wing groups rationalized the killing of left-wing activists and communists by saying:

> *I think that even Thais who believe in Buddhism should do it [kill leftists]. Whoever destroys the nation, religion and king is not a complete man, so to kill them is not like killing a man. We should be convinced that not a man but a devil is killed. This is the duty of every Thai person.*

Question: But isn't killing a transgression?
Yes, but only a small one when compared to the good of defending nation, religion and king. To act in this way is to gain merit in spite of the little sin. It is like killing a fish to cook for a monk. To kill the fish is a little sin, but to give to the monk is a greater good.
Question: So the ones who kill leftists escape arrest on account of the merit they gain.
Probably.

In the incident of the mock hanging, the charge that the person being "hung" resembled the prince was given as the immediate source of the fury of the mob on October 6. Rumors of Vietnamese incursion suggested the nation was under attack. The rationalizations of Kittiwuttho Bikkhu gave license to kill. When the junta stepped in they posed as the upholders of the King, Country and Religion. Subsequently the identity of the monarchy with the new regime has been emphasized, as well as the part played by the crown prince who returned for unexplained reasons on October 2. One of his first acts was to visit and pay his respects at Wat Bovornnives where Thanom was living. After the coup, newspapers carried daily photographs of the prince in the company of army and police officers. Both he and the king himself are also shown receiving the homage of Village Scouts who had gained so much "merit" in the events of October 6. Finally, the two royal princesses have done their part by being photographed with wounded policemen in Bangkok hospitals.

How neatly the parts fit together! But the key to the plot lies in the events of October 6 that have been outlined. For it is completely inexplicable that a police commander would accept responsibility for the killings in Thammasat if he had not received the assurance that the events would lead to a military coup. Right-wing groups and police were the agents, while the military kept discreetly away. During the mob violence of the morning, police declared they were still in control and rejected suggestions that the military be called in. Yet as soon as the coup was announced, the alliance of police and military came into the open as combined squads set out together on search and book-burning sorties.

"King, Religion and Country." These are the values around which the military junta, closely knit to the monarchy, police, and the Village Scouts, professes to take its stand. The dead of October 6th are being explained away and forgotten; they are said to have been rejected by the "people." Students are fleeing the country into Laos or to the jungle to join the armed struggle. Others remain, with bitterness hidden in their hearts, awaiting the day when the people will speak again and stir to move history forward. ☆

Withdrawal Symptoms: Social and Cultural Aspects of the October 6 Coup

by Ben Anderson

Introduction

In themselves, military coups are nothing new in modern (or ancient) Thai history. There have been at least eight successful, and many more unsuccessful, coups since the one that overthrew the absolute monarchy in 1932.[1] It is therefore not altogether surprising that some Western journalists and academics have depicted the events of October 6 1976 as "typical" of Thai politics, and even as a certain "return to normalcy" after three years of unsuitable flirtation with democracy.[2] In fact, however, October 6 marks a clear turning point in Thai history for at least two quite different reasons. First, most of the important leaders of the legal left-wing opposition of 1973-1976, rather than languishing in jail or in exile like their historical predecessors, have joined the increasingly bold and successful maquis. Second, the coup was not a sudden intra-elite *coup de main,* but rather was the culmination of a two-year-long right-wing campaign of public intimidation, assault and assassination best symbolized by the orchestrated mob violence of October 6 itself.[3]

Political murders by the ruling cliques have been a regular feature of modern Thai politics—whether under Marshal Phibunsongkhram's dictatorship in the late 1930s, under the Phibunsongkhram-Phao Siyanon-Sarit Thanarat triumvirate of the late 1940s and 1950s,[4] or the Sarit Thanarat-Thanom Kittikachon-Praphat Charusathien regime of the 1960s and early 1970s.[5] But these murders, sometimes accompanies by torture, were typically "administrative" in character, carried out by the formal instrumentalities of the state, very often in secret. The public knew little of what had occurred, and certainly did not participate in any significant way. What is striking about the brutalities of the 1974-76 period is their nonadministrative, public, and even mob character. In August 1976, Bangkokians watched the hitherto inconceivable spectacle of the private home of Prime Minister Kukrit Pramote being sacked by a swarm of drunken policemen.[6] In February, Socialist Party secretary-general Dr. Boonsanong Punyodana had been waylaid and assassinated outside his suburban home by professional gunmen.[7] Hired hooligans increasingly displayed a quite "untraditional" style of violence, such as indiscriminate public bombings,[8] that sharply contrasted with the discreet, precise murders of an earlier era. Ten innocent persons died when a grenade was thrown into the midst of a New Force party election rally in Chainat on March 25, 1976.[9] And the gruesome lynchings of October 6 took place in the most public place in all Siam—Sanam Luang, the great downtown square before the old royal palace.

> *. . . And in those days all men and beasts*
> *Shall surely be in mortal danger*
> *For when the Monarch shall betray*
> *The Ten Virtues of the Throne*
> *Calamity will strike, the omens*
> *Sixteen monstrous apparitions:*
> *Moon, stars, earth, sky shall lose their course*
> *Misfortune shall spread everywhere*
> *Pitch-black the thundercloud shall blaze*
> *With Kali's fatal conflagration*
> *Strange signs shall be observed throughout*
> *The land, the Chao Phraya shall boil*
> *Red as the heart's-blood of a bird*
> *Madness shall seize the Earth's wide breast*
> *Yellow the color of the leadening sky*
> *The forest spirits race to haunt*
> *The city, while to the forest flee*
> *The city spirits seeking refuge . . .*
> *The enamel tile shall rise and float*
> *The light gourd sink down to the depths.*
>
> Prophetic Lament for Sri Ayutthaya (c. 17th C.)

What I propose to do in this article is to explore the reasons for this new level and style of violence, for I believe that they are symptomatic of the present social, cultural and political crisis in Siam. My argument will be developed along two related lines, one dealing with class formation and the other with ideological upheaval.

The class structure of Thai society has changed rapidly since the late 1950s. Above all, new bourgeois strata have emerged, rather small and frail to be sure, but in significant respects outside of and partially antagonistic to the old feudal-bureaucratic upper class. These new strata—which

include both a middle and a petty bourgeoisie—were spawned by the great Vietnam War boom of the 1960s when Americans and American capital poured into the country on a completely unprecedented scale (rapidly followed by the Japanese). It is these strata that provide the social base for a quasi-popular right-wing movement clearly different from the aristocratic and bureaucratic rightism of an earlier age. This is by no means to suggest that old ruling cliques of generals, bankers, bureaucrats, and royalty do not continue to hold the keys of real political power; rather, that these cliques have found themselves new, and possibly menacing, "popular" allies.[10]

The ideological upheaval was also in large part due to the impact of American penetration, and manifested itself primarily in an intellectual revolution that exploded during the "democratic era" of 1973-76. Reacting to the intellectual nullity of and the crude manipulation of traditionalist symbols by the Sarit-Thanom-Praphat dictatorship, many young Thai came openly to question certain central elements of the old hegemonic culture. In response to this, there was an enormous increase in the self-conscious propagation and indoctrination of a militant ideology of Nation-Religion-King—as opposed to the *bien-pensant* "traditionalism" that reigned before. Rather than being seen generally as "naturally Thai," Nation-Religion-King became ever more explicitly the ideological clubs of highly specific social formations. The obvious audience for this self-conscious rightist ideologizing were the new bourgeois strata; the propagandists were both fanatical elements in these strata themselves and some shrewd manipulators in the ruling cliques.

Troubles of New Classes

In the 1950s and 1960s most Western social scientists took the view that Siam was a "bureaucratic polity"—a political system completely dominated by a largely self-perpetuating "modernizing" bureaucracy.[11] Below this bureaucracy there was only a pariah Chinese commercial class and an undifferentiated peasantry, both with low political consciousness and virtually excluded from political participation. The relations between bureaucracy and peasantry were understood to be generally harmonious and unexploitative,[12] involving only the classical exchanges of taxes, labor and deference for security, glory and religious identity. Thanks largely to the shrewdness and foresight of the great nineteenth-century Chakkri dynasts, Siam, alone among the states of Southeast Asia, did not succumb to European or American imperialism and thereby escaped the evils of rackrenting, absentee landlordism, chronic peasant indebtedness, and rural proletarianization so typical of the colonized zones. The Siamese economy, by no means highly developed until the 1960s, was essentially in the hands of immigrant Chinese, who, by their alien and marginal status, could never play a dynamic, independent political role.[13] This picture of a peaceful, sturdy and independent Siam was in important ways quite false. Western capital, Western "advisers," and Western cultural missionaries exercised decisive influence on Siamese history after the 1950s.[14] On the other hand, when compared to the changes brought about by the American and Japanese penetration in the Vietnam War era, the years before the 1960s appear relatively "golden." As late as 1960, Bangkok could still be described as the "Venice of the East," a somnolent old-style royal harbor-city dominated by canals, temples, and palaces. Fifteen years later, many of the canals had been filled in to form roads and many of the temples had fallen into decay. The whole center of gravity of the capital had moved eastwards, away from the royal compounds and Chinese ghettoes by the Chao Phraya river to a new cosmopolitan zone dominated visually and politically by vast office buildings, banks, hotels, and shopping plazas. The city had expanded with cancerous speed, devouring the surrounding countryside and turning rice-paddies into speculative housing developments, instant suburbs and huge new slums.[15]

This transformation, which on a smaller scale also occurred in certain provincial capitals, was generated by forces exogenous to Siamese society. It may be helpful to describe these forces in terms of three inter-related factors. The first and most important was undoubtedly America's unceremonious post-1945 extrusion of the European colonial powers from their prewar economic, political, and military hegemony in Southeast Asia.[16] The second was Washington's decision to make Siam the pivot of its regionwide expansionism. Bangkok became the headquarters not only for SEATO, but also for a vast array of overt and clandestine American operations in neighboring Laos, Cambodia, Burma, and Vietnam.[17] A third factor—important in a rather different way—was the technological revolution that made mass tourism a major industry in the Far East after World War II. (Hitherto tourism in this zone had been an upperclass luxury.) For this industry Bangkok was a natural nexus: it was not only geographically central to the region, but it was thoroughly safe under the protection of American arms and native dictatorships, and,

above all, it offered an irresistible combination of modern luxury (international hotels, comfortable air-conditioned transportation, up-to-date movies, etc.) and exotic antiquities.[18] Elsewhere in Southeast Asia the colonial powers had typically constructed culturally mediocre, commercially oriented capital cities in coastal areas far removed from the old indigenous royal capitals. (Tourists had thus to make time-consuming pilgrimages from Djakarta to Surakarta, Rangoon to Mandalay-Ava, Saigon to Hue, and Phnom Penh to Angkor.)

If the American penetration of Siam was a general feature of the post-World War II era, there was nonetheless a marked difference in degree and pace after 1959, when the absolutist dictatorship of Sarit Thanarat was installed. His predecessor, Marshal Phibunsongkhram, was a relatively polished product of St. Cyr and the prewar European-dominated world. Sarit, on the other hand, was a provincial, the product of the Royal Military Academy, and a man who rose to power in the postwar era of American global hegemony. It was he who personally presided over the Americanization (in terms of organization, doctrines, training, weaponry, and so forth) of the Thai military, following his first visit to Washington in 1950.[19] Almost a decade of close ties with the Pentagon prior to his seizure of power meant that after 1959 he found it easy and natural to link Siam to the United States in an unprecedented intimacy.[20] In other ways, too, Sarit was a perfect dictator from Washington's point of view. He was willing and eager to make "development" part of his quest for legitimacy and to accept the advice of U.S.-trained technocrats in drawing up and implementing developmental programs.[21] As unquestioned "strongman," he had far more power to act swiftly and decisively than his predecessor.[22] Most important of all, Sarit did everything in his power to attract foreign (and especially American) capital to Siam, believing it to be an essential means for consolidating his rule and that of his successors. Thus strikes were banned and unions forcibly dissolved. Branches of foreign corporations were not only permitted to remain largely foreign-owned, but could purchase land in Siam, were largely exempted from taxation, and were even allowed to bring technicians freely into the country, bypassing the existing immigration laws.[23] The *baht* was managed according to the most orthodox economic principles and remained a rock of stability until the end of the 1960s.

After five years in power Sarit succumbed to cirrhosis of the liver. But his heirs, Thanom and Praphat, continued the basic thrust of his policies. The onset of their rule virtually coincided with Lyndon Johnson's escalation of the Vietnam War, and they were quick to seize the opportunities thereby presented. Washington was encouraged to treat Siam as a sort of gigantic immobile aircraft carrier: in the peak year 1968, there were almost 50,000 U.S. servicemen on Thai soil, and the Americans had been allowed to build and operate at least eight major bases as well as dozens of minor installations.[24] Not only were the Thai rulers amply rewarded in terms of military aid, but this huge American presence generated a rapid economic expansion, above all in the construction and service sectors.[25] A massive war-related boom developed, which built on, but far outstripped, the "prewar" prosperity of the early Sarit years. It was the Thanom-Praphat regime that presided over the proliferation of hotels, restaurants, movie houses, supermarkets, nightclubs, and massage parlors generated by the torrential inflow of white businessmen, soldiers and tourists.

If the boom itself was basically fueled by American (and Japanese) investment and spending, the mode of Thai participation in its benefits was influenced significantly by regime policies. Of these, one of the most decisive was Sarit's early decree eliminating the existing 50-*rai* (c. 20 acre) limit on permissible landholding.[26] This decree laid the legal foundations for large-scale land speculation which continued to accelerate so long as the boom itself lasted. Nor was the speculative wave confined to Bangkok. As the Americans built and paved great strategic highways to the borders of Laos and Cambodia (the "Friendship" Highway, *inter alia*),[27] metropolitan and provincial speculators followed in their train, buying up wayside land very cheaply from subsistence farmers who had little understanding of land-as-speculative-commodity.[28] Land speculation is an economic activity in which legal skills, "inside information," "pull," and access to cheap bank loans are peculiarly important. It is not surprising, therefore, that the main beneficiaries of the real estate boom were not merely the traditional Sino-Thai commercial class, but high and middle-level bureaucrats (military and civilian) and provincial notables with good political connections. Unsurprisingly, the zones hardest hit tended to be those closest to Bangkok, the funnel through which capital poured so fast. The situation in central Thailand is illustrative: whereas in the Phibunsongkhram era, scholars agree, tenancy was not a serious problem, by the latter 1960s, USAID reports indicated that less than thirty percent of the farms were still owner-operated.[29]

The cultural and ideological consequences of October 1973 took two diametrically opposite forms. On the left, an almost giddy sense of exhilaration, iconoclasm and creativity was born. For a time it seemed that one could say, sing or do almost anything. On the right, the illusion rapidly took root that the newly established liberal regime was the cause of the sudden epidemic of subversive ideas. Democracy was quickly blamed for the consequences of the dictatorship and its complicity with American and Japanese capitalism.

The general "dynamization" of the Thai economy as a result of the factors mentioned above served to create or expand at least four social formations that are significant for our purposes here—in the sense that their survival largely depended on the continuation of the boom. In those rural areas where the process of commercialization had spread most rapidly, strategically positioned notables, rice-mill owners, traders, headmen, and so forth, acquired sudden new wealth, a good deal of which was reinvested in land. As rural landlordism rose, so there was a complementary exodus of the young and the dispossessed to the booming urban centers.[30] In the towns, and perhaps especially in Bangkok, the flow of migrants generated two sorts of politically volatile social

groups: first, a large mass of unemployed, or underemployed, youthful drifters, with few substantial prospects either in the city or back home in their villages; second, a considerable number who were able to better themselves by finding niches in a broad array of burgeoning service-type occupations. This petty bourgeois army included barbers, pimps, manicurists, drycleaners, chauffeurs, tailors, masseuses, tour guides, motorcycle repairmen, bartenders, receptionists, tellers, small shop owners and so forth. To a considerable degree this new petty bourgeoisie served and was dependent on the prosperity of a fourth group. This segment, mainly of previous urban origin, was a largely new middle bourgeoisie, in certain respects as closely tied to foreign capital as to the Thai state apparatus.

The two tables following may serve to suggest the nature of these changes in the Thai class structure and, in very rough terms, both the absolute sizes of the middle and petty bourgeoisies and their relative share of the population as a whole. The extraordinary increase in category B, and the sizeable increases in categories A, F and I (largely middle/upper and petty bourgeois occupations), clearly reveal the nature of the boom's sociological impact over a decade.[31] Data drawn from the 1970 census, in which the above broad categories are broken down into great detail, allow one to make the following very rough calculations (see Table II). We may then provisionally estimate that by 1970 the middle and upper bourgeoisie formed about 3.5% of the working population (divided perhaps 3.0% and 0.5%), and the petty bourgeoisie about 7.5%.[32]

It is always useful to remember that social groupings become social classes insofar as they consolidate themselves through the *family*—a key institution for linking power, wealth, and status in one generation and transmitting them to another. One important sign of class formation in Siam during the Sarit-Thanom-Praphat era was a massive expansion of education at all levels, partly at the "modernizing" behest of American advisers and Thai technocrats, but also in bureaucratic response to the demands of the new upwardly-aspirant social groups—and the families within them. In 1961, there were 15,000 students enrolled in a total of five universities; by 1972, there were 100,000 enrolled in seventeen.[33] From 1964 to 1969, the numbers enrolled in government secondary schools rose from 159,136 to 216,621; in private secondary schools from 151,728 to 228,495; and in government vocational schools from 44,642 to 81,665.[34] "Traditionally" (for our purposes here from the 1880s until World War II), education had been sharply bifurcated. A tiny upper class received a gentlemanly Western-style education, while the bulk of the population either went uneducated, attended government primary schools, or received instruction in Buddhist temples.[35] Neither level of education generated nationally significant social mobility; rather, each helped to conserve its constituents in their existing social and economic positions. Western-style higher education gave polish to those already born to rule. State primary education was so elementary that it seems to have had few vectoral consequences: its existence was more a gesture by Thai governments concerned to show a modern face to the outside world than a response to peasant demand. Buddhist education was essentially ethically and cosmologically oriented, rather than geared to providing career-related skills (though for a small group of commoners success in the Sangha's tiered

Table I
Economically Active Population Aged 11 and Over Classified by Occupation

Occupational Group	Nos. in 1960	Nos. in 1970	% Increase
Total	13,836,984	16,850,136	21.7
A. Professional, technical & related workers	173,960	284,104	63.3
B. Administrative, executive & managerial workers	26,191	246,591	941.5
C. Clerical workers	154,303	190,238	23.3
D. Sales workers	735,457	833,607	13.3
E. Farmers, fishermen, hunters, loggers, & related workers	11,332,489	13,217,416	16.6
F. Miners, quarrymen, & related workers	26,255	42.605	62.2
G. Workers in transport & communications occupations	144,610	225,204	55.7
H. Craftsmen, prod-process workers, & laborers not elsewhere classified	806,205	1,109,943	37.7
I. Service, sport & recreation workers	273,375	471,999	72.7
J. Unclassifiable	99,259	30,560	-59.2
K. New entrants to the work force	64,880	197,869	305.0

Source: Adapted from National Economic and Development Board, National Statistical Office and Institute of Population Studies, Chulalongkorn University, "The Population of Thailand" [1974], in Mudannayake, ed., *Thailand Yearbook, 1975-76,* p. E 41.

Table II
Economically Active Population Aged 11 and Over Classified by Occupation and Class (1970)

Occupational Group	Total Nos.	Nos. State Employed	% State Employed	Est. Middle & Upper Bourgeoisie	Est. Petty Bourgeoisie
A.	284,104	198,792	70.4	250,000	35,000
B.	246,591	212,752	86.3	230,000	15,000
C.	190,238	108,632	57.1	negl.	190,000
D.	833,607	1,492	.2	negl.	600,000
E.	13,217,416	10,169	.1	negl.	?
F.	42,605	568	1.3	negl.	negl.
G.	225,204	24,759	11.0	negl.	100,000
H.	1,109,943	106,292	9.6	negl.	150,000
I.	471,999	114,528	24.3	70,000	160,000
J.	30,560	—	—	—	—
K.	197,869	—	—	?	?
Total	16,850,136	777,984	4.7	550,000	1,250,000

Source: Adapted from Department of Labour, Ministry of the Interior, *Yearbook of Labour Statistics 1972-1973* [using 1970 census figures], cited in Mudannayake, ed., *Thailand Yearbook, 1975-76,* pp. E 41-68.

examination system could lead to very steep social mobility).[36]

Accordingly, the real significance of the education expansion of the 1960s was that it took place mainly at the secondary and tertiary levels.[37] For the first time, sizeable numbers of Thai began to desire and to have some access to career-oriented educations for their children, educations which, past history suggested, were the badges of or the avenues to elevated social status—above all entry into the secure upper reaches of the state bureaucracy.[38] It is in this light that one must understand the *political* meaning of the proliferation of universities under Sarit and his heirs: as a kind of symbolic confirmation that the boom was not fortune but progress, and that its blessings would be transmitted to the next generation within the family. It was possible to *imagine* within the confines of a single household a successful dry-cleaner father and an embryonic cabinet secretary son.[39] So the university boom served to consolidate the economic boom sociologically and to confirm it culturally.[40]

Yet, in spite of the rapid expansion in numbers, size and enrollments of Thai universities, many aspiring families could not get their children into them: hence, in part, the no less rapid expansion of technical, vocational, commercial and other colleges as second bests. And in the context of all this stratificatory turmoil, one must understand, I think, a significant shift in the semantics of the word "student" itself. In an earlier time, "student" had been almost synonymous with "member of the national elite"—a being on an almost stratospheric plane above the mass of his countrymen. But by the late 1960s and early 1970s, social mobility had created conditions where "student" might still have elevated connotations, but could also signify something like "the neighbor's kid who got into Thammasat when mine didn't." It became possible to envy and resent students in a way that would have seemed incongruous a generation earlier.

Buteven for parents who were successful in getting their children into a university, the idea of the "student" came to have ambiguous resonances. The past paradox of mobility is that movement upwards is also movement away. Rather poorly educated fathers, regarding university education in essentially instrumental terms, often found themselves appalled by quite unpredicted changes in the manners, goals and morals of their student offspring, as these came to be influenced, in universities and teacher training colleges, by the iconoclastic ideas seeping in from the United States and China.[41] One must imagine the concern and anger of middle bourgeois or petty bourgeois parents when their sons began coming home with "messy" long hair, impertinent talk, casual morals and subversive ideas: how would they ever make successful officials?

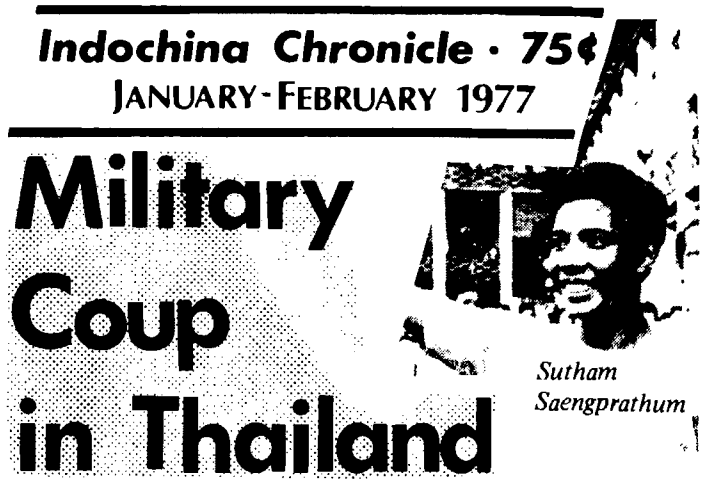
About 1971 or 1972, the feeling began to spread that the golden days were fading. The Americans were withdrawing their troops from Indochina, and the long-standing spectre of communist consolidations on Siam's border began to assume a threatening reality. The bureaucracy, ultimate target of many social hopes, had expanded to saturation point, and increasingly university degrees no longer guaranteed what they had been assumed to guarantee—secure and high-status employment.[42] After a long period of price stability, double-digit inflation suddenly struck the Thai economy.[43] A certain uneasiness and dissatisfaction developed among the beneficiaries of the great boom as it drew to its close. Exclusion from political participation had been tolerable so long as the dictatorship "produced" in the economic, security and educational sectors, but became much less so as problems accumulated. In addition, neither Thanom nor Praphat had the frightening personal presence of Sarit.[44]

In this context the snowballing mass demonstrations that brought down Thanom and Praphat in October 1973—the month the world oil crisis began—are of extraordinary

interest.[45] There is no doubt the new bourgeois strata contributed decisively to the huge crowds that came out in support of students' and intellectuals' demands for a constitution and respect for civil liberties. Indeed, it can be argued that these strata ensured the *success* of the demonstrations--had the crowds been composed of slum-dwellers rather than generally well-dressed urbanites, the dictators might have won fuller support for repression.

At the same time, the participation of these bourgeois strata must be understood more as a product of their immediate history than as a portent of their future political role. It is clear, in fact, that they almost completely lacked political experience and so had no real idea of what the consequences of ending the dictatorship would be. The regime was simultaneously blamed both for failing to exact fuller American commitments to Siam and for excessive subservience to Washington. (The obverse side was an irritable, mystified, anti-American nationalism expressed in the combination of such sentiments as "Why have you let us down in Indochina?" and "Look how you've corrupted our girls!"). The open corruption of Praphat, the dynastic marriage of Narong, Thanom's son, to Praphat's daughter, and his nepotistic, meteoric rise to power, all offended bourgeois sensibilities. It was also important that, for their own reasons, the monarch and certain senior generals supported the demonstrators, if only indirectly. Finally, one must remember that the student demands were essentially legalistic (constitutional) and symbolic. No one imagined that something dangerous or undesirable could come out of them. True enough, the students had destroyed a number of police stations in the last days of the demonstrations, but had they not kept traffic flowing smoothly and cleaned up the mess in the streets in a thoroughly responsible manner thereafter? With the corrupt and incompetent dictators gone, prosperity, peace and progress would be restored under the benevolent supervision of the king with his enlightened entourage of senior justices, respected professors and capable bankers.

As we know, none of these expectations came close to realization. The global oil crisis had broken out almost simultaneously with the October 1973 demonstrations. The disorder that resulted in the world capitalist economy began to make itself felt in Siam by early 1974. In the spring of 1975, the American position in Indochina collapsed with stunning speed. Siam was now no longer the safe pivot of America's Southeast Asian empire, but close to its fragile outer perimeter. It seemed conceivable that henceforth Singapore would play Bangkok's role, while the Thai capital itself would take Vientiane's. As a direct consequence of these events beyond its borders, Siam found its economy lagging badly.[46] The injury seemed compounded by the post-October 1973 liberal governments' public commitment to civil rights and liberties, above all the rights of farmers and workers to organize, demonstrate and strike. The Sanya Dhammasakdi (October 1973-February 1975) government made real, if timid, efforts to respond directly to worker demands.[47] It is



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true that to some extent especially insecure new enterprises were vulnerable to the squeeze between declining profits and rising wage claims.[48] Under the dictatorship, workers had had to accept miserable pay while the middle classes prospered; now their turn had come. Yet the growing anger of the bourgeois strata as a whole had more complex roots. In the first place, the development of unions in itself threatened to undermine the patron-client "familial" style of employer-employee relations that had largely prevailed hitherto.[49] (It would be a mistake to underestimate the psychic "profit" that socially aspiring bourgeois elements derive from the opportunity to play quasi-feudal roles vis-à-vis their subordinates.) Secondly, many of the strikes occurred in sectors such as transportation, where it was particularly easy for bourgeois groups to interpret personal inconvenience as an affront to the public interest. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly of all, influential sections of the Thai press under the control of large business interests, constantly hammered on the theme that such strikes were anti-national, in the sense that they scared away the foreign investors on whom the "national economy" so depended. It was thus only too easy to blame the general economic deterioration on worker irresponsibility.

Finally, in still another sphere the chickens of the dictatorship came home to roost during the liberal era: rapidly growing unemployment among high school, vocational school and even university graduates.[50] In effect, the educational boom, with its promise of rising status and security, went into a slump. Under the circumstances, it is scarcely surprising that the image of the student as unemployed (unemployable?) layabout at home and restless troublemaking agitator in shop or plant became the prime focus of a whole complex of resentments and frustrations among the new bourgeois strata.[51]

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Malcolm Caldwell

THAILAND: towards the revolution

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EE SUTHAM AND FRIENDS,
OD CHILDREN OF THE PEOPLE

Save Orisa's Life

We are to visualize then a very insecure, suddenly created bourgeois strata—Bangkok's immense traffic problems are partly the result of a flood of *first-generation* car owners and drivers[52]—faced by straitened economic circumstances and the menace of worse troubles still to come; not merely worried by the ending of the long boom but haunted by the fear that the boom was part of a single historical parabola, that the golden days of Sarit would never return, and that their ascent from backstreet dust would end where it had begun. Furthermore, we must understand that this bourgeoisie, with little experience in politics and unsophisticated ideas about government, but precisely *therefore* a strong consciousness of "not being to blame for the mess," was peculiarly liable to evince paranoiac responses to their predicament. (Depending on the circumstances, one could imagine this paranoia being vented on corruption, students, communists, foreigners, Chinese, or whatever.) In the event, in 1975-76, for reasons to be discussed below, the radicalized students—bourgeois successes who seemed to spit on that success—came to be the main target of this panicked anger. Such, I think, is the explanation of why many of the same people who sincerely supported the mass demonstrations of October 1973 welcomed the return to dictatorship three years later.

Yet they were not the immediate perpetrators of the brutalities on October 6. It remains therefore to attempt to identify the culprits and to situate them within the broad sociological framework sketched out so far. Undoubtedly the most notorious men of violence, not only on October 6, 1976, but during the preceding two years, were the Krathing Daeng (Red Gaurs). These hooligans have been given (I think somewhat mistakenly) a quasi-sociological respectability by journalists and academics who have identified them simply as vocational school students. Since vocational more than university students bore the brunt of the police repression of October 1973, so the argument goes, it is plausible to interpret Red Gaur attacks on university students as expressing the honest resentment of long-suffering low-status vocational students against high-status, arrogant and cowardly "college kids."[53] The Red Gaur-vocational student identification was probably strengthened in many people's minds by a series of spectacularly violent (but mainly apolitical) clashes between adolescents from rival vocational schools in late 1974 and 1975.[54] Since these boys used guns and bombs against each other, and these were the favored weapons of the Red Gaurs, it was easy to jump to the conclusion that the latter politically represented the former.

A more complex picture of the Red Gaurs is suggested by the following passage from an article in the conservative *Bangkok Post:*

> *Another interesting man is Doui, who is appointed as the leader of a mobile unit [of the Red Gaurs], a force which could shift rapidly from place to place. Long-haired in hippy style and with a big scar on his face, Doui said he had 50 men under his control. Most of these are mercenaries, he said, who live in Loei Province as a security unit for road construction in the area.*
>
> *I was a former soldier, but later I became a mercenary. I liked the uniform, but I disliked there being too many disciplines and regulations in the army. I like the freedom to follow my own style, wearing long hair or whatever dress I wish. . . .*[55]

Well-informed sources in Bangkok confirm that many of the key Red Gaur cadres were ex-mercenaries and men discharged from the army for disciplinary infractions, while their followings were mainly composed of unemployed vocational school graduates, high-school dropouts, unemployed street-corner boys, slum toughs and so forth.[56] Hired by various cliques within the ISOC (Internal Security Operations Command) and other agencies specializing in police and

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intelligence work,[57] the Red Gaurs were not recruited primarily on the basis of ideological commitment, but rather by promises of high pay, abundant free liquor and brothel privileges, and the lure of public notoriety. It is striking how these rewards mirror the privileges anticipated for successful students on their entry into government service (money, prestige, expenses-paid visits to nightclubs and massage parlors)—anticipated at least in the aspiring petty bourgeois milieux from which the Red Gaurs emerged.[58] In other words, there is a sociological underpinning to the political role played by these hooligans. Children of a new and vulnerable petty bourgeoisie, caught in a time of widespread unemployment,[59] unsuccessful in obtaining jobs in government offices and scornful of jobs in factories, they were easy targets for anti-(successful) student and anti-worker propaganda.

A second group, no less involved in the right-wing violence of 1974-76[60] but with a somewhat more respectable public image, was the Village Scouts. Founded in 1971 under the joint aegis of the Border Patrol Police and the Ministry of the Interior, it was evidently then conceived as a para-military, anti-communist rural security organization.[61] In the liberal period, however, it developed a significant urban component, and played an important mobilizing role for various right-wing forces. If, prior to October 1973, it had been the arena for discreet competition between Praphat, military strongman and Minister of the Interior, and the royal family, very influential in the BPP, the Village Scouts became, after the fall of the dictators, ever more openly a means for building up an activist constituency for royalist politics. Even under the dictatorship, the palace had worked hard to bind to itself the beneficiaries of the boom by a variety of public relations techniques.[62] This experience proved very useful when the Scouts expanded after October 1973. Scout leadership was drawn heavily from the well-to-do and the middle-aged, provincial officials, rural notables, and urban nouveaux riches.[63] Such people were not only ideologically amenable to assuming such roles, but had the private economic resources to enable the organization to develop rapidly and, to a considerable degree, independently of the state bureaucracy.[64] "Training programs," coordinated by BPP headquarters, were essentially political in character: lectures by right-wing monks, parades, oath-swearings, salutes, beauty and dance contests, visits to military installations, royal donation ceremonies, "sing-songs," and so forth.[65] From a right-wing perspective, the beauty of the Village Scouts was that the organization worked by the following reciprocal motion: For the palace, it provided continuous public evidence of militant political support, outside the Bangkok upper class, among the "establishments" of provincial capitals, small towns, and even some villages. (The word "Village" in its title gave a reassuring, if deceptive, picture of rustic communities organizationally engaged—as it were, a concrete manifestation of the natural ties between "Nation" and "King.") For the Scouts' leaders, on the other hand, royal patronage made it easy to legitimize private, localized repression of protesting peasants and student activists as essential for the preservation of Nation-Religion-King.

Beyond the Red Gaurs and the Village Scouts, there were other agents of right-wing violence, less well organized and directed, but no less products of the great boom and its anxious aftermath. Typically, these men came from marginal and/or recently-developed sectors of the security bureaucracy: up-country policemen and counterinsurgency personnel who saw budgets, staffs and promotion chances decline as a result of world depression and U.S. strategic withdrawal; officials assigned to the career dead-end of service in the South (whether for lack of good connections or for poor performance elsewhere); superannuated guards at U.S. bases; and so forth.[66] Such people found the experience of the liberal years frustrating and alarming on almost every front. Accustomed to exacting cowed deference, to exercising often arbitrary local authority, above all to enjoying virtual immunity to law and criticism,[67] they were deeply enraged by the irreverent and muckraking journalism permitted after October 1973. As salaried men, they were hurt by the inflation, and by a certain decline in opportunities for moonlighting and extortion. Given the chance to enter government service by the great bureaucratic expansion of the 1960s, they had to face the same prospect as nonofficial segments of the new middle and petty bourgeoisie: stagnation, if not decline. Small wonder that out of frustration and resentment came nostalgia for the heyday of the dictatorship and fury at its insolent opponents.

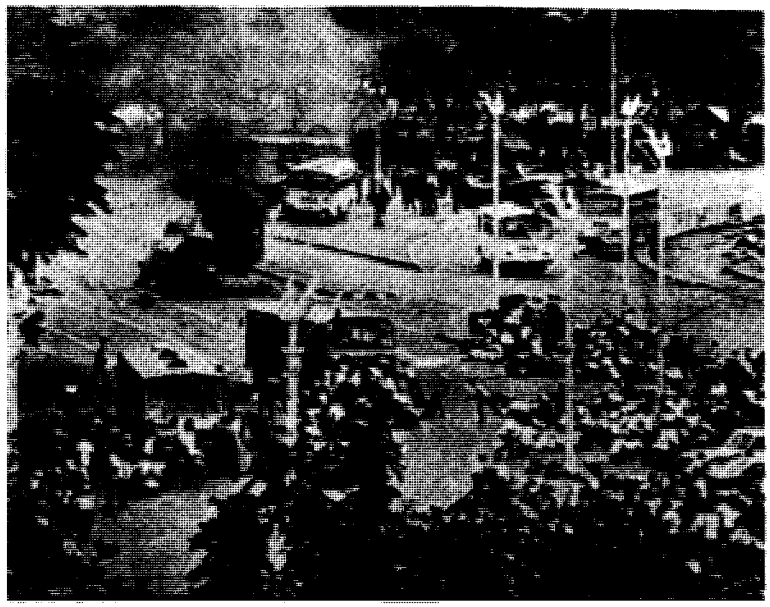
Ideological Upheaval

One way of getting a sense of the dimensions of the cultural crisis that developed out of the economic and social changes sketched above is to begin with one striking contrast between Siam and its regional neighbors. Thanks in part to

their colonized pasts, most Southeast Asian countries have inherited a political vocabulary and rhetoric which is essentially radical-populist, if not left-wing, in character. It is very hard to find anywhere, except perhaps in the Philippines, a calm, self-confident conservative ideology: indeed, since the nineteenth century, conservative culture has been in epistemological shock and on the political defensive, its nationalist credentials deeply suspect. In Siam, mainly because the country escaped direct colonial control, the situation has been, until recently, almost exactly the reverse.[68] The heroes in Thai children's schoolbooks have not been journalists, union leaders, teachers and politicians who spent years in colonial jails, but above all the "great kings" of the ruling house. In fact, until 1973, it would be hard to imagine a single Thai children's hero who had ever been inside a prison. The prevailing rhetoric had typically been conservative, conformist and royalist. It was the left that was always on the defensive, anxious to defend its nationalist credentials against charges of being "Chinese," "Vietnamese," "un-Thai" and "anti-monarchy" (this last a clear sign of a successful identification of royal and nationalist symbols). It would even be fair to say that until the repressions of October 6, the taboo on criticism of monarchy as an institution or the monarch as a person was overwhelmingly accepted even by those firmly on the left.[69]

To be sure, the capable monarchs on the nineteenth century, above all Rama IV and Rama V, did, in some sense, "save" Siam from conquest and colonization by adroit concessions to, and maneuvers between, the European imperialist powers. But one must not forget the other side of this coin: that the "saving" of Siam made these rulers simultaneously the most powerful and the most dependent sovereigns in Thai history. For if, in the course of the nineteenth century, the Europeans threatened Siam, they also completely eliminated the menace of her traditional foes—the Burmese, Khmers, Vietnamese and Malays. Thai armies did not fight a serious engagement with *anyone* for almost one hundred years (roughly 1840-1940).[70] The old enemies were too weak, the new ones too strong. This externally generated and maintained security enabled the rulers to concentrate, in a quite unprecedented way, on the consolidation of their domestic power. To a very considerable degree, however, even this consolidation was only made possible by royal reliance on European advisers, technology, capital and weaponry.[71] In a pattern prophetic of the "absolutism" of Sarit, the dynasty was able to exploit externally created security and externally generated resources to maximize internal control. The Thai "absolute monarchy" came closest to realization precisely when Siam was most completely at the mercy of the Europeans.[72]

In 1932, the immensely expanded "Western-style" civil and military bureaucracy, earlier instrument of royal aggrandizement, turned on its master. The leaders of the 1932 coup decisively put an end to the monarchy's direct, practical political power without, however, attempting any serious or permanent undermining of its cultural centrality and "nationalist" prestige. "Thailand," as Phibunsongkhram would eventually named Siam, remained defined as a (constitutional) *monarchy*. When Rama VII, deeply involved in the political crises of the late 1920s and early 1930s, abdicated in 1935, the coup leaders immediately offered the throne to a grandson of the legendary national savior Rama V (Chulalongkorn) —then, fortunately, still a minor.[73] The fact that this lad



remained at school in Switzerland throughout World War II merely preserved the monarchy from any contamination from Phibunsongkhram's collaboration with Japanese militarism.

Yet there is a sense in which the Phibunsongkhram era of the late 1930s and early 1940s did mark a real cultural-ideological change in Siam. For the dictator worked hard to legitimize his power by nationalistic propagandizing. To a considerable degree he was able to make the bureaucracy, and above all its military sector, where his effective power lay, appear the public custodian of the nation's interests. Much more clearly than hitherto, nation and monarchy became intellectually separable ideas, with the *state* (essentially the armed forces) as representative of the one and guardian of the other.[74] In important ways this development helped to enshrine the monarchy as a sort of precious *palladium* of the nation.[75]

In spite of all this, Phibunsongkhram's deep involvement in the 1932 coup and the suppression of Prince Boworadet's royalist counter-coup of 1934, earned him the lasting hostility of the royal family. During his second tenure of office (1948-1957), therefore, he was unable to exploit the symbolic resources of the monarchy as he might by then have wished.[76] Perhaps *faute de mieux*, he turned to the symbols of democracy for help when, by 1956, he felt his power ebbing away.[77]

It was Marshal Sarit who brought out the full "shogunal" potential of Phibunsongkhram's early militarism, and thereby significantly changed the whole ideological atmosphere of Thai politics. Sarit was a home-grown product of the Royal Military Academy; he was too young to have played any important role in the 1932 coup and its aftermath; and, unlike Phibun, he had never even pretended to an interest in constitutionalist or democratic conceptions. There was thus no serious obstacle to a rapid rapprochement with the palace. Shortly after seizing power, Sarit began a systematic campaign to "restore" the monarchy, and, in giving it new luster, to fortify his own position. In Phibun's time the king and queen had scarcely ventured outside the national capital. Now they were sent on long world tours to hobnob with other heads of

state, especially European monarchs; reciprocal visits by assorted European royalty were encouraged—and so forth.[78] Royal ceremonies not performed since the days of the absolute monarchy were now revived.[79] The king and queen not only were brought into much more frequent contact with the Thai population, but also were sent out to help "integrate" the tribal minorities by kindly donations. One could almost say that under Sarit a strange displacement of traditional roles occurred: the field-marshal playing the part of the ruler (punisher of crimes,[80] collector of taxes, deployer of armies, and political power-boss in general), and the ruler that of the Buddhist hierarchy (consecrator of authority and epitome of disinterested virtue). We need not be surprised, therefore, that in some ways the monarchy became more "sacred" as the dictatorship entrenched itself.

Not content with utilizing the monarchy, Sarit also exploited Buddhism. In 1962, he eliminated the existing decentralized, rather democratic Sangha organization and replaced it with a despotic centralized system under the control of the Supreme Patriarchate, an office he filled with pliable characters.[81] At his instigation, two popular liberally-minded senior monks were stripped of their ecclesiastical ranks and prosecuted on fabricated charges (in the one case, for communist sympathies, in the other, for sodomy).[82] Finally, important segments of the Sangha were mobilized for "integrationist" (vis-à-vis non-Buddhist hill tribes) and counterinsurgency programs, particularly in the disturbed North and Northeast.[83] More than ever before, Buddhist symbols and institutions were cynically manipulated to generate regime legitimacy.[84] It was in the Sarit era that the triolet Nation-Religion-King was transformed from placid motto to fighting political slogan, and was increasingly understood as such.[85]

The end of the long economic boom, the unexpected frustrations generated by rapid educational expansion, inter-generational estrangement, and the alarm caused by the American strategic withdrawal and the discrediting of the military leadership—these linked crises were experienced most acutely of all by the insecure new bourgeois strata.

It would be a mistake to suppose from the above, however, that the prestige of the monarchy and the Sangha were affected by the dictatorship and the great boom in the same way. As we have seen, there is good reason to believe that the monarchy, for one, improved its position. The "royal revival" had coincided with the start of the boom, and for many newly prosperous Thai the coincidence hardly seemed fortuitous. In a reciprocal motion, development confirmed the legitimacy of the throne, and the throne gave moral luster to development. On the other hand, it seems clear that the powerful secularizing influence of capitalism was simultaneously eroding the authority of Buddhism, particularly in aristocratic and upper bourgeois circles. Boys from these strata were less and less inclined to enter the monkhood even for a nominal period, let alone commit themselves to a lifetime of religious devotion. Even more than hitherto, the committed younger monks tended to come from lower class and rural backgrounds. The consequence, predictably enough, was sharpening politico-religious conflict within the Sangha itself.[86] Growing numbers of young monks, especially those from the impoverished Northeast, moved towards social activism[87] and a left-wing interpretation of religious doctrine.[88] Others, such as the notorious Kitti Wuttho, openly linked Buddhism to an ultra-rightist ideology.[89] In all these ways, then, the Sangha was brought directly into the midst of the political fray.

So far we have considered only the transformation of elements in the hegemonic cultural tradition. But, as Flood has helped to show, change was also occurring among the tradition's opponents. Students and intellectuals in particular were profoundly affected by the Vietnam War. The courage and stamina with which the Vietnamese resisted the American juggernaut aroused increasing admiration. Many bright students who had gone to study in Europe and the United States in the latter 1960s were influenced by and participated in the anti-war movement. In China, the Cultural Revolution was in full spate, and internationally the prestige of Mao Ze-dong's anti-bureaucratic ideas was at its zenith. In Siam itself, the huge American presence was generating serious social problems—rampant prostitution, fatherless mixed-blood babies, drug addiction, pollution, and sleazy commercialization of many aspects of Thai life. By the early 1970s an increasingly strong anti-American (and anti-Japanese) nationalism was making itself felt, symbolized by the bitter title of an influential book published in 1971: *White Peril*.[90] In 1972, students successfully organized a boycott of Japanese commodities in Bangkok.[91]

Yet the censorship that the dictatorship imposed (to be sure, weaker under Thanom than under Sarit) concealed from almost everyone the real extent of the intellectual ferment going on. After October 14, 1973, censorship disappeared overnight, and, to general astonishment, a steadily swelling torrent of critical poetry, songs, plays, essays, novels, and books flooded first the capital and later the provinces. Many of these works had been written or composed under the dictatorship but had never seen the light of day.[92] Others were produced by the radicalizing effects of the October days themselves, and the rapid increase in political consciousness among students in the free atmosphere of the liberal era.

The cultural and ideological consequences of October 1973 took two diametrically opposite forms. On the left, an almost giddy sense of exhilaration, iconoclasm and creativity was born. For a time it seemed that one could say, sing or do almost anything. On the right, the illusion rapidly took root that the newly-established liberal regime was the *cause* of the sudden epidemic of subversive ideas. Democracy was quickly blamed for the consequences of the dictatorship and its complicity with American and Japanese capitalism.

Predictably, the issue came to be joined on the ideological tools self-consciously forged to buttress Sarit's autocracy: Nation-Religion-King. Of these, religion was the least important and did not at first generate much heat. But on the national issue, the left quickly went onto the offensive, making its case more or less along the following lines: Just as Phibunsongkhram had collaborated with the Japanese, so Sarit and his heirs had betrayed the country to the Americans. Never before in Thai history had almost 50,000 foreign troops been stationed on Thai soil. The economy had been allowed to fall overwhelmingly into foreign hands. For all the talk of national identity, the dictators had complacently permitted

the corruption of Thai society and culture. So slavishly had the old regime aped the Americans' anticommunism and paranoia about Chinese expansionism that it was left ludicrously paralyzed by the Machiavellian Nixon-Kissinger approach to Peking. All in all, the policies of the right had proven not only venal and opportunistic, but shortsighted and ultimately bankrupt.

Of even greater significance in the long run were clear signs of a Copernican shift of perspective on the core element of conservative Thai ideology: the historical centrality and nationalist legitimacy of the monarchy. The popularity of Chit Phumisak's *Chomna Sakdina Thai* is symptomatic here because this closely argued book, dealing exclusively with pre-nineteenth century (and thus pre-European imperialist) Siam, interpreted the whole course of Thai history in terms of *fundamental conflicts* between oppressive rulers and struggling ruled. But Chit's book was only one element in a broad array of scholarly and journalistic writing appearing after 1973 which explored the Thai past in categories that implicitly denied or marginalized the traditional royalist-nationalist mythology. It is useful to try to visualize the everyday social feedback from such cultural-ideological developments. One must imagine Thai students discussing in their parents' presence a Siamese nineteenth century not in terms of the great King Rama V, but of the commercialization of agriculture, the growth of compradore communities, foreign penetration, bureaucratic aggrandizement, and so forth. Simply to use a vocabulary of social processes and economic forces was to refuse centrality to Thai monarchs as heroes in or embodiments of national history. Indeed, in some ways this *bypassing of traditional historical categories,* doubtless often perpetrated with naive insouciance or calm contempt by the young, may have seemed more menacing than any direct denial of royal prestige and authority.[93] (One should never underestimate the power of inter-generational hostility to exacerbate ideological antagonisms.)[94]

It should now be possible to understand more clearly why, not long after liberal democratic government was installed and censorship abolished, prosecutions for *lèse majesté* began to be inaugurated.[95] It was not just that the ruling cliques were angered by the hostile rhetoric of radicalized students. Rather a whole concatenation of crises in Thai society began to crystallize around the symbol of the monarchy. The end of the long economic boom, the unexpected frustrations generated by rapid educational expansion, inter-generational estrangement,[96] and the alarm caused by the American strategic withdrawal and the discrediting of the military leadership—these linked crises were experienced most acutely of all by the insecure new bourgeois strata. One must remember that for these strata the monarchy was both a talisman and a moral alibi. The historical depth and solidity of the institution appeared as a kind of charm against disorder and disintegration. And whatever the venality of their lives or their actual economic and cultural dependence on foreigners, members of these strata felt their nationalist self-esteem morally guaranteed by their loyalty to the throne, the epitome of the national heritage. Thus any assault, however, indirect, on the legitimacy of the throne was necessarily sensed as a menace to that alibi.

The malaise of 1974, which generated the first of the lèse majesté trials, was then immeasurably deepened by events in Indochina. In the space of a few weeks in the spring of

1975, Vientiane, Phnom Penh, and Saigon all were conquered by communist forces. In the short run, the main effect was a panicked capital outflow. In the slightly longer run came a crucial change in the practical, as opposed to the symbolic, role of the throne. For there can be little doubt that the abolition of the Laotian monarchy in December (the end of the Khmer monarchy at right-wing hands five years earlier had actually been applauded)[97] raised the alarming specter that Rama IX might prove the last of his line. The king took an increasingly back-to-the-wall conservative anticommunist line in his public statements. The royal shift was noted duly by a whole gamut of right-wing groupings, who were thereby encouraged to go violently on the offensive.

Thanks to the entrenched position of right-wing elements in the mass media--especially radio and television[98]--this offensive, initiated in the fall of 1975, went into high gear in the spring of 1976, particularly during the campaign for the April parliamentary elections. The head of the Chat Thai party, General Pramarn Adireksan, for example, used his ministerial powers over state-controlled media to launch openly the slogan "Right Kill Left!"--something he would not have dared to do a year before.[99] Radio stations controlled by rightists, and especially the extremist Armored Division Radio, commissioned and played incessantly such violent songs as "Nak Phaendin" (Heavy on the Earth) and "Rok Phaendin" (Scum of Earth). Kitti Wuttho's dictum that Buddhism endorsed the killing of communists was given wide and constant publicity. Nor, of course, was the violence merely verbal. The spring and summer of 1976 witnessed a whole series of physical outrages, as sketched out at the beginning of this article.

The essential point to bear in mind is that the pivot on which this whole right-wing offensive turned was the monarchy, increasingly identified with and under the influence of the enemies of the liberal regime. It was therefore characteristic that the "flash-point" for the overthrow of the regime on October 6, 1976, should have been a fabricated case of *lèse-majesté*. Some days earlier, on September 24, two workers at Nakhon Pathom, putting up posters protesting former dictator Thanom's re-entry into Siam under the cloak of monkhood, were beaten to death by some local policemen and their corpses hanged.[100] Two days before the coup, a radical student troupe staged a dramatic re-enactment of the murder in the Bo-Tree courtyard of Thammasat University as part of a nationwide campaign for Thanom's expulsion.[101] The rabid right-wing newspaper *Dao Sayam* touched up photographs of the performance in such a way as to suggest that one of the actors "strangled" had been made up to look like the crown prince.[102] In a coordinated maneuver, the Armored Division Radio broadcast the slander, urged the citizenry to buy copies of *Dao Sayam*, and demanded retribution for this "cruel attack" on the royal family.[103] From this stemmed the lynch-mobs that paved the way for the military takeover.

It is perhaps worth stressing that this type of frame-up and coordinated media campaign is quite new in Thai politics. When Sarit framed Phra Phimonladham and Phra Sasanasophon, or when Phao murdered opposition parliamentarians, they committed their crimes administratively, behind closed doors. The mass media of the 1960s had always warned that the *government* would deal severely with communists and subversives. In 1976, however, the frame-up was staged out in the open, and the *public* was invited to exact vengeance for subversion.

The reason for this, I hope to have shown, is that the old ruling cliques, weakened by developments at home and abroad, have been seeking new domestic allies, and have found them in the bewildered, buffeted and angry middle and petty bourgeoisie created under the old dictatorship. The crudity with which such formulations as Nation-Religion-King are being elaborated and deployed is symptomatic both of a growing general awareness that they are no longer genuinely hegemonic, and of the real fear and hatred generated by the cultural revolution of the 1970s.[104]

The consequences of October 6 point therefore in two different but related directions. On the one hand, the coup has obviously accelerated the secular demystification of Thai politics. Direct and open attacks on the monarchy loom imminently.[105] Sizeable groups, both liberal and radical, have come to understand that they have no place in the Bangkok order, and so, in unprecedented numbers, have left for exile or the maquis. On the other hand, the political conceptions and symbols of the once hegemonic right have become self-conscious slogans with an increasingly *specific* social constituency. In the 1950s and 1960s, it was possible for many Thai conservatives to view the Thai left quite sincerely as a kind of alien minority ("really" Vietnamese, Chinese, or whatever), and the anticommunist struggle as a loftily national crusade. Today, such ideas have become less and less plausible even to the right. The events of October 6 have served to speed up the process whereby the right gradually concedes, almost without being aware of it, that it is engaged in *civil* war. In the long run, this change is likely to prove decisive, for modern history shows very clearly that no revolutionary movement succeeds unless it has won or been conceded the nationalist accolade.[106] ☆

Notes

1. See, for example, David Wilson, *Politics in Thailand* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), chapter IX; Fred W. Riggs, *Thailand: The Modernization of a Bureaucratic Polity* (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1966), Appendix B.

2. A liberal variant of this approach is to describe October 6 in Sisyphaean terms, as yet another in an endless series of frustrating failures to bring democratic government to Siam. For a nice example of this, see Frank C. Darling, "Thailand in 1976: Another Defeat for Constitutional Democracy," *Asian Survey*, XVII: 2 (February 1977), pp. 116-32. 3.

3. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, April 16, 1976, in its account of the April 1976 elections, spoke of "a spate of shootings, bombings and other violent incidents aimed mainly at left-wing and reformist parties." *Prachachart Weekly Digest*, 20 (March 16, 1976) and 21 (March 23, 1976), lists the names of close to fifty victims of political assassination in the period 1974-1976, all of them on the left.

4. On the repression following the "rebellion" of Phraya Song Suradet in 1938, see Wilson, *Politics in Thailand*, p. 261. On March 3, 1949, four well-known MPs and former cabinet ministers were murdered by Phao's police while being moved from one prison to another. See Samut Surakkhaka, *26 Kānpattiwat Thai lae Ratthaprahan* 2089-2507 (Twenty-six Thai Revolutions and Coups, 1546-1964) [Bangkok: Sue Kānphim, 1964], pp. 472-89. In December 1952, two prominent northeastern politicians, Thim Phuriphat and Tiang Sirikhan, disappeared. It was revealed later that they had been strangled by Phao's police. See Charles F. Keyes, *Isan: Regionalism in Northeastern Thailand* (Ithaca: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program Data Paper No. 65, 1967), p. 34; and Thak Chaloemtiarana, "The Sarit Regime, 1957-1963: The Formative Years of Modern Thai Politics" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1974), p. 118.

5. See, e.g., Thak, "The Sarit Regime," pp. 266-69, for accounts of the public executions of Suphachai Sisati on July 5, 1959; of Khrong Chandawong and Thongphan Sutthimat on May 31, 1961; and of Ruam Phromwong on April 24, 1962. One famous victim of the Thanom-Praphat era reached groups well beyond the circle of intellectuals and politicians. For example, an official inquiry in 1975 by the Ministry of the Interior, headed by the ministry's own inspector-general, confirmed student charges that in 1970-71 at least seventy people were summarily executed by the Communist Suppression Operations Command in Patthalung province. In the words of the report, "Communist suspects arrested by the soldiers were mostly executed. Previously, soldiers would have shot these suspects by the roadside [sic!]. But later they changed the style of killing and introduced the red oil drum massacre in order to eliminate all possible evidence. The sergeant would club the suspect until he fell unconscious, before dumping him in the oil drum and burning him alive." *Bangkok Post*, March 30, 1975. For indiscriminate napalming of minority Meo villages in the north, see Thomas A. Marks, "The Meo Hill Tribe Problem in Thailand," *Asian Survey*, XIII: 10 (October 1973), p. 932; and Ralph Thaxton, "Modernization and Peasant Resistance in Thailand," in Mark Selden, ed., *Remaking Asia* (New York: Pantheon, 1971), pp. 265-73, especially at p. 269.

6. These policemen, in civilian clothes, were escorted by police cars with flashing lights and motorcycle outriders. Aside from stealing brandy and cigarettes, they did an estimated $500,000 damage to Kukrit's palatial home. *New York Times*, August 20, 1975. At precisely the same moment, Thammasat University, spiritual home of student radicalism, was assaulted and put to the torch by the right-wing hooligans of the Red Gaurs (on whom see below)—with complete impunity.

7. The murder took place on February 28. See *Far Eastern Economic Review*, March 12, 1976; and Carl Trocki's article in this issue of the *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*.

8. On February 15, 1976, the moderate New Force party's Bangkok headquarters were fire-bombed by right-wing hooligans. See *Far Eastern Economic Review*, February 27, 1976. Though one of these hooligans got an arm blown off in the process, he was released by the police for "lack of evidence." On March 21, a bomb thrown into a mass of marchers in downtown Bangkok—they were demanding full removal of the American military presence—killed four people and wounded many others. See *Prachachart Weekly Digest*, 22 (March 30, 1976), p. 1.

9. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, April 9, 1976.

10. This is perhaps the place to emphasize that the present article, being centrally concerned with the emergence of *new* social formations and *new* cultural tendencies, deliberately pays little attention to these old ruling groups, or to such powerful bureaucratic institutions as the military and the Ministry of the Interior. The political roles of these groups and institutions have been extensively discussed in the literature on modern Thai politics, including other contributions to this issue of the *Bulletin*.

11. The phrase was, I think, coined by Riggs. See p. 11 of his *Thailand*. But the basic idea was central to Wilson's *Politics in Thailand*, the single most influential study of that era.

12. Thadeus Flood, in his excellent article, "The Thai Left Wing in Historical Context," *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* (April-June 1975), p. 55, quotes the following entertaining sentences from Wendell Blanchard et al., *Thailand* (New Haven: Human Relations Area File, 1957), pp. 484-85: "It is doubtful whether [Thai peasants] could conceive of a social situation without distinction between superior and inferior position. Peasants and others of low social status have never viewed such a social system as particularly unreasonable or severe, and there is no history in Thailand of general social oppression."

13. See G. William Skinner's *Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytic History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1957); and his *Leadership and Power in the Chinese Community in Thailand* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1958). Cf. Donald Hindley, "Thailand: The Politics of Passivity," *Pacific Affairs*, XLI: 3 (Fall 1968), pp. 366-67.

14. Frank C. Darling, *Thailand and the United States* (Washington: Public Affairs Press, 1965), p. 29, noted that, at the time of the 1932 coup that overthrew the absolute monarchy, 95% of the Thai economy was in the hands of foreigners and Chinese.

15. Over a quarter of a century the population of the metropolitan complex of Bangkok-Thonburi rose as follows:

1947	781,662
1960	1,800,678
1970	2,913,706
1972	3,793,763

See Ivan Mudannayake, ed., *Thailand Yearbook, 1975-76* (Bangkok: Temple Publicity Services, 1975), p. E28.

16. Darling, *Thailand*, pp. 29, 61, 170-71. By 1949, U.S. trade with Siam had increased by 2000% over the immediate prewar level. By the late 1950s the U.S. was buying 90% of Siam's rubber and most of its tin.

17. This line of analysis is developed more extensively in Thaxton, "Modernization," pp. 247-51.

18. Some indication of the scale of this tourism is suggested by the following figures:

	1965	1966	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974
Foreign Visitors (in thousands)	225.0	469.0	628.7	638.7	820.8	1037.7	1107.4
United States	78.3	133.3	159.2	147.0	151.6	161.4	156.8
(R&R)	(15.0)	(70.7)	(44.3)	(26.6)	(7.7)	(4.4)	(3.5)
Japan	17.3	42.9	47.0	55.8	93.5	151.9	132.7
Foreign exchange earnings from tourism (in millions of *baht*)	506	1770	2175	2214	2718	3399	4292
'(R&R)	(50)	(459)	(390)	(240)	(63)	(13)	(11)

Note: in gauging the significance of the figures for 1972-74, one must bear the then high rate of inflation in mind. Source: World Bank, "Thailand: Current Economic Prospects and Selected Development Issues," II (Statistical Appendix), November 14, 1975, table 8.7. Tourism was typically among the top eight foreign-exchange earning industries during these years.

19. The best single source on Sarit is Thak, "The Sarit Regime." For his role in the Americanization of the Thai military, see especially pp. 120-22. But Darling, *Thailand*, is very useful on the American side of the Sarit-Washington relationship.

20. Sarit was especially supportive of U.S. aggressiveness in Laos. Whereas Phibun had been born near Ayutthaya in Central Thailand, and was "central Thai" in his basic orientation, Sarit was a Northeasterner in many ways. His mother had come from Nongkhai on the Thai border with Laos, and he himself had spent part of his childhood there. Through her, he was closely related to Gen. Phoumi Nosavan, the Pentagon's perennial rightist-militarist candidate for strongman in Vientiane.

21. There had never been a national plan in the Phibun era. Siam's six-year First National Development Plan was developed under Sarit and formally inaugurated in 1961. On this plan, and the degree to which it abjectly followed the recommendations of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, see Pierre Fistié, *L'Evolution de la Thailande Contemporaine* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1967), pp. 334-35. But cf. Thak, "The Sarit Regime," pp. 327-28, for an argument that Sarit did not allow himself to be wholly guided by international technocrats.

22. While Phibun had been a virtual dictator in the late 1930s and early 1940s, during his second long term as Prime Minister, 1948-1957, he was in a much weaker position. The coup group of 1947 had brought him back as a sort of figurehead who could serve to give some international "class" to their regime. Phibun survived mainly because of U.S. support and his own astute balancing of the increasingly antagonistic factions of Police General Phao and General Sarit. By the coups of 1958 and 1959, Sarit destroyed the power of the police, and made the army, which he controlled, the undisputed master of Thai political life.

23. For a summary of Thai enticements to foreign investors, see Fistié, *L'Evolution*, p. 337.

24. According to the *New York Times*, April 14, 1968, there were then 46,000 troops in Thailand, as well as 5,000 troops a month on R&R from Vietnam. The *Nation*, October 2, 1967, listed 46,000 troops, 7,000 personnel in economic and propaganda activities, and 8 airbases.

25. Part of this transformation is shown by comparing employment in various sectors between 1960 and 1970:

	1960	1970	Change
Agriculture	11,300,000	13,200,000	(+ 17%)
Mining	30,000	87,000	(+ 290%)
Manufacturing	470,000	683,000	(+ 45%)
Construction	69,000	182,000	(+ 64%)
Commerce	779,000	876,000	(+ 13%)
Transport, storage, communications	166,000	268,000	(+ 62%)
Services	654,000	1,184,000	(+ 81%)

Rounded figures computed from Table 1.2 in World Bank, "Thailand," II (November 14, 1975). In the years 1960-1965 Gross National Income increased annually by 7.5%, Gross Domestic Investment by 14.4%. See Annex I of the "Report and Recommendation of the President of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development to the Executive Directors of the World Bank on a proposed loan to the Industrial Finance Corporation of Thailand." September 1, 1976. Clark Neher, "Stability and Instability in Contemporary Thailand," *Asian Survey*, XV:12 (December 1975), pp. 1100-01, gives an average 8.6% annual increase in GNP between 1959 and 1969.

26. See, e.g., Fistié, *L'Evolution*, p. 353; Robert J. Muscat, *Development Strategy in Thailand: A Study of Economic Growth* (New York: Praeger, 1966), p. 138.

27. See Thak, "The Sarit Regime," Appendix IV, for details and a sketch map.

28. Vivid evidence to this effect is provided by Howard Kaufman in his *Bangkhuad: A Community Study in Thailand* (Rutland, Vt. and Tokyo: Tuttle, 1976), pp. 219-220. Revisiting Bangkhuad, which he had studied in 1954 when it was still a small rural community on the fringes of Bangkok, he found seventeen years later that: whereas in 1954 a rai (1 rai = c.0.4 acres) was valued at 3000 baht (approximately $150), by 1971 it had gone up to 250,000 baht (approximately $12,500). In addition, the most valuable land was no longer the most fertile, but the land closest to the developing road system. Thak, "The Sarit Regime," pp. 337-38, notes that many peasants with land along the major highways were simply extruded without compensation by powerful officials and their accomplices.

29. See Anonymous, "The U.S. Military and Economic Invasion of Thailand," *Pacific Research*, I:1 (August 3, 1969), pp. 4-5, citing Department of Commerce, OBR 66-60, September 1966, p. 6. Neher, "Stability," p. 1110, speaks of tenancy and indebtedness having "jumped precipitously." Takeshi Motooka, in his *Agricultural Development in Thailand* (Kyoto: Kyoto University, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 1971), pp. 221ff., observes that: 1. According to the Thai government's 1963 agricultural survey, over 60.8% of the farmed land in the Central Plain was operated by full- or part-tenants. 2. From his own local study in a district of Pathum Thani province (very close to Bangkok), 90% of the operating farmers were tenants. On the other hand, the thesis of rapidly increasing tenancy has recently been strongly attacked by Laurence Stifel in his "Patterns of Land Ownership in Central Thailand during the Twentieth Century," *Journal of the Siam Society*, 64:1 (January 1976), pp. 237-74. For some comparative material on growing landlordism, indebtedness, and land-title manipulation in the Northern province of Chiengrai, see Michael Moerman, *Agricultural Change and Peasant Choice in a Thai Village* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), chapter V.

30. This flow, however, was extensive even before the onset of the boom. Mudannayake, ed., *Thailand Yearbook, 1975-76*, p. E 30, notes that in 1960 no less than one quarter of Bangkok's population had been born elsewhere.

31. A striking example of such "nonbureaucratic" *nouveaux riches* produced by this era was Mr. Thawit ("Dewitt") Klinprathum, head of the large Social Justice party in 1974-1976. The son of a poor government official, with not much more than a secondary school education, he started work at $10 a month as a bookkeeper. He later did stints as pedicab driver, shipping clerk, bus operator and so forth. As his official biography records, "While working on subcontracts from the Express and Transportation Organization (ETO—a state-owned corporation intimately tied to JUSMAG) unloading and transporting equipment, he realized the need for trailers. With the money he had saved and credit from the bank, he purchased two trailers to deliver heavy machinery and equipment. . . . He started carrying equipment for the Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group (JUSMAG) and Accelerated Rural Development (ARD). Mr. Dewitt chose the right time to buy his trailers because mechanization was becoming necessary for economic development. With no other local companies possessing trailers and cranes his company, Trailer Transport Company, secured a contract for transporting military equipment. . . . His godown expanded and his trailers and trucks numbered in the hundreds *as the transportation network in the country expanded.*" *Bangkok Post*, December 24, 1974 (special advertisement paid for by the Social Justice party). Italics added. By 1974, "Dewitt" was a multimillionaire with an eight-story office building to himself.

32. The figures in the two right-hand columns are likely to be too low. Category E, in particular, must include numbers of rural merchants and businessmen, though there is no way of telling even roughly how many.

33. Neher, "Stability," p. 1101; Frank C. Darling, "Student Protest and Political Change in Thailand," *Pacific Affairs*, 47: 1 (Spring 1974), p. 6. To understand class formation in a capitalist society like Thailand's, it is important to study the "non-productive" elements (schoolchildren, students, etc.). To build and to perpetuate their positions/wealth, the new bourgeois and petty bourgeois groups steer their children into the educational institutions. You only know when a *class* has really come to exist (rather than a suddenly rising elite) when you see "privileged kids"—and two generations of power. Aristocracies can consolidate themselves by intermarriage; bourgeoisies cannot, at least not to the same degree. Education tends to replace marriage.

34. See Darling, "Student Protest," p. 6. These figures should be understood in the context of the budgetary statistics cited by Thak, "The Sarit Regime," pp. 437-38, which show the expenditures on the ministries of Education, Defense and the Interior as percentages of the total budget over the years 1953-1973. For brevity's sake I will give only his computations for the years 1958-1973.

	1958	*1959*	*1960*	*1961*	*1962*	*1963*	*1964*	*1965*
Education	4.6	18.4	17.3	15.4	14.9	15.6	15.4	15.3
Defense	10.2	19.6	17.8	16.6	16.9	15.6	15.4	15.5
Interior	7.0	16.3	15.1	15.0	13.9	14.3	15.5	16.9
	1966	*1967*	*1968*	*1969*	*1970*	*1971*	*1972*	*1973*
Education	14.3	13.2	5.8	5.5	5.9	6.2	6.0	6.7
Defense	15.0	13.6	15.3	15.7	17.0	17.9	18.2	18.2
Interior	17.1	15.6	20.7	21.3	20.7	21.5	22.1	23.5

When one remembers that the costs of primary education came out of the Interior Ministry's budgets, the scale of expenditures on secondary and tertiary education (represented by the Education Ministry's budgets) is rather startling.

35. Kaufman, *Bangkhuad*, p. 220, notes that in this community, very close to Bangkok, only 6% of the teenage cohort was attending any form of secondary school in 1954.

36. See, e.g., David K. Wyatt, *The Politics of Reform in Thailand: Education in the Reign of King Chulalongkorn* (New Haven:

Yale University Press, 1969), chapter 1; and his earlier "The Buddhist Monkhood as an Avenue of Social Mobility in Traditional Thai Society," *Sinlapakorn*, 10 (1966), pp. 41-52.

37. Cf. above, p. 16. Kaufman, *Bangkhuad*, p. 220, comments that by 1971 60% of the community's teenage cohort was enrolled in secondary schools.

38. Kaufman, ibid., pp. 229-31, has some excellent material on this topic. Hans Dieter-Evers, "The Formation of a Social Class Structure: Urbanization, Bureaucratization, and Social Mobility in Thailand," in Clark D. Neher, *Modern Thai Politics* (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman, 1976), pp. 201-205, indicates that this tendency had been in the making from the period of the 1932 coup on. From the sample of higher civil servants he studied, 26% of those who entered government service before 1933 had foreign university degrees, while the figure was 93% for those entering after World War II.

39. The degree of mobility imagined possible is what needs underlining here, i.e., the change in public consciousness. Real mobility was, unsurprisingly, less spectacular, as Kraft's sample survey indicates:

Occupations of Parents of University Students (c. 1968)

Parents' Occupation	No. Enrolled	% Enrolled
Proprietors & Self-Employed	4,508	53.72
Government Officials	2,020	25.12
Employees	657	8.19
Agriculturalists	580	7.31
Others	437	5.31
Unknown	29	.35
Total Population of Study	8,231	100.00

Source: Richard Kraft, *Education in Thailand: Student Background and University Admission* (Bangkok: Educational Planning Office, Ministry of Education, 1968), cited in Mudannayke, ed., *Thailand Yearbook, 1975-76*, p. I 17. Kraft estimated that the children of government officials had a 268 times better chance of being admitted to a university (and those of manufacturers and industrialists a 36 times better chance) than children of farm families.

40. True to the general shift in world power from Europe to the U.S. after World War II, the acme of the Thai educational pyramid came to be university schooling in California, Indiana, and New York, rather than London or Paris. Harvey H. Smith et al., *Area Handbook for Thailand* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 175, for example, state that in 1966 of 4,000 Thai youngsters studying abroad, 1,700 were doing so in the U.S. (There is good reason to believe that both figures are unrealistically low.) As late as 1955, the total number of Thai studying abroad had been only 1,969 (Evers, "Formation," p. 202).

41. See, e.g., Thanet Aphornsuwan, "Khwām Khluanwai Khōng nak suksā Thai nai yukh raek (The Thai Student Movement in the Early Period," in Witthayakorn Chiengkun et al., *Khabuankān nak suksā Thai chāk adit tung patchuban* (The Thai Student Movement from the Past to the Present) (Bangkok: Samnakphim Prachan Siao, 1974), p. 28; and Sawai Thongplai, "Some Adults' Ideas about Some Youngsters," *Prachachart Weekly Digest*, 22 (March 30, 1976), pp. 15-18.

42. Neher, "Stability," p. 1101; Darling, "Student Protest," pp. 8-9.

43. Compare the following figures on the Bangkok consumer price index (1962=100): 1964, 102.9; 1965, 103.8; 1966, 107.7; 1967, 112.0; 1968, 114.4; 1969, 116.8; 1970, 117.7; 1971, 120.1; 1972, 124.9; 1973, 139.5; 1974, 172.0; Jan/Aug 1975, 176.4. Figures adapted from World Bank, "Thailand" (1975), II, table 9.1. Neher, "Stability," p. 1100, gives an inflation rate of 15% for 1972 and 24% for 1974.

44. It is significant that, when the twin dictators finally held national elections in 1969, the civilian opposition Democrat party, in some ways a mirror of the new bourgeois strata, swept every seat in Bangkok. This sweep should be seen as a portent for middle-class participation in the events of October 14, 1973. On the Democrat sweep, see J. L. S. Girling, "Thailand's New Course," *Pacific Affairs*, XLII: 3 (Fall 1969), especially at p. 357.

45. The important thing to note here is the size of the final demonstrations against the Thanom-Praphat regime. Neher, "Stability," p. 1103, gives a figure of 500,000—a mass demonstration without parallel in earlier Thai history.

46. Gross Domestic Investment, which had grown at an annual rate of 14.4% in 1960-1965, and 13.5% in 1965-1970, dropped to 5.1% in 1970-1975. The balance of payments situation deteriorated rapidly from 1973 on.

Year	Net Balance of Payments in U.S. $ millions
1973	−50
1974	−90
1975	−618
1976 (est.)	−745

Source: Annex I of "Report and Recommendation of the President of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development," September 1, 1976.

47. Strikes and unionizing had been virtually outlawed by Sarit, both to crush left-wing opposition and to encourage foreign investment. Neher, "Stability," p. 1100 notes that "Over 2,000 labor strikes were carried out in 1973, almost all of them *after* [my italics] the October 1973 uprising, and some 1,500 strikes were counted in the first six months of 1974. In contrast, during the three-year period between 1969 and 1972 a total of only 100 strikes occurred." The Sanya government raised the 60¢ minimum wage, first to $1.00 and later (October 1974) to $1.25 a day. *Indochina Chronicle*, May-June 1975.

48. The profit margins of some poorly managed Thai concerns certainly depended directly on the extremely cheap labor the dictatorship guaranteed.

49. In 1966, only 5% of 30,672 manufacturing enterprises registered with the government employed more than 50 persons. Smith et al., *Area Handbook*, p. 360.

50. "Strangely enough, vocational school graduates have a difficult time finding jobs. In the rural areas, only 25 percent are able to find jobs and in the greater Bangkok area the situation is not much better, with only about 50 percent able to find employment." Mudannayake, ed., *Thailand Yearbook, 1975-76*, p.I 10.

51. Highly significant is the fact that in the 1973-76 period perhaps the most militant of all labor unions was the Hostel and Hotel Workers' Union, led by the well-known activist Therdphum Chaidee. (By 1976, there were at least 50 first-class hotels alone in Siam, employing more than 30,000 workers. *Bangkok Post*, May 22, 1975.) No one sees more bitterly than a badly paid water or chambermaid how luxuriously some of their fellow-countrymen really live. It is revealing that the main targets of union militancy were not foreign-owned or Chinese hotels (which were usually quite willing to recognize the union and deal with it in a reasonable way), but those owned by Thai (old and new rich), who insisted on treating their employees in patronal style. The most violent strike of 1975 erupted at the downtown luxury Dusit Thani hotel, when the Thai management hired Red Gaur gunmen as strike-breakers. See the account given in the *Bangkok Post*, May 30, 1975, which also quotes Prime Minister Kukrit Pramote's strong criticism of what he called a "private army."

52. Chaktip Nitibhon, "Urban Development and Industrial Estates in Thailand," in Prateep Sondysuvan, ed., *Finance, Trade and Economic Development in Thailand* (Bangkok: Sompong Press, 1975), p. 249, notes that between 1967 and 1971 the number of vehicles registered in Bangkok rose by 15% p.a. (road surfaces increased by 1%). In 1973, with over 320,000 vehicles registered, Siam's capital contained more than half of the national total.

53. See, e.g., Somporn Sangchai, "Thailand: Rising of the Rightist Phoenix" [sic], in *Southeast Asian Affairs 1976* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1976), pp. 361-62.

54. "Police said about 300 students from Uthane Thawai Construction School, armed with bombs, clubs, guns and other weapons, marched [yesterday] to Pathumwan Engineering School in front of the National Stadium where they engaged in a point blank-range fight with 300 Pathumwan students." (*The Nation*, June 17, 1975.) Some earlier and subsequent confrontations include the following: (i) On October 29, 1974, a small boy was killed and fourteen people injured by a bomb thrown during a clash between students from the Dusit Construction, Nonthaburi Engineering and Bangsorn Engineering schools. (*Bangkok Post*, December 9, 1975.) (ii) On December 26, one student was killed and several injured in a fight conducted with bombs and rifles between boys from the Bangsorn Engineering and Northern Bangkok Engineering schools. (*The Nation*, December 27, 1974.) (iii) Three students suffered severe knife and gunshot wounds after a brawl between gangs from the Dusit Construction and Archivasilpa schools on December 27, 1974. (*Bangkok Post*, December 28, 1974.) A further bottle-bomb, rifle and grenade battle between Bangsorn and Northern Bangkok on January 22, 1975, led to the death of a *Bangkok Post* cameraman. (*Bangkok Post*, January 23 and 24, 1975.) (iv) On June 12, two students died in a

series of bottle- and plastic-bomb melees between boys from the Rama VI Engineering, Bangsorn Engineering, Uthane Thawai Construction, Nonthaburi Engineering, Pathumwan Engineering and other vocational schools. (*The Nation*, June 13, 1975.) (v) On June 18, after a quarrel between Archivasilpa students and bus and construction workers, the students fire-bombed some buses, causing serious injuries. (*The Nation*, June 19, 1975.) Of these schools, only Rama VI had a somewhat political (left-wing) reputation.

55. *Bangkok Post*, June 1, 1975. Italics added.

56. Personal communications. Compare note 50 above for unemployment rates among vocational school graduates.

57. Two of the better-known leaders of the Red Gaur clusters are directly connected to ISOC: they are Praphan Wongkham, identified as "a 27-year-old employee of the Internal Security Operations Command"; and Suebsai Hasdin, son of Special Colonel Sudsai Hasdin, formerly in charge of ISOC's Hill Tribes Division. *Bangkok Post*, June 1, 1975; and Norman Peagam, "Rumblings from the Right," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 25, 1975. It is known that other Red Gaur groups were controlled by General Withoon Yasawat, former leader of the CIA-hired Thai mercenary forces in Laos, and General Chatchai Choonhawan, brother-in-law of the late Police General Phao, top figure in the Chat Thai party, and Foreign Minister in the Kukrit Pramote government (March 1975-April 1976). It should be noted that ISOC had also heavily infiltrated the section of the Education Ministry in charge of vocational education, and was the clandestine paymaster and manipulator of the NVSCT (National Vocational Student Center of Thailand), a small, aggressively right-wing antagonist of the large NSCT (National Student Center of Thailand), vanguard of left-wing student activism during the liberal era.

58. While the bulk of the Red Gaurs were probably petty bourgeois in origin (working class Thai were much less likely to get their children as far as high school or vocational school), it is possible even likely that some were recruited from the migrant unemployed population alluded to on p. 14 of this article.

59. Prime Minister Thanin Kraiwichien, in a radio broadcast on October 17, 1976, observed that: "Another group of people facing poverty are the seasonal workers, laborers, *new graduates* and other unemployed people. The unemployed now number over 1 million." *FBIS* (Foreign Broadcast Information Service) Daily Report, October 18, 1976. Italics added.

60. They played an important role in intimidating liberal and left-wing elements during the 1976 election campaign; in expelling student activists trying to organize peasant and tenants' unions in the villages; in demanding the resignation of the Seni Pramote government's three "progressive" ministers (Surin Masdit, Chuen Leekphai, and Damrong Latthaphiphat) on the eve of the October 6, 1976, coup; and in the violence of October 6 itself. See, e.g., Sarika Krirkchai, "Do Not Corrupt the Village Scouts," in *Prachachart Weekly Digest*, 23 (April 6, 1976), pp. 14-15.

61. Much of the information on the Village Scouts contained in the following sentences is drawn from the illuminating, detailed article by Natee Pisalchai, "Village Scouts," in *Thai Information Resource* (Australia), No. 1 (May 1977), pp. 34-37.

62. Thak, "The Sarit Regime," pp. 414-425, offers instructive material on three such techniques. First, the king stepped up both the absolute number of weddings at which he officiated and the relative number involving bourgeois, as opposed to royal, aristocratic or military partners. Second, by the deft distribution of official decorations the monarch was able to levy very large sums of money from the new bourgeois strata in the form of donations for charitable (and, after 1966, anti-communist) organizations and campaigns. (However, contributions were also elicited even from poor pedicab drivers, essentially for "populist" image-making purposes.) Third, the ruler increased his personal contacts with circles outside officialdom to a very pronounced degree.

Frequency of the King's Contacts with Non-Official Groups

Year	Private Sector Function	Citizen/Group Audience	Meeting with Students	Meeting with Subjects
1956	17	1	–	–
1961	35	45	3	–
1966	71	116	9	5
1971	121	191	10	31

Table adapted from "The Sarit Regime," p. 422. As Thak rightly observed, all this activity "clearly indicates that the throne was developing links with the rising (private) middle-class sector."

63. Natee notes that of his 496 fellow-applicants for admission to the Scouts branch in Nakhon Pathom in September 1976, 70% were between the ages 35-42, 2-5% were young people, and most of the rest in their sixties and seventies. He adds that "most of the people who joined the program were reasonably well-off." See "Village Scouts," pp. 34-35. Indeed, this would have had to have been so, for the trainees were required to: buy expensive badges and colored group photographs; contribute 40-50 baht daily for food; make religious donations; and pay for the elaborate costumes used for the beauty and dance competitions. (Ibid., p. 36.)

64. While the provincial governor was usually the local chairman of the Scouts, financing was deliberately left up to prestige- and status-conscious local notables. (Ibid., pp. 34-35.)

65. For a good description, see ibid., pp. 34 and 37. Natee's group was taken to visit the Naresuan paratroop training camp near the royal resort town of Hua Hin. (These paratroops worked closely with the Village Scouts in the violence of October 6.) Some idea of the style of instruction given to the trainees may be gleaned from the songs they were required to learn. These included: "Wake up, Thai!", "Ode to the Queen Mother," "Ode to the King," "They Are Like Our Father and Mother," "Punctuality," and "Any Work!" Themes of plays put on included scenes of communists being tormented in hell.

66. In June 1975, a rather spectacular strike of 2,000 "security guards" at various U.S. bases took place. The guards not only demanded government guarantees for their future livelihood, but accused the Supreme Command of embezzling over 8,000,000,000 baht (= $400,000,000) of their U.S.-supplied severance pay—charges that Supreme Command Chief of Staff General Kriangsak Chamanan hastily denied. *The Nation*, June 19 and 21, 1975. The NSCT strongly supported the guards' demands, and, curiously enough, developed close working relations with some of them.

67. One must imagine the shock experienced in such circles when, on January 22, 1975, the official residence of the governor of Nakhon Si Thammarat, Khlai Chitphithak, was burned to the ground by an angry crowd of about 3,000 people. The governor, widely suspected of corruption and incompetence in the handling of relief supplies for the victims of recent severe flooding, had to flee secretly to Bangkok. *Bangkok Post*, January 23 and 24, 1975.

68. I say this in spite of the material assembled in Flood's fine "Thai Left Wing." Flood ably shows the real element of continuity on the Thai left, but also, possibly inadvertently, how oppressed and marginal that left was until quite recently.

69. This applies no less to the Communist Party of Thailand in the maquis than to left-wing elements attempting to participate in parliamentary-style politics. It is true that in the 1930s the monarchy went through a difficult time, to the point that Rama VII went into self-imposed exile in England. But there seems to have been no question of getting rid of the monarchy as such, merely of bringing it into conformity with internationally-respectable standards of constitutionality.

70. It was only in 1894 that a modern-style Ministry of Defense was set up.

71. The *facts* of this reliance are a commonplace of modern Siamese historiography. They are traditionally *interpreted*, however, in good bien-pensant fashion, as signs of the "modernity" and "progressiveness" of the rulers. For a very instructive picture of how Siam's Northeast (Isan) was subjugated by Bangkok in the reigns of Rama V, VI and VII, see Keyes, *Isan*, chapter III ("The Consolidation of Thai [sic] Control"). He stresses the importance of external peace, extension of rail, road, telegraph, and telephone systems, and "modern" state-controlled education.

72. The effect of European imperialism on the Thai monarchy was important in two other ways. First, it changed the effective principle of succession from political capacity and seniority to quasi-primogeniture. It is unlikely that Rama VI or VII would have come to the throne under pre-imperialist conditions, as they lacked much real politico-military competence. Second, it put an end to the possibility of a new dynasty. Realization of this must have begun about the turn of the century. Able, ruthless figures like Phibun and Sarit, in many ways very similar types to Rama I, could no longer start new royal lines. In Phibun's expansionist and irredentist policies of the late 1930s and early 1940s, however, one can see clear dynastic lineaments. He was, as it were, restoring Greater Siam (bits of Burma, Cambodia, Laos and Malaya), as Taksin and Rama I had done before him.

73. See Wilson, *Politics in Thailand*, p. 18.

74. There are curious parallels here—which may not entirely

have escaped Phibunsongkhram's attention—to the shogun's relationship to the Emperor in Tokugawa Japan.

75. Among the important prizes at stake in the power struggles of traditional Laos and Siam were certain highly-venerated, magically-charged objects (Buddha images in particular), referred to by many Western historians of Siam as palladia. After 1932, one detects a developing interest in control of the monarch-as-sacred-object. The tendency was probably facilitated by the domestic circumstances of the royal family. In the late 1930s and early 1940s Rama VIII was a minor and mostly at school overseas. (In effect, there was then almost no *bodily* royal presence in Siam.) Shortly after World War II he returned home, but almost immediately died of a gunshot wound under circumstances that are still mysterious. He was succeeded by his younger brother, the present king, who was then still a minor and thus incapable of playing an independent political role.

Palladium-ization achieved a certain spectacular climax in 1971, when Marshal Thanom appeared on television after organizing a coup against his own government, and solemnly opened before the viewers a purported letter of approval from the palladium, brought in on a gold tray.

76. He did, however, make efforts to clothe himself with Buddhist legitimacy, especially at nervous moments. In 1956, for example, when his regime was nearing its end, he had 1,239 temples restored at government expense. (In 1955 the number had been only 413, and a puny 164 in 1954.) See Thak, "The Sarit Regime," p. 128. He also spent a great deal of money on the 25th Centennial of the Buddhist Era celebrations (1957), and attempted to keep the monarchy from sharing in the resulting glory. In return, the palace pointedly disassociated itself from the proceedings. Ibid., pp. 129-30.

77. For a description of Phibunsongkhram's "restoration of democracy," which culminated in the rigged elections of 1957, see Wilson, *Politics in Thailand*, pp. 29-31. It is one of the oddest ironies of modern Thai political history that the famous Democracy Monument in downtown Bangkok, the central visual symbol of the October 14, 1973, demonstrations and student activism thereafter, was constructed by Siam's most durable dictator.

78. This side of Sarit's manipulation of traditional symbols is analyzed in Thak, "The Sarit Regime," pp. 397-402. In late 1959 and early 1960, the king and queen left the country for the first time to visit Saigon, Djakarta and Rangoon. Between June 1960 and January 1961, they visited the U.S., England, West Germany, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Italy, Belgium, France, Luxembourg and the Netherlands (note that half of these countries are monarchies of sorts). Before Sarit's death at the end of 1963, further visits had taken place to Malaysia, Pakistan, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and the Philippines. International "recognition" of the Thai monarchy followed with visits by royalty from Malaysia and Great Britain.

79. Ibid., pp. 410-25, for excellent details. Thak also notes the organized and direct participation of the royal family in anticommunist and counterinsurgency propaganda campaigns.

80. Sarit's willingness to take personal responsibility for executions and other regime violence accords well with the style of pre-nineteenth century Thai monarchs.

81. See Mahāmakuta Educational Council, ed., *Acts on the Administration of the Buddhist Order of Sangha* (Bangkok: The Buddhist University, 1963) for full texts of the 1962 regulations and the regime (dating back to 1941) they replaced. The 1941 system was tripartite, with authority divided between legislative, executive and judicial branches. The 1962 system created a single administrative-judicial hierarchy. As Yoneo Ishii rightly says, the new rules completely eliminated "the idea of democracy which had been the spirit of the previous law." (See his "Church and State in Thailand," *Asian Survey*, VIII: 10 [October 1968], p. 869). They also permitted, I believe for the first time, the arrest of monks by the lay authorities (police) without consultation with the Sangha authorities.

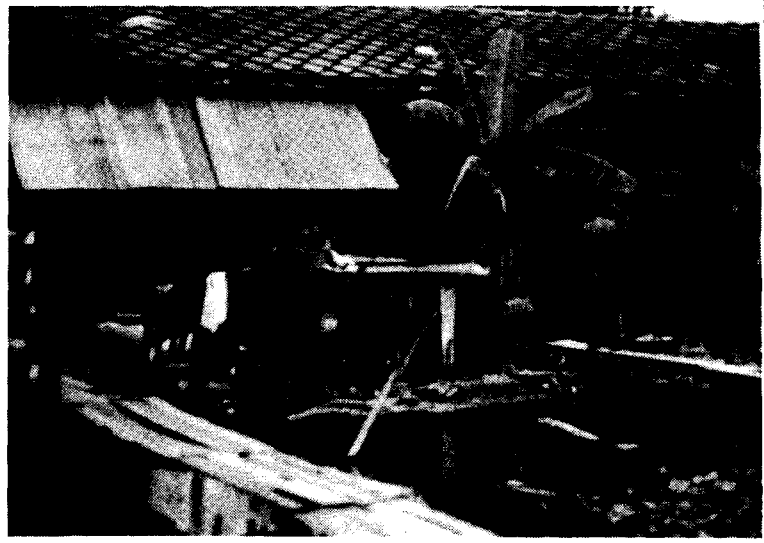
82. On this case, see Somporn, "Rightist Phoenix," p. 384; and S. J. Tambiah, *World Conqueror and World Renouncer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp. 257-60. Though the two men, Phra Phimonladham and Phra Sasanasophon, were completely exonerated by the courts, the Sangha hierarchs were too timid, venal or jealous to restore them to their former positions. After October 1973, a quiet campaign for their rehabilitation was begun, initially to little effect. Then on January 12, 1975, in an action unprecedented in modern Thai history, a number of young monks began a hunger strike at Wat Mahathat in Bangkok, refusing to take food till the Supreme Patriarch agreed to reopen the case (*The Nation*, January 13, 1975). The strike caused a sensation, and, on January 17, the Supreme Patriarch surrendered, promising rehabilitation within the month. (*Bangkok Post*, January 18, 1975.) On January 30, a specially-appointed Sangha committee finally cleared the two men. (*Bangkok Post*, February 23, 1976.)

The Supreme Patriarch who connived with Sarit in the original frameup, Somdet Phra Ariyawongsakhatayan, died a gruesome death in a traffic accident on December 18, 1971. Many Thai regarded his end as retribution for abuse of power.

83. See Charles F. Keyes, "Buddhism and National Integration in Thailand," *Journal of Asian Studies*, XXX: 3 (May 1971), pp. 551-67, especially pp. 559-65; also Ishii, "Church and State," pp. 864-71.

84. When the Buddhism-promoting Sarit died, it came out that he had accumulated a $140 million fortune by corrupt practices and maintained perhaps as many as 80 mistresses. See Thak, "The Sarit Regime," pp. 427-30, who also cites much of the contemporary Thai literature on the scandal.

85. This is naively illustrated by the section "Education and Society," in Smith et al., *Area Handbook*, pp. 175-77.



86. See Chatcharintr Chaiyawat's article, "Protests divide the monkhood," in the *Bangkok Post*, February 23, 1975, for some useful material on this. Cf. Kaufman, *Bangkhuad*, pp. 224-26, for comparable data in a local community setting. Sarcastic comment on misconduct by high-ranking monks began to be heard publicly around 1971. See, e.g., Phra Maha Sathienpong Punnawanno, "Phra Song Thai nai Rob 25 Pi (The Thai Sangha Over 25 Years)," in *Sangkhomsat Parithat* (Social Science Review), IX, 6 (December 1971), p. 28. For this citation I am indebted to an unpublished paper, "The Buddhist Monkhood in Thai Politics" by Mr. Somboon Suksamran. During the series of protests and demonstrations that led to the overthrow of Thanom and Praphat, monks were increasingly in attendance as sympathetic observers.

87. On November 29, 1974, a group of 100 monks, with arms linked, actually formed the front line for a massive demonstration by peasants who had come to Bangkok eleven days earlier to press demands for land reform. Somboon Suksamran, "The Buddhist Monkhood," p. 6. Predictably, this move aroused a rabid reaction in the "moderate" and right-wing press, which straightfacedly insisted that the Sangha had always been above politics and should remain so. On December 8, the "radical" monk Phra Maha Jad Khongsuk announced the formation of a Federation of Thai Buddhists to promote democratization of the Sangha and orientation of Buddhist education towards social service. *Prachathipatai*, December 9, 1974; see also *Bangkok Post*, December 10-12, 1974. The hunger strike referred to in note 82 above, which occurred in January 1975, was organized by a group called Yuwasong (Young Monks), which had learned a good deal about political organization from the NSCT since 1974.

88. See, e.g., Phra Maha Jad Khongsuk's speech to the Seminar on "Is Thailand a Genuinely Buddhist Country?", published in *Phā Tat Phutsasana* (Operating on Buddhism) (Bangkok: Pharbsuwan Press, 1974), pp. 48-49, cited in Somboon Suksamran, "The Buddhist Monkhood," p. 22.

89. The best account of Kitti Wuttho's career and political ideas that I have seen is in Charles F. Keyes, "Political Crisis and Militant Buddhism in Contemporary Thailand," in Bordwell Smith, ed., *Religion and Legitimation of Power in Thailand, Burma, and Laos* (Chambersburg, Pa.: Wilson, 1977, forthcoming). This essay includes a fine analysis of Kitti Wuttho's famous 1976 speech, "Killing Communists Is Not Demeritorious." Keyes quotes the speech as follows: "[Killing communists is not killing persons] because whoever destroys the nation, the religion, or the monarchy, such bestial types are not complete persons. Thus, we must intend not to kill people but to kill the Devil (Māra); this is the duty of all Thai. . . . It is just like when we kill a fish to make a stew to place in the alms bowl for a monk. There is certainly demerit in killing the fish, but we place it in the alms bowl of a monk and gain much greater merit." Keyes' translation is of Kitti Wuttho's *Khā Khōmmūnit mai bāp*ı (Bangkok: Abhidhamma Foundation of Wat Mahādhātu, 1976). In spite of the vociferous protests of the liberal press, the NSCT, and others at the "anti-Buddhist" nature of this speech and Kitti Wuttho's membership in the secretive ultra-right-wing organization Nawaphon (for which, see below at note 94), the Sangha hierarchy refused to administer even a mild reprimand, though earlier they had arranged to have Jad Khongsuk and others (temporarily) expelled from their monasteries for "political activities unbecoming a monk."

90. See Thanet, "Khwām Khluanwai," p. 30.

91. See Neher, "Stability," p. 1101.

92. Of crucial importance were the varied works of the brilliant Marxist historian, poet, linguist, essayist and social critic Chit Phumisak, killed by agents of the dictatorship at the early age of 36. Most of his works had either been suppressed shortly after publication or existed only in manuscript from prior to 1974. Indeed even the mention of Chit's name was publicly taboo under the Thanom-Praphat regime. In 1974-75, however, his *Chomna Sakdina Thai* (The Face of Thai Feudalism) had gone through three editions and become the bible of a whole generation of radicalized youth.

93. Syptomatic are the following enraged remarks delivered by the Thanin regime's Public Relations Office on November 6, 1976: "Our culture, upheld by our ancestors and customs [sic], was neglected, considered obsolete and regarded as a dinosaur or other extinct creature. Some had no respect for their parents, and students disregarded their teachers. They espoused a foreign ideology without realizing that such action is dangerous to our culture and did not listen to the advice of those who have much knowledge of that ideology. National security was frequently threatened over the past 3 years. Anyone who expressed concern for the national security was mocked and regarded as a wasted product of the bureaucratic society by those who labeled themselves as progressive-minded. . . ." *FBIS* Daily Report, November 8, 1976.

94 It is interesting that an important component of the ultra-rightist organization Nawaphon, founded in 1974 (of which Prime Minister Thanin is reputed to be a member), was (and is) middle-aged and elderly university professors. Many of these men, with M.A. degrees from second-rate foreign universities and long records of toadying to the dictatorship, were outraged by the openly critical, even contemptuous way they were regarded by younger men (often with Ph.D. degrees from good universities, and influenced by the idealism of the anti-war movement). In a number of important cases, senior university officials were deposed for corruption, scandalous laziness and incompetence, and spying on students for the state bureaucracy. On Nawaphon, see, e.g., Keyes, "Political Crisis," pp. 8-12.

95. The first case was that of left-wing student activist Praderm Damrongcharoen, accused of slyly attacking the king in a poem written for an obscure student magazine. Praderm was fortunate to be acquitted finally at the end of February 1975 (see *The Nation,* March 1, 1975, for details). The second was that of the journalist Seni Sungnat, charged with insulting the queen by criticizing one of her speeches in the pages of the rabidly rightist *Dao Sayam.* Seni was sentenced to two years in prison on February 4, 1976. (See *Prachachart Weekly Digest,* 15 [February 10, 1976], p. 36.) The punishment of a right-wing journalist is a clear indication that the lèse majesté prosecutions were not simply cynical conservative maneuvers against the left, but stemmed from genuine cultural-ideological panic.

96. Kaufman, *Bangkhuad,* pp. 229-31, is good on this conflict in a local community setting.

97. The Thanom-Praphat government immediately reopened diplomatic relations with Phnom Penh, and in the summer of 1970 came very close to sending Thai troops into Cambodia in support of the Lon Nol regime and the U.S.-South Vietnamese "incursions." Even in the early 1950s, when the Khmer monarch Norodom Sihanouk had come to Bangkok in the course of his "Royal Crusade" for Cambodian independence, the Phibunsongkhram government treated him with scarcely-veiled contempt. See Roger M. Smith, *Cambodia's Foreign Policy* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1965), p. 48. Nonetheless, political change in Cambodia was not left wholly unexploited over the border. Kitti Wuttho, for example, justified his anti-communist militancy in part on the grounds of alleged communist massacres of Khmer monks during the final stages of the Cambodian civil war.

98. At that time, the military alone owned more than half the radio stations in the country and all but one of the TV stations in Bangkok, according to The National Anti-Fascism Front of Thailand, "Three Years of Thai Democracy," in *Thailand Information Resource,* No. 1 (May 1977), p. 3.

99. Pramarn, a well-known partner of Japanese big business, is a brother-in-law of the late unlamented Police General Phao Siyanon, whose brutalities in the late 1940s and early 1950s have been briefly detailed above on p. 2.

100. Natee, "Village Scouts," p. 35, claims that several hours before these murders took place the Village Scout training camp at Nakhon Pathom had staged a mock killing and hanging of the corpses of "bad students." He also avers that some of the real-life murderers had come from this camp.

101. The Bo-Tree courtyard had become a national symbol of resistance to dictatorship, for it was from this courtyard that the demonstrations started which overthrew Thanom and Praphat in October 1973.

102. It is worth noting that *Dao Sayam,* founded by a typical nouveau riche figure, ran a regular Village Scout activities column. Wealthy donors and activists could see their names given good publicity and even intermingled with those of royalty, aristocrats and important government officials. The newspaper was thus the logical place to launch a swift, violent Village Scout mobilization campaign.

103. The eminence grise of the Armored Division Radio, Col. Utharn Sanidwong na Ayutthaya, is a relative of the queen—and thus of the crown prince. See *Far Eastern Economic Review* February 11, 1977. His key role in the fabrications of October 5-6 is an indication of the complicity of the palace in the overthrow of the parliamentary constitutional regime. Another effective hate-monger was Dr. Uthit Naksawat, Cornell University graduate and President of the Chomrom Witthayu Seri (Independent Radio Group of Thailand).

104. It is a bizarre, but characteristic, sign of the almost cosmological panic involved that the Thanin regime should have banned the teaching of *all* (i.e., even right-wing) forms of political theory in Thai schools. See *New York Times* October 21, 1976; and *Far Eastern Economic Review,* November 5, 1976.

105. This is clear from recent broadcasts over the maquis radio and from clandestine leaflets circulating in Bangkok. Interestingly enough, there are indications that certain dissatisfied right-wing groups are becoming increasingly critical, if not of the monarchy as an institution, at least of the present incumbent and his consort.

106. I hope I have made it clear that, in the analysis presented in this article, I have deliberately focussed on the *new* elements in the Thai political constellation. I certainly do not mean to suggest that the new bourgeois strata are more than a secondary element in the Bangkok power structure; they are probably even an *unreliable* secondary element from the point of view of the ruling cliques. It is instructive that, after the October 6 coup, the junta returned as far as possible to the old "administrative" style of repression. The Red Gaurs were silenced or packed off to combat zones in the North, Northeast and South (where they reportedly suffered severe casualties). Nawaphon was encouraged to crawl back into the woodwork. Col. Utharn has been removed from control of the Armored Division Radio. The generals currently on top—"moderates" all—would probably like to run the regime in the Sarit-Thanom-Praphat style. But one suspects that this may no longer prove feasible. The new bourgeois strata are there, the new provincial landlords are there—and these erstwhile allies cannot be safely ignored or discarded. Nor, probably, can the problems of these strata be solved by the generals. The boom is unlikely ever to return with its old elan; the ideological seamlessness of the past cannot be restored; unemployment swells; the bureaucracy grows ever more congested and and expensive; the university paradox is seemingly insoluble. The new right-wing groups have experienced participation and it is improbable that they can be totally excluded from it again. The genie has been let out of the bottle and it will be very difficult for the junta or its successors to put it back again for good.

The Vietnamese Refugees in Thailand: Minority Manipulation in Counterinsurgency

by E. Thadeus Flood

Introduction

The purpose of this brief survey is to clarify the political role of the Vietnamese minority in recent Thai history. The importance of this subject derives from the long-held but unexamined assumption on the part of the Thai ruling classes and, since World War II, U.S. academic ideologues of neo-colonialism, that social revolution is somehow extraneous to Thai history. If it does rear its ugly head—so the thinking goes—it must be the result of transborder subversion and not of factors indigenous to Thai social history. One villain in this piece of wishful thinking—and the principal one since the 1950s—has been the Vietnamese revolutionary movement. The immediate scapegoats have been those militant anti-imperialist Vietnamese who took temporary refuge in Thailand from the destructive effects of French and later American expansion into their homelands. They have long been viewed—and are still seen by the present regime in Bangkok—as virtual "saboteurs," frontline agents of revolution that would otherwise be alien to "happy" Thailand.

It is hoped that this review of the history of the Vietnamese minority in Thailand will help to demolish the myth that the Thai peoples themselves are not capable of revolution, and will at the same time expose the way in which this minority has been and still is being manipulated by the Thai ruling classes, recently with the assistance of American-derived counterinsurgency programs. Removing the Vietnamese minority as the Thai state's scapegoat for its own insoluble socio-economic and political troubles (and from American academia's arsenal of anti-communist platitudes) will help to place the focus of the problem where it should always have been: on the Thai peoples themselves and on their own long struggle for dignity and social justice.

The survey that follows begins with a review of the Vietnamese minority in pre-imperialist Thailand (Part I). Changes in the composition and political outlook of the emigres during the French colonial period are discussed with special reference to their peculiar role in the formation of the Comintern's Siam Communist Party in 1930 and after. The latter issue is analyzed directly from recent Thai Communist Party documents (Part II). The general problem of the Thai "attitude" towards the Vietnamese minority is then taken up on the basis of a distinction between the repressive Thai state and the Thai people (the masses). In this connection, the emergence of an anti-imperialist sentiment shared between Thai Northeasterners and Vietnamese emigres as a result of Japanese imperialist aggression (1940-45) in the Indochina countries and Thailand is also studied (Part III). The gradual postwar hardening of the myth of the refugees as a "vanguard" of imminent external aggression is documented, along with the increasing repression of the emigres by the Thai state, itself now a virtual pawn in wider American counterinsurgency programs. This analysis spans the French Indochina War era (Part IV) and the American Indochina War era (Part V). Finally, armed with this perspective, a brief attempt is made to assess the ever more precarious condition of the Vietnamese emigres (not including new arrivals from the end of the Saigon regime) at the hands of the post-October 6, 1976, military dictatorship and its violently anti-communist policies (Part VI).

What follows in no way purports to be an exhaustive treatment of this subject. Similarly, it is not intended to be an ethnographic study, nor a treatise on Thai-Vietnamese diplomatic relations.

I. The Pre-Imperialist Era

Thailand has been a refuge for Vietnamese fleeing social and political upheavals in their own land since the late eighteenth century. The earliest Vietnamese refugee community in Thailand (then known as Siam), as distinct from earlier traders, was that of the ruling family of the Nguyen, whose center of power at Hue was overrun by the greatest peasant uprising in pre-twentieth-century Vietnamese history: the *Tay-son* Rebellion (1771-1802). The first ruler of the present Bangkok dynasty of Chakri welcomed these highborn refugees from social revolution in Vietnam. He instinctively recognized that the "roaring armies" of the *Tay-son* peasants somehow represented a threat to kingship and royal prerogatives in neighboring countries as well. For reasons of both social-class preservation and political self-interest, therefore, he sent Thai conscript armies to help the Nguyen suppress the peasant rebels. The Nguyen successfully defeated this traditional uprising and established the Nguyen Dynasty (1802-1945) over a unified Vietnam.[1] Remnants of these early refugees who remained in the area of the Thai capital were settled at Bangpho, which is within the present-day city of Bangkok (known as Krungthep in Thai).

A united Vietnamese dynasty under the Nguyen eventually brought antagonisms between this ruling house and the Thai ruling elite as both states sought to extend their traditional empires into Laos and Cambodian regions. The resulting conflicts were within the general pattern of endless wars between mainland Southeast Asian monarchies for the

labor power of peasant cultivators who produced the surplus revenues that sustained them and, of course, who fought their wars for them. From the 1830s to the 1850s new groups of lower class Vietnamese refugees arrived in Thai territory, consisting mainly of prisoners of war taken by Thai armies fighting in Vietnam and Cambodia. Those who were Buddhists among these were usually sent to Chantabun in southeast Thailand, while the French-proselytized Catholic Vietnamese were usually placed under the supervision of Portuguese Catholic priests in the Samsen area (within present Bangkok). Later some of the Buddhist Vietnamese around Chantabun were permitted to move to Bangkok and its environs, where they eventually formed a minority of some five or six thousand persons living largely as fishermen along the Chao Phraya River tributaries near Bangpho.

In the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century the Vietnamese communities in the southeast were increased slightly with an influx of Catholic refugees from anti-Christian persecutions under Emperors Minh Mang (r.1820-40), Thieu Tri (r.1841-47) and Tu Duc (r.1848-1883). These Catholics, coming by sea from the south, established themselves at Thai coastal points from Trat, Chantabun and Rayong in the far Southeast to Samut Songkhram, west of Bangkok on the Gulf of Thailand. Others moved up the Chao Phraya River to the Bangkok area, settling at Paknam and Paklat (i.e., Phrapradaeng) and even moving as far north as Paknampho and Nakhonsawan, 250km north of the capital city.[2] All of these were products of the pre-Western imperialist push into the region. They seem to have been generally commoners (i.e., not mandarins or literati) and possessed none of the political awareness or varieties of "nationalism" of later arrivals.[3]

II. Anti-French Colonial Struggle, 1890-1945

Around the late 1880s a new type of Vietnamese was coming into Thailand. These were refugees from the vicious French seizure of southern and central Vietnam.[4] The refugees from the south settled originally near their predecessors, along the southeast Thai coast and up into the Bangkok areas near Phrapradaeng. In the 1890s, partisans of the *Can Vuong* (Protect the King) Movement and its leader, Phan Dinh Phung, arrived.[5] Several hundred strong, these refugees from the desperate resistance against the French in central Vietnam settled in small communities on the Thai side of the Mekong River opposite Suvannakhet and Thakhek, across from what was now French-controlled Laos (after 1893). These tiny communities in northeast Thailand set the precedent for Thailand as a haven from the brutalities of foreign imperialism in Indochina. They included a significant number of old guerrilla fighters from central Vietnam where some of the most violent resistance to the French and some of the most brutal French suppression had taken place.[6]

It was these communities that first attracted the attention of the famous literati resistance fighter and early nationalist, Phan Boi Chau.[7] Between 1908 and 1912 around 100 partisans of Phan's *Duy Tan Hoi* (Reformation Society) arrived in Thailand. Their plan was to set up self-subsistent agricultural communities along the Thai-French Laos frontier that would serve as external bases for operations against the colonial regime. Under the leadership of one of Phan Boi Chau's lieutenants, Dang Thuc Hua (Dang Ngo Sinh), these militants engaged in petty farming, artisanal work, and itinerant peddling in matches, cloth, medicines and the like to neighboring Thai villagers. In addition to bases on the Mekong River across from Laos, they had important communities at Phichit, Nakhonsawan, Lampang, Phitsanulok and other points in north-central Thailand.[8]

By their own testimony, these new arrivals were well received by the Thai peasant populations among whom they eked out their living in the provinces. Yet, unlike earlier 19th century emigres, these newer refugees in the northeast tended to view Thailand as a temporary haven in the long anti-French struggle, even though the efficiency of the French colonial police in fact greatly prolonged their stay in Thailand. They harbored memories and legends of the earlier resistance battles against the French, and they continued to lay plans for the eventual liberation of their homeland. The latter were, however, of the sporadic, "bomb-throwing" type, and lacked political sophistication. As a politically-trained Vietnamese in the mid-twenties noticed, the emigre communities in central

and northeast Thailand lacked any comprehensive understanding of the historic problem of imperialism that they faced.[9] Still, over the years, they remained committed patriots. In the early twenties the prospects for liberating Indochina from French control seemed to brighten with the emergence of a strong anti-imperialist movement across the border in southern China, assisted by the new socialist regime in Russia.

It was this new prospect that encouraged the old emigre leader in the northeast, Dang Thuc Hua, to send a number of young emigre militants to Canton in the early twenties. In late 1923 or early 1924, these joined with other militants from Vietnam to form the *Tam Tam Xa* (Society of Like Minds). This group sought assistance from the Soviets in Canton in their anti-French plans.[10] The young members of the *Tam Tam Xa*, including some from Thailand, would form the original core of Ho Chi Minh's (i.e., Nguyen Ai Quoc) first cadres when he arrived in Canton from France, via Russia, in December 1924. They were among the earliest members of Vietnam's first internationalist anti-imperialist struggle group, formed by Ho Chi Minh in Canton in June 1925: the *Hoi Vietnam Thanh Nien Cach Mang Dong Chi* (Vietnam Young Revolutionary Comrades Society). This group was in turn the forerunner of the Indochinese Communist Party and the *Lao Dong* (Workers) Party of today's liberated Vietnam.[11]

These young cadres of Ho Chi Minh's *Thanh Nien* group were given a "Special Political Training Course" in Canton which provided them for the first time with a comprehensive framework for understanding imperialism: the ideology of Marxism-Leninism. They were then sent back—most to Vietnam itself but some to northeast Thailand's emigre communities—to organize workers and peasants associations.[12]

Ho Chi Minh's concern for the revolutionary capacity of the Vietnamese (and for that matter the Chinese) peasantry dated at least from late 1923 and his association, as a delegate of the French Communist Party, with the Peasant International (*Krestintern*) in Moscow.[13] It is not generally recognized that this interest and theoretical concern predated that of most later Asian communist peasant leaders, with the exception of the early Chinese peasant leader with whom he was acquainted, P eng Bai (P'eng Pai).[14] As early as 1925, therefore, when the first graduates of his "Special Political Training Course" returned to Thailand, they set about forming revolutionary peasant associations. At first, they found the situation among the emigres, who by this time numbered some 20,000 in the northeast, quite disappointing because, despite their nostalgic patriotism, their political consciousness was low and they lacked organization and durable planning. The *Thanh Nien* cadres thus set up subsections of their organization and began educational work among them. They did not concern themselves with the largely Catholic "old Vietnamese" settlers from the 19th century.

The peasant associations set up by the *Thanh Nien* cadres at Udon Thani, Nakhon Phanom, Sakon Nakhon, Mukdahan and elsewhere in the Northeast were known as *Hoi Than Ai* (Fraternal Associations); they were designed to bring the emigres together and to educate them in communal solidarity and sentiments of nationalism.

Other young militants fled across the Mekong River from French Laos after 1925 and set up so-called *Hoi Hop Tac* (Work Cooperative) among the emigre communities on the Thai bank. The members of the *Hoi Hop Tac* jointly worked to reclaim new land for farming (there was no population pressure at this time in the Northeast), shared their work tools in common and, except for minimal subsistence earnings, put their incomes back into the *Hoi Hop Tac* common fund. This in turn went to support revolutionary work in Indochina. The *Hoi Hop Tac* soon became the backbone of these revolutionary bases on the periphery of Indochina. They served as an important source of funds for revolutionary operations within the country.

The *Hoi Than Ai* and the *Hoi Hop Tac* groups were already operating in Thailand when Ho Chi Minh arrived there around August of 1928.[15] By this time these northeastern Thai emigre bases were virtually the only ones for operations against the French, after the collapse of the South China revolution in 1927 and the beginning of Jiang Jie-shi's (Chiang K'ai-shek) "White Terror," and this no doubt accounts for Ho Chi Minh's presence there. Because of the French *Sûreté Coloniale* was closely tracking him, Ho was obliged to adopt another of many pseudonyms he used, in this case the Thai-Lao term "Thao Chin," meaning "Old Mr. Chin" (=Chinese). Like his boyhood hero Phan Boi Chau before him, Ho got his first real taste of peasant conditions as he travelled on foot for the next year from one emigre community to another, living, working and sharing with the emigres their daily efforts to survive.

It is interesting to note that it was here in Thailand that Ho seems to have worked out for the first time the classic rural organizing techniques that would later carry his movement to power on a wave of revolutionary nationalism, and serve as a model for other Third World countries. Most notable among these efforts was his egalitarian respect for the lowliest peasant or itinerant peddler. It should be noted here too that this respect extended also to his host country and its populace. He set a long-held precedent for the emigre communities in the northeast by insisting that his compatriots respect Thai Buddhism, observe Thai laws and customs. (There were no anti-communist laws in Thailand at this time.) He scolded the older emigres for not showing enough interest in studying the language and customs of their host country. He insisted that they do these things so that the Thai would sympathize with them and support their anti-colonial cause. He set the example by taking up the study of Thai himself. He insisted that the emigres apply for government permission to open up schools where both Vietnamese and Thai would be taught. In every community to which he trekked, he stressed literacy and education. In addition, he promoted the opening of medical facilities for the emigres.

In the case of the Vietnamese (as with the largest minority group, the Chinese) there is virtually no evidence of spontaneous, local, popular animosity on the part of the Thai. Indeed, in the relations between the two groups, there is much evidence that local Thai villagers often shielded Vietnamese from French and Thai police during the twentieth century. The Thai state, on the other hand, has often manipulated ethnic differences between Thai and minority groups when this suited ruling-class interests.

Hand in hand with these methods went a subtle attack on such practices as gambling, drinking, and indulgence in old superstitions. In place of the latter, especially, he sought to inculcate political and social consciousness as well as national pride. For the literate among them, he urged reading of the *Thanh Nien* and other journals; for the illiterate, he and his cadres would stand in the village assemblies in the evenings and painstakingly read and explain the revolutionary press. In doing so, they infused a more sharply defined nationalist, anti-colonial sentiment and consciousness into the emigres. Ho Chi Minh himself grafted nationalist and political themes onto long-held village traditions by composing simple poems and songs with relevant, contemporary political themes. He composed new lines for old village tunes and added nationalist notes to peasant songs hummed in the fields or on the roads. He plunged into community theatre, introducing with his mimicry new political and social sentiments into old dialogues.[16]

To further clarify the role of these revolutionary Vietnamese centers in Thailand, it is necessary to follow the movements of Ho Chi Minh in this era more closely. He left the Thai northeast around mid-June 1929 and went to the Bangkok area, probably to organize old-time Vietnamese revolutionaries scattered about there.[17] His efforts here related to the developing competition among the *Thanh Nien* and other Vietnamese revolutionary groups to form a single revolutionary party, both in response to objective conditions

within Vietnam and to the Third (Communist) International, or Comintern, Sixth Congress (July-September 1928) call for the replacement of regional revolutionary centers with national parties or "sections."[18] Naturally, whatever party succeeded in gaining Comintern recognition would immediately benefit from the prestige, organizational skills and funding of the International.

It was in this connection that Ho Chi Minh left Thailand in the autumn of 1929 and went to Kowloon in British Hong Kong. Here, on February 3, 1930, he chaired a Unification Congress which founded the Vietnam (soon renamed Indochina) Communist Party.[19] But, according to his old comrade in Thailand, Le Manh Trinh, Ho Chi Minh returned to the Thai Northeast "for a few days" in March 1930, bringing news of the new party and its platform to the Vietnamese revolutionaries.[20] According to recent Thai Communist Party statements on their own history, however, we find the first indication that "in 1930, Comrade Ho Chi Minh, representative of the Third International, came [to Thailand] and set up the Siam Communist Party (Phak Khommunit Sayam) as a section of the Third International . . ."[21] This would be, in fact, quite in conformity with Ho Chi Minh's long connection with the Comintern and with the Sixth Congress' call for the establishment of national sections. But in regard to the Vietnamese role in Thailand, it is crucial to see that the establishment of such a party did not conform to objective conditions in Thailand. That is, in contrast to China and Vietnam, objective conditions among the Thai (as distinct from politically sophisticated Overseas Chinese and emigre Vietnamese in Thailand) neither required nor supported a proletarian (communist) party. As TCP spokesmen now note, historic conditions peculiar to Thailand kept political consciousness among the Thai very low.[22] Translated into political realities, this simply meant that the Siam Communist Party was composed of non-Thai elements right down until its disintegration in 1939-40 (leading to its reorganization in December 1942 as the Thai Communist Party).[23] Overwhelmingly Chinese and Vietnamese, these elements were only interested in liberation and revolution in their homelands.[24]

The history of the Siam Communist Party (SCP) and the role of the Vietnamese (and Chinese) in it illustrates the formalistic function of the Comintern in 20th century Asian history. It existed, formally, for a decade as the "Siam Section" of the Comintern and on Comintern paper, at least, it should have been promoting revolution in Thailand. Yet as admitted by the *Thai* Communist Party—the successor to the SCP—the earlier party had virtually no Thai in it but was composed of Chinese and Vietnamese revolutionaries who were also members of their own revolutionary groups (Chinese Communist and Indochinese Communist Party branch organs in Thailand). The Siam Communist Party's activities in Thailand throughout the decade were limited to very occasional leafletting and red-flagging in Bangkok, and some very minimal work among peasants (most likely Vietnamese) in the Thai northeast, and some student-youth and labor work in Bangkok (very likely among Overseas Chinese). Concretely, it did not do much for Thailand, since objective conditions there made its very existence premature.[25]

The commitment of the party's membership to liberation struggles elsewhere (China and Vietnam) explains why its very existence has been doubted by so many Thai and Western police and academic devotees of Comintern conspiratorial history in Asia. Nonetheless, while it existed largely to satisfy the formal requirements of the Comintern's "national parties" policy, and while it was clearly used for the *real* requirements of Vietnamese (and Chinese) revolutionaries in Thailand, the very presence of the latter was one of the important sources leading to the eventual formation of a radical Thai intelligentsia, a Thai Communist Party and an urban leftwing movement. Beyond this, however, the presence of Vietnamese (and Chinese) in the Siam Communist Party does not support, but rather negates the notion fostered by U.S. and Thai counter-revolutionary forces of a subversive, conspiratorial "vanguard" of non-Thai elements preparing for an alleged Vietnamese (or Chinese) invasion. The Vietnamese emigre centers in northeast Thailand were not vanguards, but in fact rear areas in the anti-imperialist struggle in Vietnam.

After the collapse of the south China revolutionary movement in 1927, the *Thanh Nien* group in 1929 at its First Congress (in Hong Kong) designated the northeast Thai emigre communities as "rest centers" for political refugees.[26] Following the formation of the Indochinese Communist Party and the failure of the Nghe-Tinh Soviets in 1930-31, many more revolutionaries took refuge in Northeast Thailand's emigre communities as the latter became revolutionary bases in the struggle against the French.[27] According to TCP accounts, by 1935-36 Thai government repression and police infiltration of Vietnamese revolutionary groups had led to the imprisonment or deportation of most of the Vietnamese membership in the Siam Communist Party.[28] In the Popular Front era after 1935 the revolutionary significance of the northeast emigre communities diminished. With the Second United Front in China, the latter again became the chief foyer for the Vietnamese liberation struggle. Northeast Thailand would only become important again in the early forties.

III. The Thai Attitude, 1900-1945

To understand the reception of the Vietnamese emigres at the hands of the Thai it is necessary to distinguish between the Thai people and the Thai state—a distinction which, owing to bourgeois philosophical biases, is almost never observed. It is noteworthy that the Vietnamese emigres made this distinction, as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam has also done.[29] American anthropologists and counterinsurgency bureaucrats have tended to equate Thai ruling class policies and politics with "the Thai people," and thereby posited an undocumentable impression of "natural antipathy" or ethnic animosity between Thai and Vietnamese (as well as Chinese and other non-Thai groups in Thailand).[30] As anyone familiar with the Thai and their language can verify, the Thai do have their local prejudices, ethnic witticisms and regional jokes. Yet, in the case of the Vietnamese (as with the largest minority group, the Chinese) there is virtually no evidence of spontaneous, local, popular animosity on the part of the Thai. Indeed, in the relations between the two groups, there is much evidence that local Thai villagers often shielded Vietnamese from French and Thai police during the twentieth century.[31]

The Thai state, on the other hand, has often manipulated ethnic differences between Thai and minority groups when this suited ruling class interests. Particularly (but not solely) in the twentieth century it has manufactured rivalries between the Thai and minority groups—the classic example here being the Chinese.[32] It would appear that repression of the politically conscious, anti-imperialist northeast Vietnamese

emigres (not the politically apathetic, pre-imperialist "Old Vietnamese") suited the needs of the Thai bureaucratic state during much of this century. The ultimate historic explanation for the Thai ruling class' natural antipathy towards these emigres lies in the former's organic linkage since the 1850s with capitalist imperialism, be it British, Japanese, or, presently, American. Since the bureaucratic monarchy's conclusion of the Bowring Treaty in 1855, the Thai state has maintained its "independence" (meaning domestic political advantage over the masses) and indeed its very existence only at the sufferance of Western (and for a brief time Japanese) imperialism. It has survived only as a subordinate agent of imperialist exploitation of the Thai people, a role it accepted in return for continued domestic political hegemony. Despite evolutionary changes in the Thai ruling class as capitalist civilization penetrated Thailand since 1855, this historic linkage remained. With the disappearance of the absolute monarchy after 1932 and its replacement by a figurehead monarch overshadowed by a military bureaucratic class buttressed by a sybaritic (Chinese) bourgeoisie, the need for imperialist connections only increased. Anti-imperialism, therefore, could not and cannot be a popular cause with the Thai ruling elite.

Given the Thai state and its ruling classes' relations with global imperialism after the mid-19th century, it is not surprising that the earliest Vietnamese anti-French colonial agitators were often harassed and deported by them at the behest of Indochina authorities, especially after 1908 (even though a few among Thai royalty sympathized with them as they did with likeminded Japanese Pan-Asianists in Thailand in this era).[33] After World War I and the creation of the French colonial police force, the *Sûreté Générale,* precisely to track down anti-colonial agitators, the Thai monarchy's secret police continued to inform on the Vietnamese emigres and to pursue and deport them at *Sûreté* behest.[34] In 1933, after formal anti-communist laws were passed by the new militarist government (with much royalist pressure), scores of Vietnamese anti-colonial revolutionaries were arrested and herded into the infamous Bangkhwant Prison in Nonthaburi Province, just north of Bangkok.[35]

The post-1933 ruling military elite slavishly imitated the coercive techniques inherent in 19th and 20th century bourgeois nationalism and especially (though by no means solely) the overtly militarist dimension of German, Italian and Japanese bourgeois models. In this specific sense, they were nationalistically anti-French, and bore great resentment at the French seizure of Laos and Cambodian territories that the Thai state itself had acquired by force in earlier times. Though they harbored a deep rancor against the French Indochina regime on this count, they could not be, as noted above, opposed to the global imperialist system as sucy, for they too were reciprocally linked with it. They were therefore no more prepared to countenance anti-imperialist social revolution than their royalist predecessors before 1932. Just as the monarchy had identified "nation" with itself, the post-1933 militarist state identified "nation" with the militarist-functionary elite. They rightly sensed in the distinctly Marxist-Leninist revolutionary emigre communities in the northeast (after the *Thanh Nien* groups arrived in them in 1925) another kind of "nation" in which "nationalism" and the masses (peasants) were synonymous—a nationalism in which militarist elites had no place. To counter this dangerous sort of nationalism, they herded the Vietnamese emigres into prisons with greater vigor than ever (they did the same with Chinese revolutionary nationalists among the Chinese minority). At the same time, they fostered an artificial "nationalist" sentiment, based on a "traditional community" and "ethnic solidarity" that never existed. The post-1933 Thai state built its nationalism on an artificially-promoted racism that inevitably had repercussions on minorities and of course left the elitist structure theoretically intact.[36]

Under military dictator Phibun Songkhram in the late thirties the Thai government disengaged from the faltering British empire system and gradually aligned itself with an

apparently ascendant Japanese imperialism. This new Thai-Japanese alignment eventually laid the basis for a common anti-imperialist front between the peoples of Thailand (and initially the emigres in the northeast) and the peoples of Indochina. This came about as the Japanese empire extended its military control first into Indochina, with French Vichy acquiescence, and then into Thailand in the early forties.[37] During the ensuing Pacific War (1941-45) the Western powers unwittingly initiated and fostered this anti-imperialist solidarity. The Thai government under Phibun had, along with Japan, declared war on the Allies. Hence, British, American and Chinese secret services worked with various Thai and non-Thai minority groups who opposed the Phibun Songkhram dictatorship and its alliance with Japan. This resulted in the arming of anti-Japanese and anti-Phibun guerrilla forces in the Thai Northeast (principally by the American OSS).[38] At the same time, the Allies (and especially the OSS) were giving some assistance to Ho Chi Minh's *Vietminh* organization (est. May 1941) in the latter's efforts to resist the Japanese in Indochina and the Vichyite colonial regime of Admiral Jean Decoux that cooperated with the Japanese.[39]

In the same year that the *Vietminh* was established, a similar organization, the *Viet Kieu Cuu Quoc Hoi Thai Lao* (Thailand-Laos Overseas Vietnamese National Salvation Association), or *Cuu Quoc* for short, was set up on the same pattern in the northeastern Thai town of Udon Thani. It was composed of many veteran revolutionaries and its most important leaders were Indochinese Communist Party members who had fled to Thailand after the failure of the 1930 uprisings. It was one of a number of mass organizations adjunct to Ho Chi Minh's *Vietminh*. This *Cuu Quoc* association had its parallels in Chinese Communist Party United Front tactics after 1936 and in the numerous *jiu guo* (national salvation) groups that grew up under its sponsorship in the late thirties and early forties throughout China and in Bangkok as well.[40] Throughout the Pacific War, The *Cuu Quoc* headquarters were located in the northeastern Thai town of Sakon Nakhon. Faced with the common Japanese enemy, a natural unity of anti-imperialist sentiment developed between the Northeastern Thai guerrilla movement (originally known as *klum ku chat* or National Salvation Group, only later as *seri thai* or Free Thai) and the Vietnamese *Cuu Quoc* groups in the Northeast. The latter emigre associations were thus able to operate openly in Northeast Thailand during the war and to operate secretly against the Franco-Japanese imperialist regime in Laos as well.[41]

The Vietnamese emigre communities in northeastern Thailand thus found themselves in the late stages of the Pacific War in a curious situation. They were bound through decades of revolutionary struggle with the ICP-led movement (the *Vietminh* after 1941). They were thus sympathetic to the developing Laos anti-colonial movement (itself influenced by the *Vietminh* model). They had a similar ideological bond with the northeastern Thai underground guerrilla movement armed by the Allies. These links would remain after the war and would eventuate in a common cause against the new hegemonic expansion of America in the region after 1945. Yet it is necessary to insist that, as responsible Thai police officials in moments of rare candor have admitted publicly (see documentation below), the emigre communities never lent themselves to revolutionary actions against the Thai government. In this, they remained faithful to the dictums of Ho Chi Minh in the twenties.

When the war ended, short-lived civilian governments of a somewhat leftist hue, though lacking in unity, came to the fore as the Thai military shrank back in disgrace from its former position of power. These governments were controlled by the chief symbol of domestic Thai underground resistance to the Japanese during the war, Dr. Pridi Phanomyong. Pridi's closest support lay with the northeastern Thai underground leaders during the war.[42] Pridi himself supported the Vietnamese resistance to the restoration of the French colonial regime. He and his wartime northeastern supporters were approached at the war's end and asked by Ho Chi Minh's Vietminh organization for weapons to be used in resisting the French return. Pridi ordered that a portion of the northeastern underground group's weapons be put aboard a train and moved to the Cambodian border at Battembang and handed over to Vietminh forces. The arms were later used to outfit two Vietminh battalions in the anti-French struggle.[43] Pridi permitted the Vietminh to open a liaison office in Bangkok headed by Tran Van Giau, key figure in the anti-French struggle in southern Vietnam.[44] At the same time, sympathetic northeastern Thai guerrilla fighters crossed the Mekong in an effort to aid the Laos peoples against the French there.[45] Finally, just before his ouster from power, Pridi formed the Southeast Asia League to support anti-colonial movements in the region.

IV. French-Indochina War Era, 1946-1954

By 1946, the tide was already turning in favor of reaction. With American endorsement the French military returned in great force to Laos and, in several operations that year, they drove some 40-50,000 Vietnamese across the Mekong River into northeastern Thailand's border provinces. French planes strafed them in the water as they crossed.[46] While Pridi-backed governments were still in power in Bangkok, these new refugees from French imperialism continued to receive official as well as popular support from the Thai. They were allowed to travel and choose their places of residence freely, and the government even loaned them living expense funds.[47]

Here again it should be stressed that these were *refugees* from an extremely brutal military campaign by the French; they were not invaders. Thus, as their predecessors did, they respected Thai customs and got on well with the local populations. But perhaps even more than their predecessors, they looked upon their residence in Thailand as purely temporary; all wished to return to their homes as soon as possible.[48] Indeed, they very likely would have been able to do so, were it not for the full support given by the United States to the French reconquest of Indochina, and to reactionary forces within Thailand. More than ever before, the now-swollen refugee populations of the northeast became the victims of Great Power intervention in the history of mainland Southeast Asia.

In 1947 disgruntled Thai military and police officers ousted the Pridi-backed government in a coup. The military's anger stemmed, of course, from the disgrace into which it had fallen, and for which they blamed Pridi, as well as on his having participated in the wartime anti-Japanese resistance movement. Many military units at war's end had found themselves in the far north of Thailand facing Chinese troops

and had been forced to disband and make their way back to central Thailand as best they could, usually by selling their weapons, clothing, etc.[49] On top of this humiliation, the 1947 coup leaders were deeply disturbed at Pridi's progressive policies towards revolutionary movements in the region. They were also angered at his policy of fair treatment for minorities, and at his lifting of the former militarist regime's racist restrictions against Chinese, Moslem-Thai, Vietnamese and other minorities. The core leadership of the 1947 coup which brought the old pro-Japanese dictator Phibun back was explicitly anti-Chinese and anti-Vietnamese. At the same time it was profoundly fearful of the consequences for the elitist state of left-wing movements in Thailand and neighboring countries.[50]

As the Thai ruling class had done earlier in order to preserve its existence and privileges, the new regime now lost no time in 1950 allying itself with another great imperial power—this time the United States. American dollars and military hardware easily persuaded the Thai militarists of the material benefits of a severe anti-communist policy, particularly in view of the mounting social unrest within the country itself. This Thai-U.S. alliance made Thailand immediately and officially the enemy of all the revolutionary peoples of Indochina then agitating for a more humane social and political system.[51] With the old militarist and proven racist regime back in power in Bangkok, both the Overseas Chinese and the Vietnamese became the scapegoats for the ills of an endemically unjust and oppressive society. As the Phibun government—in U.S. rhetoric, the new champion of democracy in Southeast Asia—now joined hands with America and the French regimes of Indochina after 1950, the Vietnamese refugees in the Northeast found their movements and human rights increasingly restricted on the pretext that they were the vanguard of a North Vietnamese "communist invasion."[52] This charge also applied to northeastern wartime guerrilla leaders (and political opponents of Phibun) and was nurtured and promoted by a growing host of religiously anti-communist Americans who came to Thailand after 1949-50 as counterinsurgency advisors, technicians, and "altruistic" scholars.[53]

Following the ouster of the Pridi-backed government, Vietnamese refugees were obliged to relocate to 12 drought-ridden provinces in the northeast. They were prohibited from traveling outside this area without special permission of the director-general of police in Bangkok.[54] In 1951, after General Phao Siyanon took over as director of police, the Vietnamese refugees were again forced to relocate into a smaller area of eight northeast border provinces. Again they were forbidden to travel outside this perimeter without permission from Bangkok, while local officials were given *carte blanche* authority to imprison them at any time without charge or trial.[55] The repression worsened in 1953 when Phao's police sent approximately 1000 Vietnamese males from these areas to be imprisoned in Phatthalung and Surat Thani Provinces in remote southwest Thailand.[56]

V. American-Indochina War Era, 1954-1975

In 1954 the Vietminh won a stunning victory over the French at Dien Bien Phu and the Geneva Conference ended the nine-year French effort to recolonize Indochina. The United States now intensified its efforts to prop up the Saigon regime.[57] American ambassador to Bangkok and powerful CIA figure Gen. W. Donovan insisted that the Thai government require the Vietnamese emigres in the northeast to repatriate to the American-controlled puppet regime in Saigon. Repatriation to the south would have been a much-needed propaganda victory for the Saigon regime's claims to legitimacy despite its origins in French colonial policy. It would also have aided the incipient American anti-communist effort to create legitimacy for its puppet state as representative of the Vietnamese "nation." The DRV protested, however, arguing that, among other things, 200 refugee families earlier sent back to Saigon had ended up in concentration camps.[58]

In the final throes of the fighting in Vietnam and Cambodia, there surfaced, quietly and anonymously in Thailand, an American Army study, obviously of Psy-Ops origin, entitled "External Support to the Thai Insurgency: the 35PL/NVA Combined Command." It was circulated among Thai officials and in that section of the Bangkok newspaper world that served American anti-communist interests and was purported to be a Vietnamese master plan to bring the Western bank of the Mekong (meaning the northeast Thai border provinces) and indeed the lower Mekong watershed under Hanoi's political and economic control.

The DRV insisted that the refugees, now numbering between 70-80,000, be allowed to choose for themselves. While the Americans and the Thai opposed this (as did the Saigon regime) the Thai were finally forced by international pressures and publicity to accede and agree in the so-called Rangoon Accords of 1959, signed by both the DRV and the Thai Red Cross societies. The Thai side agreed to maintain the refugees until means could be set up for their repatriation. The Thai Red Cross appointed a Central Committee for the Repatriation of Vietnamese Refugees to organize this task while the emigre communities themselves selected one of their own, the widely-respected Liem Tran, to sit on the committee.[59]

As the Thai official (a former director of police after the 1947 coup) in charge of the repatriation process was later forced to admit, of the 70,000 refugees who registered for repatriation, all but some 80 or 90 persons "voted with their feet" in indicating their desire to return to DRV jurisdiction. Even the most hostile witnesses had to admit that this was not only because many of them were from the central or northern parts of Vietnam but because they simply preferred Ho Chi Minh's DRV to the American-created police regime in Saigon.[60] In the longer historical perspective, this was in perfect conformity with the decades-long commitment of the Vietnamese emigres in the northeast to the liberation of their homeland, which they recognized in the DRV.[61]

Despite intense pressure from the south Vietnamese authorities (and no doubt from American officials as well) not to implement the 1959 Rangoon Agreement, the Thai government was obliged to do so by international publicity surrounding the issue and by "civil disobedience" agitation by the refugees themselves.[62] Some 40,000 Vietnamese refugees of the early Vietminh-French war thus were duly repatriated by their own choice to the DRV. The repatriation process continued by sea until 1964 when the United States

effectively ended it with the beginnings of the genocidal air war that would eventually rain some six million tons of high explosives on the lands and peoples of Laos and Vietnam.[63]

Well before the repatriation process was blocked by American intervention in Indochina, Thai official repression of those who remained had reached new heights of brutality and had wrought numerous protests from the DRV. The state's police tyranny in this regard was especially pronounced after 1957, when General Sarit seized power, with American support, from Phibun and Phao. With greater infusions of U.S. dollars, more terrifying anti-communist and racist institutions were set up.[64] Exact figures may never be known but independent Thai sources estimate that after 1957 at least an average of 200 to 300 Vietnamese refugees per year were jailed without charge or trial in such formidable prisons as Latbuakhao near Korat (site of key Pentagon and CIA counter-insurgency operations), and Bangkhen and Setsiri prisons in Bangkok. Some languished in these jails for years, as their forbears had done in the thirties and early forties. Many were women and, by a 1974 count, about thirty were children under 16 years of age. In these same years, other refugees in the northeast became the victims of shootings, robberies and other acts of violence, with little or no action taken against their assailants by police. (In fact police were sometimes the assailants).

At the same time a hate campaign was launched against the refugees by Thai authorities, who pictured them as "spies," "terrorists," and dangerous "communists."[65] There was little new, of course, in this campaign: the Thai state had had years of experience in conducting them against the Chinese minority. However, the anti-Vietnamese campaign was reinforced by American counterinsurgency research.[66] This tended to paint the ominous picture of the refugee communities as a "small vanguard of Vietnamese race and culture" in Thailand, as one Pentagon technocrat wrote in a lengthy study of them (published by Cornell University Press). Naturally, along with this imposed racist analysis went insinuations that these communities were hotbeds of communist subversion and northeast separatist conspiracies aimed at lopping off the northeast from Thailand.[67] Although even the highest Thai police officials, when pressed, have had to candidly admit that none of this was true,[68] the campaign went on and the myths grew. They are to be found today not only in the press of the restored military-racist regime in Thailand but in much Western journalism on the issue as well. The huge volume of anti-communist writing generated in the last two decades by Americans in and about Thailand and force-fed to the Thai through American cultural control of Thai socializing institutions and direct American education of the Thai "socializers" naturally resulted in Thai writings, inspired, knowingly or otherwise, by American counter-insurgency syndromes. In short, the northeastern Vietnamese refugees became a "problem." The Thai writings, too, indulged in such well-worn racist themes as "natural ethnic antipathy," "clannishness," "commercial dominance conspiracies," "political subversion" (i.e., "Northeast Separatism"), and the like.[69] Most of these charges had been employed by the Thai state against the Chinese since the early part of the century. They appealed to the vested interests of local elites whose destinies were coincident with those of the Thai state. Thus the campaign of hate was rather effective, especially among lower-echelon Thai military-civil officials (which, given the nature of the bureaucratic state, were quite numerous).[70]

In any case, the Vietnamese refugees found themselves more and more hemmed in by a myriad of restrictions that in sum denied them the basic human rights enjoyed by other foreign groups living in Thailand, including, most notably, the Americans. The refugees were now forbidden to move from the district (*amphoe*) of their residence without 30 days prior permission from police headquarters in Bangkok. They were forbidden to have house-guests without official permission. They were virtually always denied permission to marry Thai. Their children, many of whom were born in Thailand, were denied rights of Thai citizenship (which violated the new post-1973 constitution). Their children were also denied entry to Thai schools, even though many now spoke Thai more often than Vietnamese. On the other hand, when the refugees sought to open schools themselves, they were viewed as engaging in "communist activities" and accused of ignoring their host country's culture. In short, they were forced to maintain their own ethnic identity not out of some deep "cultural antipathy," as the Thai right-wing and many American researchers have held, but rather because the restrictions placed upon them obliged them to do so.[71]

Numerous Thai government agencies, some created under the impetus of U.S. counterinsurgency programs (e.g., the National Security Council, the Communist Suppression Operations Command, the Central Bureau of Information, the National Security Command, the Special Branch Police, the Vietnamese Refugee Bureau and especially the Interior Ministry) expended huge sums of money in surveillance and supervision of the "refugee problem."[72]

With the October 1973 Student Uprising and the ouster of the Thanom-Praphat dictatorship, a brief interlude followed in which parliamentary forms were instituted and the military, while remaining intact, temporarily moved to the sidelines (principally to reorganize its internal clique power structure).[73] During this period, in which there was relative press freedom in Thailand, the Vietnamese refugees in the northeast made desperate efforts to bring their plight to the attention of the Thai people. Hundreds of Vietnamese heads of families and individuals addressed letters to progressive Bangkok newspapers, detailing the brutalities and the repression of their human rights.[74]

The refugee position became even more precarious in the spring of 1975 with the fall of the rightwing dictatorships supported by the United States in Cambodia and Vietnam, and the obvious ascendancy of the popular Pathet Lao movement in that neighboring country. Some factions within the Thai

government sought to accommodate with ungovernable realities--a strategy that foreign observers have oft noted as a hallmark of Thai foreign relations. Such moves were especially evident with the Thai foreign ministry, which tried to move Thailand toward a rapprochement with its new socialist neighbors, as well as with China. One dimension of this was the civilian government's acquiescence to student and popular demands for the removal of American military bases and forces from the country. Such demands had been in the air since the October 1973 uprising, contrary to some American academicians, was in fact as much anti-American as anti-Praphat-Thanom.[75]

It was obvious that neither the Thai military-police rightwing nor their American counterinsurgency supporters could countenance this situation with complacency. The experts on "black propaganda" of the American intelligence community had already been operating full time in constructing a "bloodbath syndrome" to assuage American consciences in regard to America's genocidal policies in

Vietnam and Cambodia. They now went into action, in coordination with their Thai protégés, to block any Thai accommodation with their socialist neighbors. In the final throes of the fighting in Vietnam and Cambodia, there surfaced, quietly and anonymously, in Thailand an American Army study, obviously of Psy-Ops origin, entitled "External Support to the Thai Insurgency: the 35PL/NVA Combined Command." It was circulated among Thai officials and in that section of the Bangkok newspaper world that served American anti-communist interests and was purported to be a Vietnamese master plan to bring the Western bank of the Mekong (meaning the northeast Thai border provinces) and indeed the lower Mekong watershed under Hanoi's political and economic control. Accordingly, the chief Bangkok press spokesman for U.S. business interests in Thailand, the English-language *Business in Thailand,* ran an article in May 1975 describing the Vietnamese as "an aggressive, acquisitive and xenophobic race imbued with delusions of superiority and a Messianic sense of manifest destiny. It can be safely concluded that the Vietnamese have not lost the will, the appetite nor the determination for conquest . . ." A similar article appeared at the same time in Bangkok's major English-language daily (and a widely-known servant of U.S. interests in Thailand), the *Bangkok Post.* Both were inspired by the U.S. Army Psy-War study which had surfaced in the early spring.[76]

American intelligence and psychological warfare operations of this type were clearly aimed at creating an anti-communist panic among Thai (and Americans) concerning the revolutionary Cambodian and Vietnamese victories of April 1975, with the ultimate design of "destabilizing" the Thai democratic experiment that followed October 1973 and restoring a pro-U.S. rightwing dictatorship.[77] As this orchestrated program proceeded, Thai rightwing groups (with well-established connections to U.S.-created counterinsurgency units and commands) joined in the chorus.

The most vocal of these at this point was the neo-fascist *Nawaphon* organization, linked both to the United States and to its Thai counterinsurgency offspring, the Internal Security Operations Command (*kong amnoeikanraksa khwam-mankhong phainai,* or ISOC).[78] *Nawaphon*'s flamboyant spokesman and former foreign student in the United States, "Dr." Watthana Khieowimon, in one of his first public pronouncements following the appearance of the "Nawaphon Foundation" in March 1975, asserted that the progressive students who brought democratic processes back to Thailand were really part of a vast communist plot, part of which was to seize the northeastern provinces and annex them to a "Greater Indochina" or even to China.[79]

General Krit Siwara, whosse relatively moderate military clique held real power behind the parliamentary scene after October 1973, felt threatened by *Nawaphon*'s ultra-rightwing appeal and publicly denounced its demagoguery. Krit rejected Watthana's anti-communist fear-mongering and scoffed at the idea communist forces planned to seize the Northeastern provinces.[80] The demagoguery went on, however, and it took its inevitable toll upon the Vietnamese refugees, whose numbers were now swollen by recent arrivals from the final struggle in Vietnam. In May 1975, the northeastern emigre communities were the target of massive pogroms and riots which the then-deputy minister of interior flatly declared were instigated by the American CIA to embarrass the Thai government in its relations with the new socialist Vietnam.[81] The minister of defense, Praman Adireskan, who had himself made a number of anti-Vietnamese refugee statements, nonetheless asserted that the riots in the Northeast looked like the work of *Nawaphon.*[82]

In line with this same hate program, some (though by no means all) military-police officials, civil bureaucrats and politicans—the latter symbolized best by Samak Sunthonwet, the "Spirit of the Rightwing" (as he openly dubbed himself)—turned upon the refugee communities as a ready-made means for blocking accommodation with the socialist countries of Indochina. The revolutionary and egalitarian paths these countries were now embarking upon obviously discomfitted the Mercedes-Benz elites of Bangkok and their American supporters and it became necessary to distort the nature of these revolutions in the eyes of the Thai public. In conformity with the U.S. Psy-War themes noted above, a massive campaign grew to link the Vietnamese refugees' presence in the border areas with alleged "invasion plans" harbored by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam for capturing northeast Thailand. The Vietnamese refugees in the northeast were again cast in the role of "vanguards."[83]

By December 1975, the Thai National Security Council was pointing to the DRV and the "800,000 American rifles"

left behind there by fleeing American client troops as a grave danger for Thailand. It specifically singled out the possibility of a "fifth column" operating for "North Vietnam" among the estimated 70,000 Vietnamese refugees within the country.

In the same month, December 1975, the Thai monarch, King Phumiphon (Bhumibol), whose reign almost exactly spanned the American neo-colonization of Thailand, and whose fascination for American material culture from jazz to professional mystique of the Green Berets and M-16 rifles is widely known, called upon the country to prepare to defend the nation's independence and sovereignty. "Thailand is now a direct target of an enemy who wants to control our country," he declared. "The enemy is directing its forces against us. This has developed to such a serious stage that it is a direct aggression against the country." These statements, together with vague references to 'sabotage,' etc., placed the King squarely on the side of the anti-Vietnamese movement within the country.[84]

Against this campaign, the Thai foreign office moved for a normalization of relations with the now-independent DRV. High on the agenda in discussions with the DRV after the spring of 1975 was the issue of repatriating the remaining refugees from the French Indochina War per the 1959 Rangoon Agreements. These talks culminated in the July 20 1976 visit to Bangkok of the deputy foreign minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam*—an event that seems to have galvanized the Thai rightwing forces within and outside the government into drastic action. Beginning just after this visit, military and rightwing-controlled newspapers and radio launched a massive rumor campaign implying that the refugee communities were bristling with arms and deeply involved in sabotage and "infiltration" plots throughout the country. Specifically anti-Vietnamese hate groups sprang up suddenly—too suddenly to be spontaneous—to organize rallies and mob violence against the refugees. These included, among others, the "Patriots' Group" operating in Nakhon Phanom Province, and the well-organized "Anti-Vietnamese Refugee Group of Thailand" operating in Sakhon Nakhon and Udon Thai Provinces and elsewhere. In the nightmarish days that followed, Thai police arrested without charge some 16,000 refugees in the northeast, southeast and southwest—roundups in the latter two areas comprising mostly refugees from the last days of the Saigon regime. Widespread police sweeps of Vietnamese were carried out in Bangkok itself. In Sakhon Nakhon and Nakhon Phanom Provinces in the northeast, mobs of technical school students and unemployed village hoodlums ruthlessly sacked the refugee settlements there in August and September. The mobs even attacked local civil and police officials who tried to protect the refugees.[85]

The sources of this agitation and mob violence in the late summer 1976 appear to have been the vice-minister of the interior, Samak Sunthonwet, and , more indirectly, the Internal Suppression Operations Command (ISOC). Samak Sunthonwet made a number of public inflammatory charges concerning the Vietnamese refugees and made no secret of his distaste for the foreign office and its conciliatory policy towards the newly independent socialist states of Indochina. He attacked the foreign office and the Seni Pramot government then in power, arguing that, while the rightwing had put it into office, it was not acting in accord with rightwing philosophy. He accused the foreign minister, in fact, of preferring friendship with the SRV and socialist Laos over that of Thailand's old friend, the United States.[86] Samak also indicated his displeasure at the attitude of the police forces under his own ministry's control because high police officials were denying publicly what Vice-Minister Samak was alleging about the Vietnamese in August. The director of the Special Branch Police, Police Major General Santhat Thanaphumi, denied that he had ever sent in reports to the premier concerning Vietnamese plots and saboteurs. The deputy director of the Special Branch Police, Col. Kasem Saengmit, was even more explicit: "We have been following the movements of every national who might have any desire to upset the security of this country," he avowed, "but we are not in a position to say whether or not the Vietnamese refugees are going to commit any acts of sabotage . . ." Other high police officials, when queried by the Thai press, laughed at the entire matter of the Vietnamese as a threat to the country's security. Samak indicated to the press that he would soon move in and control the police more closely.[87] He did so, to the misfortune of the Vietnamese, and to Thailand's democracy.

It seems clear that the Internal Suppression Operations Command (ISOC) also had a hand in the rightwing agitation about the Vietnamese in the late summer and early fall. In early September 1976, the governor and deputy governor of Sakon Nakhon Province and the deputy governor of Udon Thani Province (both areas with a longtime Vietnamese emigre presence) gave press interviews publicly accusing certain Bangkok political factions, including certain national assembly deputies, of inciting the rural mobs to riot against the Vietnamese. They made it clear that the political motivation behind this was a plan to use the Vietnamese refugees as an issue to "destabilize" the government and thereby to block any Thai-Vietnamese diplomatic rapprochement. Although the deputy governor of Sakon Nakhon Province, himself a longtime counte insurgency expert, expressed doubts that the American CIA as directly involved in the mounting wave of paranoia, he did not hesitate to tell the press that ISOC headquarters had just forwarded to him documents that alleged that the SRV had a plan to seize several provinces in northeast Thailand, including his own. He showed great skepticism about this and, with the other officials just mentioned, made it clear that the furor was artificially created. "I definitely think," he said, "that there are political motivations, both domestic and foreign, in this matter . . ."[88] The implication seemed clear from this that both the Thai and the Americans were involved in the matter.

ISOC and the Americans were further implicated in the furor over the Vietnamese refugees in mid-September. At least two independent Thai journals at this point reported that the Thai Red Cross had unilaterally reorganized the Central Committee for the Repatriation of the Vietnamese Refugees, and had ousted from it the Vietnamese Liem Tran. Liem Tran's reputation for integrity among the northeastern emigres was such that the Thai had continuously appointed him to the Central Committee in its various reorganizations since 1959. Like the other emigres in the northeast since the 1930s onward, there was no doubt where his loyalties lay: with the Ho Chi Minh-led national liberation movement and the SRV. After removing Liem from the Central Committee, and, without consulting the refugee communities, the Thai

* On July 2, 1976, the official name of the happily liberated and united Vietnam became the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, or SRV. —The Editors

authorities appointed in his stead a certain 'Tuong Dang Van' (transliteration from the Thai script?). Both the journals noted above reported that this individual was an agent of the ISOC organization and, further, was very close to the recently-fallen Thieu regime in Saigon. Both journals also hinted that there was American embassy involvement in the affair, but they cited no direct evidence of this.[89]

Despite the interior ministry's reactionary stand and despite the circulation by ISOC-related rightwing groups of inflammatory rumors about the Vietnamese refugees and the DRV's "aggressive intentions," the Thai foreign ministry went ahead with negotiations with the SRV on diplomatic relations and the repatriation of the estimated 60,000 remaining refugees from the French Indochina War in the late forties. In late September the foreign ministry publicly reassured the SRV that the attacks on the refugees had been the work of hoodlums and did not represent official Thai thinking. At the same time it pointedly reminded domestic opponents of the policy of rapprochement that such incidents would in no way undermine efforts to normalize relations with the SRV, and by implication, with socialist Laos.[90]

VI. Reactionary Thailand, October 6 and After

Thailand's brief interlude of at least quasi-parliamentary government came to a violent end on October 6 1976 when U.S.-trained and armed rightwing military and paramilitary forces massacred innocent and unarmed Thai students in and around Thammasat University in Bangkok.* Not surprisingly, on the day of the carnage, rightwing military and civilian sources were circulating rumors that "Vietnamese saboteurs" were present within Thammasat University campus. Not the slightest evidence for this was ever forthcoming.[92]

The Vietnamese refugee communities were now completely at the mercy of extremist rightwing forces. The independent Thai press that had for three years tried to publicize their plight was silenced, and no help could be expected from the servile journals that remained for they were now devoted solely to publicizing the doings of royalty, sporting events, beauty contests and the like, as had largely been the case before 1973. Given this socially and politically vapid reportage, the case of the Vietnamese refugees was now, in an urgent new sense, in the hands of those correspondents of major Western news services who were acceptable to the new regime. Unfortunately for the Vietnamese, the Western establishment press demonstrated a not-unprecedented naivety in accepting the old anti-communist line about the Vietnamese minority. As the daily arrests and violence against the refugees after October 6 were duly reported by the *Washington Post, New York Times* and *Le Monde* throughout the late fall of 1976, the correspondents seriously challenged neither the underlying premise that the refugees were a security threat or the "vanguard" theory which had been propounded over the years by U.S.-Thai counterinsurgency experts.[93] None reported the salient fact that even high Thai police and provincial officials had, a few short months previously, completely discounted this idea. More gravely, the great press representatives of the "Free World" did not appear to question the deeper premise underlying Thai government claims that Vietnam—a country upon which the United States had just dropped 4 million tons of bombs, killed 1.7 million people, wounded 3.2 million, rendered homeless 12 million persons, sprayed 18 million gallons of poison chemical defoliants which denuded 6 million acres of Vietnam's foodlands, left hundreds of tons of unexploded ordinance buried in the land and, with all this, profoundly traumatized the social fabric of the Vietnamese people—that this country, Vietnam, was going to leap up and attack its neighbors without so much as drawing a breath.[94]

All that the major Western newspapers could do was intone the timeworn counterinsurgency cliches: ". . . Thais have long feared and disliked the Vietnamese among them . . ." The Vietnamese had "remained clannish and . . . very few have married Thais or otherwise attempted to assimilate . . ." ". . . [T]he economically influential Vietnamese community has been regarded by many as a breeding ground for guerrillas and a channel for Hanoi's support of the [domestic Thai] rebellion . . ."[95] With this kind of "perceptive" reportage, it would be difficult not to feel that the Vietnamese deserved the violence then being heaped upon them in the northeast.

Plainly, the long struggle of the Vietnamese communities in northeast Thailand was entering a new stage of tragedy and suffering as they continued to be the victims of manipulation at the hands of U.S.-Thai counterinsurgency programs and, in a larger sense, victims of the great American expansionist, anti-communist program that has held Thailand in its grip for the last quarter of a century.

Prospects for the repatriation of the Vietnamese to their homeland looked promising until October 6 and the military coup but, despite SRV attempts to hold the new Thai government to the earlier agreements reached by the pre-October 6 elected government, the possibility of progress towards repatriation was stifled by the new official Thai policy of anti-communism and chauvinist racism. The violence against the Vietnamese communities prompted the SRV's Red Cross to cable Thailand's Queen Sirikhit, patroness of the Thai Red Cross, protesting the violations of human rights.[96] As the SRV protests mounted, the new government called a press conference on November 18 1976, and Premier Thanin and his foreign minister assured foreign correspondents that not only did Thailand support in principle the admission of the SRV into the UN but it also believed that the agreement of August 6 1976 signed between the former government and Hanoi concerning the normalization of relations between the two countries should be pursued. Yet the Premier's emphasis on a rabid anti-communist policy domestically, coupled with the continuing anti-Vietnamese hate campaign, belied the sincerity of these words.[97]

Almost coincidental with this press conference, the submissive and sensationalist Thai press was spreading the rumor that Vietnamese restaurants were injecting chemicals into their noodles—chemicals which reportedly shrank male sex organs. Thousands of Thai men reportedly rushed to hospitals as a result.[98]

Perhaps most symbolic of the new government's anti-Vietnamese campaign was the emergence and preeminence of the former vice minister of the interior under the previous Seni Pramot government, Samak Sunthonwet. Samak was indeed, as he earlier dubbed himself for newsmen in the summer of 1976, the "Spirit of the Rightwing." He was closely linked to the pre-October 6 neo-fascist movements, was an avowed hero of the rightwing hooligan band, the *Krathing*

* The official Thai press put the death tool at around forty or fifty, the Western press put it at around 100, while the actual figure, according to the most reliable of all sources, was not less than 300 dead.[91]

Daeng (Red Gaurs or Red Bulls), and had close connections with the Internal Security Operations Command which had a crucial part in the October 6 coup. Samak himself was said to have played an important role in the events of October 6. At any rate he emerged from the coup as the new military government's chief spokesman and ideologue for national chauvinism, racism, anti-communist paranoia—with an unswerving loyalty to the principles of the militarist state: Nation, Buddhism, King. He was also the most consistent advocate of the anti-Vietnamese hate campaign.[99]

As he had predicted he would do earlier in the summer of 1976, several months before the coup, Samak took the position of minister of interior when the new government lineup was announced on October 6. This put him in a position to purge the interior ministry and the police department of those who had shown less enthusiasm than he in the anti-communist, anti-Vietnamese campaign. After clearing the decks with transfers of his political enemies within the police structure, he was free to indulge his whims.[100] On December 9 1976, he called a press conference in his office to "reveal" a secret Vietnamese plan under which the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was going to invade Thailand in February 1977.

The details of this conference, and of the "plan," lay bare the intimate connection between the insoluble social problems within Thai society as it is presently structured, and the state's policy of manipulating minorities for its special interests. According to Samak, February 15 1977 was "D-Day" for the secret SRV plan for the invasion. Prior to this, however, the SRV somehow was going to incite labor troubles, beginning around December 15, that would lead to workers' general strikes in business firms, plants and factories. This would be accompanied by troubles among the northeastern Vietnamese refugees, who would pretend, apparently, to fall to fighting among themselves. These in turn would lead to a diplomatic "misunderstanding" with the SRV and serve as a pretext for the latter's military forces to invade Thailand. Samak even laid out the routes of the invasion: (1) through the mountainous north, where the Thai, Laos and Burmese borders converge; (2) from southern Laos across the Mekong towards Ubon Ratchathani; and (3) out of western Cambodia through Arannya Prathet. The interior minister noted that all three routes had been surveyed and were dry enough for SRV tanks to pass. Finally, he announced that the SRV did not really wish to repatriate the refugees in the northeast but on the countrary really planned to use them as the vanguard in an invasion of Thailand.[101]

The precise function that the Vietnamese communities serve in the official manipulative policies of the Thai state today is patent in Samak's remarks. First of all, as the SRV recognized in its protests to the post-October 6 government, anti-communism, and in this case, virulent anti-Hanoi communism, is an obvious device for focusing the Thai people's minds on issues other than their own society's gross injustices, inhumanities and huge socio-economic disparities.[102] Hence the frantic propaganda activities of leaders such as Interior Minister Samak. Secondly, in regard to those numerous Thai people, peasants, workers, underpaid and oppressed bureaucratic and military-police functionaries and others who are already dangerously conscious of the oppressive conditions of their society, "disturbances," work stoppages and the like can easily be linked with the great "threat" from Hanoi and the Vietnamese refugees (as Samak clearly did) and thus officially be declared subversive. In a sense, then, the refugees are serving a useful "function" for the militarist rulers of present-day Thailand: like the Chinese before them, they are a tool to be manipulated by the ruling class for its own interests.

One of those who saw this most clearly in the case of official Thai treatment of both Chinese and Vietnamese minorities was the late Dr. Boonsanong Punyodyana, eminent Thai sociologist, recognized expert on minority problems in Thailand, leader of the constitutional movement that ousted the Thanom-Praphat dictators in 1973, founder of the Thai Socialist Party in 1974 and, as a humanist and Marxist critic, an outspoken opponent of the oppressive Thai bureaucratic state.* Not long before he was shot down by rightwing assassins virtually in front of his own home in early 1976, he was writing and speaking on behalf of minorities in Thailand. He saw through the self-serving dimension of the counter-insurgency approach to minority problems in Thailand, including that concerning the Vietnamese. He recognized in it the old divisive strategy of the British, Dutch, French, Japanese and more recently the Americans: sustain the conquest of the conquered by dividing them against themselves. He recognized, against the counterinsurgency view, that there was no natural or innate animosity between ethnic Vietnamese, Thai, Chinese or other groups. On the contrary, he saw that the issue was in fact only historical and sociological:

> *. . . the plight of minority groups in Thai society is due not to the prejudice and discrimination of majority people . . . It is the privileged ruling class with its permeating and subversive mechanisms that lie at the root of the problem.*[103]

The plight of the Vietnamese in the Northeast is indeed not due to the prejudice of the Thai people, as this brief review has demonstrated. It is due to the machinations of the Thai state. The great social upheaval in Indochina that really began over 200 years ago with the *Tay-son* Rebellion and that produced royalist refugees in the 18th century has now produced another class of refugees with a vivid revolutionary consciousness. As we have seen, they have never indulged in revolutionary activity against Thailand, and in that sense the "vanguard theory" of the counterinsurgency technocrats is a mockery of the truth. Yet in a sense quite different from that, they are indeed a "vanguard," not for any Vietnamese ethnic conquest of Thailand, for that category of action disappeared with the Vietnamese puppet state upon the liberation of Saigon in April 1975. Rather they function merely as exemplars of a people who have successfully overthrown domestic oppressive elites and cast out the decadent presence of foreign imperialism. In that historic sense, they are the distant echoes of those "roaring armies" of the old *Tay-son* rebels, come back to haunt the present privileged rulers of Thailand and their imperialist supporters of today with the spectre of social revolution. ☆

* See Carl Trocki's article on Boonsanong in this issue.

Notes

(Thai words in the text and notes are rendered in a modified "Cornell" system. All diacritical marks have been omitted in Thai, Chinese, Vietnamese and Japanese transliterations.)

1. Earliest contacts between the Nguyen of Hue and the Thai in connection with the Tay-son Rebellion actually date to the reign of the King of Thonburi, Somdet Prajao Taksin (r. 1777-82). Important primary sources on these and later Thai-Nguyen contacts include the *Phongsawadan yuan* (Vietnamese Chronicles), Bangkok, 2 vols., 1899, esp. vol. II, 370ff: this work is a translation by one Nai Yong, edited by Luang Damrong Thammasan and Nai Wan, of a Vietnamese *nom* text, possibly entitled *Vietnam su-ky*; Jaophraya Thiphakorawong, comp., *Phraratcha phong-sawadan krung rattanakosin: ratchakan thi nung* (Dynastic Chronicles, Bangkok Era, First Reign), Bangkok, 1961 passim.

Useful secondary sources include Thanom Anamwat, *Khwam-samphan rawan thai, khamen lae yuan nai samai rattanakosin ton ton* (Relations between Thai, Khmer and Vietnamese in the Early Bangkok Era), Bangkok, 1973, 177 ff; K. Wenk (G. Stahl, trans.), *The Restoration of Thailand Under Rama I, 1782-1809* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1968), 110-18; Le Thanh Koi, *Le Vietnam: Histoire et civilisation,* chap. Vii.

2. Damrong Ratchanuphap, *Ruam ruang kio kap yuan lae khamen nai samai rattanakosin* (Collected Matters Concerning the Vietnamese and Khmer in the Bangkok Era), Bangkok, 1964, 251 ff; Bui Quang Tung, "Contribution à l'étude des colonies vietnamiennes en Thailand," *France-Asie* XV:148 (Sept. 1958), 440 (this work, like the Poole study cited below, should be used with caution not only because of its uncritical anti-communist bias, typical of the *Ecole française d'extrème orient,* of which Bui was a member, but because it is largely based on interviews with conservative, often Catholic, "Old Vietnamese," from which Bui drew judgments about more recent, militant Vietnamese arrivals); G. Boudarel (trans.), "Phan Boi Chau Memoires," *France-Asie* XXII:194-95 (1968), 117 note 120.

3. I construe the term "nationalism" in the sense suggested by Anouar Abdek-Malek in *La Dialectique sociale,* Paris, 1972, Part II: "Le phénomène nationalitaire." Nationalism is theoretically conceived as a generic and dialectical category wherein bourgeois nationalism is merely one historic form specified by its time-space milieu and further by characteristic economic, social and ideological arrangements. Theoretical writing on this subject, including much in the Marxist genre, tends to be heavily Europeo-centric. In addition to the writings of Abdel-Malek, those of Abdallah Laroui (e.g., "Marx and the Intellectual from the Third World: or the Problem of Historical Retardation Once Again," *Diogenes,* No. 64 [Winter, 1968], 118-40) and the works issued by the *Centre d'études et de recherches marxistes* (C.E.R.M.), which often appear in *La Pensée,* are important Marxist theoretical alternatives to this problem.

4. Bui Quang Tung, 440-41. On the ferocity of the French seizure of Central Vietnam, Phan Boi Chau, *Yuenan wangguo shi* (History of the Fall of Vietnam), Shanghai, n.d., remains a moving description. On the resistance in southern Vietnam, which brought many refugees to Thailand as well, Tran Huy Lieu, et al., "Yuenan renmin chuqi de kang-fa zhengdou" (Early Anti-French Struggles of the Vietnamese People), *Shixue yicong,* No. 3 (1957), 167-70. See also David Marr, *Vietnamese Anticolonialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 27 ff.

5. Phan Dinh Phung biography in Phan Boi Chau, *Yuenan wang-guo shi,* 15-18. On the *Can Vuong* movement: Marr, chap. 3.

6. Boudarel, 117, note 120; Marr, loc. cit.

7. On Phan Boi Chau see Boudarel, passim; Marr, esp. chap. 4 ff; Kawamo to Kunie, "Han hai shu shoshi" (Brief History of Phan Boi Chau) in Nagaoka S., Kawamoto K. (eds)., *Betonamu Bokokushi* (History of the Fall of Vietnam), Tokyo, 1966, 223-55. In reference to note 3 above, Phan Boi Chau's career spanned two genres of nationalism: (1) a traditional literati style, conforming to what Joseph Levenson called "culturalism" (*Liang Chi'i-ch'ao and the Mind of Modern China* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967], 109 ff) and (2) an incipient recognition of socialist nationalism in 1924-25. Unlike Sun Yat-sen, for example, Phan never spoke for bourgeois nationalism.

8. Nagaoka and Kawamoto, 143-46: this is a Japanese translation of Phan's *Nguc Trung Thu* (Prison Notes); Tran Dan Tien, *Hu zhi ming chuan* (Ho Chi Minh Biography), Shanghai, 1948, 85-86: a Chinese translation of *Nhung Man Chuyen ve Doi Hoat Dong cua Ho Chi Tich* (Anecdotes from Chairman Ho's Life)—the earliest and in some ways the most explicit biography of Ho Chi Minh. Western-language versions are much abridged.

9. Le Manh Trinh memoir in *Hu bo bo,* Hanoi, 1962, 94: a complete Chinese translation of *Bac Ho, Hoi Ky* (Reminiscences on Uncle Ho), Hanoi, 1960 (Western-language versions contain crucial lacunas); Tran Dan Tien, 85-86.

10. Boudarel, 129, 132, 181 note 178, 193 note 190. On cooperation between the Soviets and the *Tam Tam Xa* and, separately, between the former and Phan Boi Chau, see M. A. Cheshkov, "On the History of the First Soviet-Vietnamese Revolutionary Ties," *Narod y Azii i Afriki,* No. 6 (1967), 84-88 (kindly translated for me by Dr. Ramsdale Gurney).

11. Truong Chinh, *President Ho Chi Minh,* Hanoi, 1966, 14-15; Gouvernement général de l'Indochine, Direction des Affaires politiques et a la Sûreté générale, *Contribution à l'histoire des Mouvements politiques de l'Indochine française,* Hanoi, 4 vols., 1933, IV, 14 ff; Chiang Yung-ching, *Hu zhi ming zai zhongguo* (Ho Chi Minh in China), Taipei, 1972, 41 ff: despite its grotesquely anti-communist bias, this is an extremely valuable work for its use of otherwise inaccessible Guomindang archival materials on Taiwan concerning Ho Chi Minh and the Vietnamese liberation movement in South China—its author's researches inspired his student, K. C. Chen's, equally anti-communist achievement, *Vietnam and China, 1938-54* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969). The best biography of Ho Chi Minh by a Westerner is C. P. Rageau's *Ho Chi Minh* (Paris, 1970). The Lao Dong Party became the Vietnam Communist Party in December 1976 (the Fourth Congress).

12. Le Manh Trinh in *Hu bo bo,* 94; Tran Hoai Nam, *Yuenan renmin de jiefang douzheng* (Liberation Struggles of the Vietnamese People), Peking, 1954, 61. Among those sent to Canton at this time was a youth born in Thailand, Ly Tu Trong (Le Van Trong), who joined the Thanh Nien group at age 15. He was arrested, tortured and guillotined by the French Sûreté in 1931. Brief biography in *Vietnam,* No. 92 (1965), unpag.

13. Gouvernement général, IV, 14. It is suggestive of the parochialism of the French Communist Party vis a vis Asian anti-colonialist movements that the short biography of Ho Chi Minh in Gérard Walter's quasi-official *Histoire du Parti Communiste Français,* Paris, 1948 (379), was drawn entirely from this *Sûreté Générale* Report.

14. Conseil Paysan International. *Ire Conférence International Paysanne: Thèses, Messages, et Addresses,* Paris, n.d. (but late 1923) includes a manifesto of the French delegation (= Ho Chi Minh) to peasants and women of the world, written in mid-October, 1923; Nguyen Ai Quac (*sic* = Ho Chi Minh), "La Situation du Paysan Annamite," *Le Paria,* December 1923, 1, reprinted in *La Vie Ouvrière* January 1, 1924, 3, as "En Asia: La Situation des Paysans" with an additional lengthy article on peasants in China signed Ng. Ai Quac. These were sent to Paris from Russia, where Ho Chi Minh traveled, studied and observed Soviet life from late 1923 to late 1924.

15. For the dates of Ho Chi Minh's sojourn in Thailand: *Hu bo bo,* 106; Committee for the Study of the History of the Vietnam Workers Party, ed., *Our President Ho Chi Minh* (Hanoi: Foreign Languages Press, 1970), 91, 94; Gouvernement général, IV, 24-25.

16. Foregoing based on testimony of Le Manh Trinh and Tran Lam in *Hu bo bo,* 93-107, 108-114: both these men were Thanh Nien cadres with Ho in Thailand; Gouvernement général, IV, 24-25; Tran Dan Tien, 85-90. See also the excellent essay by Tran Van Dinh, "The Rhetoric of Revolt: Ho Chi Minh as Communicator," *Journal of Communications,* Autumn, 1976, 142-47.

17. Le Manh Trinh in *Hu bo bo,* 106.

18. Tru'o'ng-Chinh, *President Ho Chi Minh,* 16-17; Vietnamese Workers Party, ed., *Thirty Years of Struggle of the Party* (Hanoi: Foreign Languages Press, 1960), I, 21-22; Tanigawa Yoshihiko, *Tōnan ajiya minzoku kaihō undōshi* (History of Southeast Asian National Liberation Movements) (Tokyo, 1969), 83-86 (based on Tran Huy Lieu's researches); Jane Degras, *The Communist International, 1919-1943: Documents* (London, 1960), II, 526-48 (Sixth Comintern Congress theses on the colonial and semi-clonial areas.

19. Tru'o'ng-Chinh, 17; *Our President Ho Chi Minh* 94.

20. *Hu bo bo,* 106.

21. Thai Communist Party confidential source, 1974, 8. British and French police sources put Ho Chi Minh in Singapore in April 1930

playing the same role in the formation of the Malay Communist Party. See Charles McLane, *Soviet Strategies in Southeast Asia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 132ff.

22. TCP, 1974, 6-8 explains that one of the unique features of the Thai revolutionary movement lay in that it derived its early theoretical Marxist-Leninist impetus directly from Asian (Chinese and Vietnamese) sources rather than from Europe, as was the case with almost all other revolutionary movements in Asia.

23. TCP, 1974, 9.

24. For example, the *Sûreté coloniale* specifically noted in 1933 that the purpose of the Thanh Nien groups in agitating among Vietnamese in Thailand was to create a party in Indochina and not abroad. Gouvernement général, IV, 18.

25. TCP, 1974, 9.

26. Gouvernement général, IV, 61.

27. Ibid., 43-44, 61: designates Ngo Chinh Quoc and Ngo Chinh Hoc as leaders of the "communists annamites" in Thailand's Northeast and notes that an ICP assembly at Ban Mai in Nakhon Phanom Province in April 1933 called for the recruitment of cadres from Vietnam to be given a revolutionary education at Ban Mai and that the ICP set up a provisional executive committee there; TCP, 1974, 9. See also Tranh Van Dinh, "The Birth of the Pathet Laos Army" in Nina Adams and Alfred McCoy, *Laos, War and Revolution* 428, note 8. On the Nghe-Tinh Soviets, see Rageau, *Ho Chi Minh*, ch. 8.

28. TCP, 1974, 9. This source also indicates that Chinese cadres in the Saim CP underwent a similar fate owing to government suppression of anti-Japanese agitation by them after Japan's invasion of North China in 1937. I believe this heavy suppression of Chinese and Vietnamese cadres by the Thai government was a key factor in the formation of a truly Thai Communist Party in 1942.

29. Dr. Boonsanong Punyodyana, "Khrai thamhai jin ben 'banha' nai sangkhom thai?" (Who made the Chinese a 'problem' in Thai society?), *Sun*, 1:5 (16 March 1974), 8-11, notes this distinction.

30. See the text and notes below for examples in this genre.

31. Vietnamese testimony in Le Manh Trinh and Tran Lam memoirs in *Hu bo bo*, 93-107, 108-14; Tran Dan Tien, 85-90, esp. 88; Liem Tran interview in *Sun*, 1:5 (16 March 1974), 29-30 (Liem Tran was the chief spokesman for the Vietnamese communities in Northeast Thailand during the fifties, sixties and early seventies). Thai confirmation of this point comes in numerous non-governmental sources, e.g., Suwansit Naphakom, "Rao ma japkum khon yuan to bai thoed!" (Let's Continue to Seize the Vietnamese!) in the issue of *Sun* just cited, 12-15. This was a special issue of the National Students Center of Thailand on minorities in Thailand. See also Kua Muonchon (pseud.), "Yuan ophayop . . . phonlamuang praphet song" (Vietnamese Emigres: Second-class Residents), *Maharat*, March 23, 1974, 16 ff.

32. Useful works on the Thai state's treatment of minorities include Boonsanong Punyodyana, "Minority Groups and Minority Class," unpubl. ms.; idem, "Khrai thamhai jin ben 'banha' . . .," 8-11; Andrew Turton, "National Minority Peoples in Indochina," *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 4:3 (1974), 336-42; Bo Gua, "Opium, Bombs and Trees: the Future of the H'Mong Tribesmen in Northern Thailand," *JCA*, 5:1 (1975), 70-81. These works take a critical approach to the issue; I omit numerous purely "descriptive" or empirical studies typical of liberal scholarship.

33. Boudarel, 119 note 123. On Japanese anti-Western, Pan-Asianist activism in Thailand and Thai sympathizers in the late 19th and early 20th century see E. Thadeus Flood, "The *Shishi* Interlude in Old Siam: An Aspect of the Meiji Impact in Southeast Asia" in David Wurfel, ed., *Meiji Japan's Centennial: Aspects of Political Thought and Action* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1971), 78-105.

34. Le Manh Trinh, in *Hu bo bo*, 106, describes his arrest by the Thai government and subsequent deportation to Swatow with some ten other emigres.

35. See Thadeus Flood, "The Thai Leftwing in Historical Perspective," *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (April-June 1975), 57-58 and notes 34 and 35. This article, published two years ago, may be useful to readers who are not familiar with certain aspects of Thai history covered in these pages.

36. Yano Toru, *Tai-biruma gendai seiji-shi kenkyu* (Studies in the Political History of Modern Thailand-Burma) (Kyoto, 1968), 168-69, 228 ff, is the first and only researcher known to me to have seen the historical artificiality of that cluster of amorphous notions, *chat, sasana, phramahakasat* or Nation, Buddhism and King that was generated in the reigns of Rama VI and VII, and that has been used since that time by the ruling class in Thailand as an ideological instrument of coercion and control. The classic statement of this constellation of amuletic ideas appeared first in Wijit Matra (Sanga Kanjanakphan), *Lak thai* (the Thai Polity), Bangkok, 3rd ed., 1935. It first appeared in 1928, when it was awarded a royal prize. This notion of *lak thai* has its equivalents in the Nazi Aryan *gemeine*, or the Japanese fascist *kokutai* and in less conspicuous symbols of other bourgeois nation-states, used to foster orthodoxy and uncritical loyalty.

37. The purely empirical side of Japanese expansion into Indochina and Thailand is studied, from Japanese and Thai archival materials in E. T. Flood, "Japan's Relations with Thailand: 1928-41," unpubl. Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 1968. Unfortunately, no significant theoretical formulation is advanced in this study.

38. R. Harris Smith, *OSS: The Secret History of America's First Central Intelligence Agency* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 311, claims that 175 tons of equipment had reached the Thai underground by war's end. For a brief discussion of the significance for Thai social-political history of the wartime anti-Japanese resistance see Flood, "Thai Leftwing . . .," 58 and notes 39, 40, 41.

39. Smith, *OSS*, chapters 9, 10. On the formation of the Vietminh, see the memoirs of two participants at the 8th Plenum of the ICP's Central Committee at Pac Bo Cave, Cao Bang Province, northern Vietnam: Vu Anh and Vo Nguyen Giap in *Hu bo bo*, 147-50, 166-67; Huynh Kim Khanh, "The Vietnamese August Revolution Reinterpreted," *Journal of Asian Studies*, XXX:4 (August 1971), 772 and notes; Tanigawa Yoshihiko, *Tonan ajia minzoku kaibo undoshi* (Tokyo, 1969), 121-28 and notes.

40. Tran Van Dinh, "The Birth of the Pathet Lao Army," 428 and note 8 (Tran was a Vietminh cadre in contact with Vietnamese emigres on the Thai-Laos border in late 1945-46); Huynh Kim Khanh, 772-73; Chiang Yung-ching, 94 ff (on Chinese Communist Party *jiu-guo* groups); Flood, "The Thai Leftwing . . .," 58 and notes 39-42 (on Chinese *jiu-guo* groups in Bangkok and the Thai *Ku chat* group).

41. Tran Van Dinh, 428 and note 8. On the Thai resistance connection with the Laos anti-colonial movement, see Michel Caply, *Guerilla au Laos*, Paris, 1966, 222-27; Nina Adams, "Patrons, Clients and Revolutionaries," in Adams and McCoy, *Laos: War and Revolution*, 109.

42. The ideological sympathy that bound Pridi to the northeastern Thai and to the Vietminh was well known to the wartime pro-Japan government of Phibun Songkhram. See the autobiography of Prayun Phamonmontri, a key figure in the pre-war and wartime pro-Japanese clique of Phibun's: *Chiwit ha phaendin khong khaphajao* (My Life Through Five Reigns) (Bangkok, 1975), 541-42. Pridi's political support was heavily in the rural areas in 1946-47, owing to the essentially rural character of the wartime guerrilla movement under his general aegis. Khajatphai Burutphat, *Kanmuang lae phak kanmuang khong thai* (Thai Politics and Political Parties) (Bangkok, 1968), 178.

43. Pridi Phanomyong, "Raluk thung khun luang sangguan yutthakit" (Reminiscing on Luang Sangguan Yutthakit) in *Anuson nai ngan phrarachathan phloengsop phon rua tri luang sangguan yutthakit* (Commemoration on the Occasion of the Royal Cremation of Rear Admiral Luang Sangguan Yuttakhit) (Bangkok, 1973), 14-15. Pridi cites a letter from Ho Chi Minh according to which the two battalions were later dubbed the "Siam Battalions." On these Thai arms transfers to Vietnamese Hoi Cuu Quoc groups in Laos, see also Tran Van Dinh, 428 note 8.

44. *Vietnam Information Service* (Paris, 1947), 7-8; personal communication from Tran Van Dinh.

45. Loet Nikon, "S.s.sawang trachu: phu mai yom kom hua hai kap thorarat fasit" (Assemblyman Sawang Trachu: One Who Refused to Bow to the Fascist Dictators) *Maharat* No. 218 (9 August 1975), 12: an important serialized interview with a northeastern Thai wartime guerrilla leader, later Assembly deputy, still later political refugee (from Thai government political repression) in Laos, Hanoi and Peking, who took part in the brief northeastern Thai effort to aid the Laos anti-colonial struggle in 1945-46.

46. Two independent eyewitness accounts of these brutal French operations are Tran Van Dinh, 436, and Sawang Trachu in Loet Nikon, "S.s. sawang trachu . . .," *Maharat*, No. 218 (9-16 August 1975), 12. See also Prince Souphanouvong's account of the French massacre at Thakhek on March 21, 1946, in Anna Louise Strong, *Cash and Violence in Laos and Vietnam* (New York, 1962), 34.

47. Liem Tran interview in *Sun*, cited, 29; "Wietnam nai thai" (The Vietnamese in Thailand), *Prachachat*, No. 148 (September 1976), 8-9; Letter to the Editor signed by 80 Vietnamese from Mukdahan in

Sangkhomsat Parithat 12:5 (May 1974), 7-10; Rit Itthipracha, *Yuan ya le* (title untranslatable: *Yuan* = Vietnamese; *ya le* = metronymics used in colloquial Thai song) (Bangkok, 1975), 62. On this book see note 69 below.

48. This is the unanimous import of all written communications I have seen from the emigre communities to Thai newspapers. A number of these are cited throughout this study.

49. The rage of the wartime Thai government military forces at the civilian-led Pridi movement comes through clearly in the memoirs of two top military leaders: Prayun Phamonmontri, 540, and Net Khemayothin, *Ngan taidin khong phan ek yothi* (Underground Work of Col. Yothi), 3 vols. (Bangkok, 1967), III, 751. Both recount the immediate postwar demobilization of the wartime government troops at Pridi's order. This was one principle factor behind the coup of 1947. A more concrete one, however, was Pridi's extraordinary tactical error in demobilizing his Free Thai forces, with their arms, thus leaving the field open to the old police-military structures. It was this error that put Pridi forever on the margin of Thai history.

50. On the 1947 coup: Khajatphai Burutphat, 186 ff; Suchin Tantikun, *Ratthaprahan P.S. 2490* (The 1947 Coup) (Bangkok, 1972), passim, but esp. the 1950 correspondence of General Kat Katsongkhram reproduced at 143-49. General Kat was the chief promoter of the coup; this correspondence lists his 25 reasons for executing it, out of which seven were overtly anti-Chinese and three others are overtly anti-Vietnamese and anti-communist. General Kat originally intended to liquidate Pridi Phanomyong and some 200 other political enemies, most of whom would probably have been northeastern supporters of Pridi. See Prayun Phamonmontri, 543-44. General Kat went into exile in 1950 after a quarrel with Phibun.

51. Boonsanong, "Minority Groups and Minority Class," 21. The American cooptation of the Thai ruling class after 1950 is superbly outlined in Thomas Lobe's pioneering work, *United States National Security Policy and Aid to the Thailand Police* (Denver: University of Denver Press, 1977).

52. Boonsanong, "Minority Groups . . .," 21; Suwansit Naphakhom, 13. As early as 1948, the restored militarist Phibun, as premier, made clear his regime's hostility to neighboring revolutionary nationalist movements and his desire to work with "neighboring countries" (meaning the French colonial regimes) "in suppressing groups who disturb good order in these countries and then flee into Thailand . . ." as he put it in his first policy address to the National Assembly. T. Prathipasen, *Jomphon plak: khunsuk phurai phaendin* (Marshal Plak: The Warlord Who Despoiled the Kingdom) (Bangkok, 1964), 282.

53. Thomas Lobe, passim; Allen Myers, "Counterinsurgency Research on Campus Exposed," *The Student Mobilizer*, 3:4 (2 April 1970); Eric Wolf and Joseph Jorgensen, "Anthropology on the Warpath in Thailand," *New York Review of Books*, Special Supplement, 19 November 1970, 26-35.

54. Rit Itthipracha, 63. The director-general of police from 1947 to 1951 was Luang Chattrakan Koson. Installed by the coup group of 1947, he not only presided over the repression of the Northeastern Vietnamese communities but his police carried out similar actions, including assassinations, against Northeastern Thai as well. Police General Luang Chattrakan was, fittingly enough, Thailand's first police officer trained in the United States—before World War II. He later became chairman of the Committee for the Repatriation of Vietnamese Refugees. Biography in Kao Nung Sam (pseud.), *Sip et khon samkhan khong muang thai* (Eleven Important People of Thailand) (Bangkok, 1965), 21-48. See also Police Major Anan Senakhan, et al., *A. T. R. Antarai* (Police Director-general: Danger) (Bangkok, 1974), 31-33.

55. Suwansit Naphakhom, 13; Rit Itthipracha, 63. Similar forced relocation had been practiced by the wartime Phibun government against the Chinese in Thailand. G. W. Skinner, *Chinese Society in Thailand* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1957), 26 ff.

56. Boonsanong, "Minority Groups . . .," 21; Rit Itthipracha, 64. Phoa's border patrol police (BPP) were initially organized by the United States in 1951-52 precisely to ". . . cope with problems posed by foreign guerrilla elements using Thailand as a safehaven: the Vietminh in Eastern Thailand . . ." in the words of a chief architect of U.S. counterinsurgeny policy in Asia, Edward Lansdale, in a 1961 report. New York Times, ed., *Pentagon Papers*, 134. See also Thomas Lobe, 19 ff. The BPP remains to this day the dread enemy of the Vietnamese expatriates as well as of Thai villagers.

57. *Pentagon Papers*, 1-67.

58. Suwansit Naphakhom, 13; Peter A. Poole, *The Vietnamese in Thailand* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970), 35-36 (the U.S. counterinsurgency viewpoint—cf. note 67 below); Rit Itthipracha, 63 ff (the Thai counterinsurgency viewpoint—cf. note 69 below). General Donovan, another chief architect of U.S. counterinsurgency policy in Asia, had been a registered foreign agent for the Thai government in the United States since the end of World War II.

59. Poole, 61, 69. The Vietnamese refugee spokesman Liem Tran is erroneously referred to as "Lien Tan" by Poole. See *Sun* 1:5 (March 1974), 29-30, interview with Liem. Membership lists of this and subsequent repatriation committees in *Prachachat*, 3:148 (16 September 1976), 10-11.

60. Interview with Police General Luang Chattrakan Koson, Chairman of the Repatriation Committee (cf. note 54 above), ibid., 9-10; Suwansit Naphakhom, 13; Boonsanong, 21; Poole, 58 and notes.

61. The same sentiments prevailed among the 100,000 Vietnamese in Western Laos before 1946. Tran Van Dinh, 424. Many of these fled to Thailand in 1946-47 to escape French brutality.

62. Boonsanong, "Minority Groups . . .," 22; Poole, chap. V.

63. Letter signed by 80 Vietnamese from Mukdahan in *Sangkhomsat Parithat* 12:5 (May 1974), 7: ". . . in 1963 the Indochina War flared up again and the repatriation had to be halted . . ."; Police General Luang Chattrakan Koson interview with *Prachachat*, cited, 8-10: "We sent them back [i.e., the refugees] in groups but this stopped some years back because the situation there was chaotic: there was the bombing of Haiphong and ships could not enter the harbor." Yet Peter Poole, 65-66 and note 28, completely ignores this human issue and places the blame on the DRV for the halt in the repatriation! Counterinsurgency "scholarship" at its best.

64. Flood, *The United States and the Military Coup in Thailand* (Berkeley: Indochina Resource Center, 1976(, 2-4. Thomas Lobe's study, cited, is strictly devoted to the history of the Office of Public Safety and police aid to Thailand; it does not deal directly with Pentagon involvement, about which I know of no substantial study similar to Lobe's work.

65. Inter al.: Suwansit Naphakhom, 13-14; *Prachachat*, issue cited above, 10 (citing "scores of letters" received by this journal asking for help); other Vietnamese refugee letters to Thai newspapers cited in this study.

66. Cf. note 33 above. In a June 6, 1969, discussion with Pentagon counterinsurgency Project JASON members, Louis Lomax, who had just returned from Thailand, revealed that Thai authorities were thinking of "transporting" (i.e., forcibly relocating) some 40-50,000 Vietnamese from the Northeast. The latter were discussed as a "problem" for American counterinsurgency scholars by JASON project members as early as June-July 1967, as witness this exchange: (General Maxwell B.) Taylor: "Did you look at the NVN colony in the Mekong valley and their role in insurgency?" (Cal. Institute of Technology Physics Professor Murray) Gellman: "Yes, but we get conflicting answers. The Thai government believes they play an important role." *The Student Mobilizer*, 3:4 (April 1970), 10, 13. Every draconian technique levelled against the Vietnamese communities in the northeast came up as a subject for discussion at one or another of these JASON, SEADAG, AACT meetings between government agents and American social scientists in the late sixties: the classic example of Marcuse's "one-dimensionality" in action (*One-Dimensional Man* [Boston: Beacon, 1964]).

67. The best example of American counterinsurgency research on the "Vietnamese problem" in Thailand is Peter A. Poole's work, from the "preface" of which the quote in the text is taken (p. vii). Poole, a veteran Pentagon Advanced Research Projects (ARPA) officer, based this widely touted study on testimony of U.S., Thai and south Vietnamese officials ,and of Vietnamese Catholic priests and their pastoral flocks in Thailand. He was unable to refer to any Thai or Vietnamese language materials in his 180-page study—a limitation that, while not necessarily crucial, is typical of the counterinsurgency writing and reflects the imperial arrogance inherent in it.

68. See text and note 87 below for documentation.

69. An excellent Thai-language example of this is Rit Itthipracha, *Yuan ya-le*, cited previously. A typical rightwing, racist and anti-communist tirade against the Vietnamese communities in Thailand, it is heavily interlarded with U.S. counterinsurgency jargon (in Thai translation). Apparently to combat the humane and progressive treatment of minorities (including the Thai minority) in socialist Vietnam, it carries a lengthy section on the Thai peoples in Vietnam—but written before World War II by Luang Wichit Wathakan, notorious spokesman for the old Phibun government's racist policies.

70. Suwansit Naphakhom, 14; *Maharat*, 3:56 (23 March 1973), 16-17.

71. See, e.g., Charles Keyes, *Isan: Regionalism in Northeastern Thailand* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1967), 23, 70, wherein he asserts, rightly, that the "Vietnamese community in the Northeast has retained the characteristics of a ghetto or caste group . . ." but quite fails to point out the oppressive institutional mechanics at work that kept them that way. Similarly, he repeats the ethnographic legend that there is "much ethnic antipathy" between the Thai and the Vietnamese *"peoples"* (my emphasis), without documenting this sweeping historical assumption. The basic problem is not documentation, however, but theory. American social science with its mechanistic, static (= positivistic) approach to the study of man can never attain a perception of the dialectic of struggle inherent in the Marxist distinction between state and people.

72. Suwansit Naphakhom, 14.

73. Flood, "The Thai Leftwing . . .," 60-62, and idem, *The United States and the Military Coup in Thailand*, 4-5.

74. Many of these, detailing their history and special problems, appear in the "Letters to the Editor" columns of Thai opposition journals and newspapers such as *Maharat, Sangkhomsat Parithat, Chaturat, Prachchat, Athipat* and *Prachathippatai*. I cite several in this study.

75. See, e.g., Jeffrey Race, "Thailand 1973: 'We Certainly Have Been Ravaged by Something . . .'," *Asian Survey*, XIV:2 (February 1974), 199-202: a good example of Europo-centric analysis, complete with "old regime's," "1848's," etc., which pictured October 1973 as an attempt at American-style democracy.

76. Michael Morrow, "U.S. Policy in the Mekhong," *The Asian Mail*, January 1977, 21. This was but one manifestation in a well-orchestrated "black propaganda" and "disinformation" program aimed at painting the socialist states of China and former French Indochina with a "Stalinist" brush. The program, which is gaining momentum at this writing in the United States, surely has as one of its aims the discrediting of the human rights lobby in the U.S. Congress by planting contrived media stories of "mass executions," "torture," etc., in these countries. The obvious objective is to undermine the human rights' activists' hitherto successful campaigns to cut off congressional funding for American-supported police dictatorships by linking the human rights issue with alleged "violations" in the Asian socialist countries, thereby reducing the last moral leverage the old anti-war coalitions enjoyed with the U.S. Congress, and at the same time turning public attention from the real violations of human dignity that take place hourly in Thailand, South Korea, Iran, Philippines, Indonesia, and other "Free World" countries.

77. See Flood, "The United States and the Military Coup in Thailand," passim. The post-October 6 coup Thai newspapers compete with each other to print the biggest alarmist headlines of imminent Laos and Cambodian incursions, although if one reads carefully between the lines it will be evident that CIA- and Thai BPP-directed Meo (H'Mong) tribesmen are the initiators of these incidents in Laos, and BPP-supported ex-Lon Nol forces and stragglers are the problem on the Thai-Khmer frontier. See, e.g., the servile *Ban Muang* newspaper over recent months in this regard.

78. As a political idea, *Nawaphon* appears to have stemmed from officers such as General Samran Phatayakun, Lt. Gen. Jamnien Wongphaibun, General Wanlop Rotjanawisut (retired)—all connected in some way with CSOC, the counterinsurgency predecessor of ISOC· with several Satthahib naval officers, certain parvenu Buddhist monks of obscure origins active at the impressive Buddhist Mental Health Institute (Jittaphawan) on Sukhumvit Highway between Bangkok and Siracha at Banglamung, and perhaps the Royal Palace. In addition to the well-known counterinsurgency function of the American-created CSOC-ISOC, the Jittaphawan Buddhist complex at Banglamung has for seven to eight years or more been a stronghold of fascist-style Thai state adulation both for Buddhist novices and Thai students who often make use of its libraries and other well-endowed facilities, much of the funds for which came from military officers. The "Nawaphon monk," Kittiwuttho (see Ben Anderson's article in this issue of the *Bulletin*) made his demagogic debut at this sparkling new Institute. As a legal entity, the Nawaphon Foundation (*munnitthi nawaphon*) was set up in March 1975 with the original goal of educating youth. At that time, its public relations man, the American-educated Watthana Khieowimon, opened training courses at the Jittaphawan Institute, and the monk Kittiwuttho forced monks from surrounding provinces to enroll and accept *Nawaphon* literature. Most recognized it, however, as being an extension of CSOC and rejected it. In a classic CIA ploy, a phony letter from a non-existent newspaper in the United States accused *Nawaphon* in August 1975 of receiving $250 million from the CIA, with the obvious aim of discrediting the widely recognized link between these two organizations. As Thai critics immediately pointed out, however, it really didn't need such funds, since its backers included old royalists, nobility, hotel owners, financiers, bankers, and the like, in addition to criminals, gangsters, killers, opium dealers, police-military types, and monks. Its secretariat was set up with Watthana as Coordinator, and its first newspaper published in late August 1975. *Maharat*,29 March 1975, 4-6; id., 30 August 1975, 3; idem, 6 September 1975, 12; idem, 13 September 1975, 5; *Athipat*, 18 April 1975, 5; id., 22 April 1975, 5; id., 8 July 1975, 1; id., 5 August 1975, 4. For the official explanation of the name *"Nawaphon,"* see the first issue of its paper, *Kaen Prachachon*, 28 August 1975, 2.

79. *Maharat*, 29 March 1975, 6.

80. Details in Nawon Bangpakong's editorial, ibid., 4.

81. B.R.O'G. Anderson, et al., "Thailand Fact Sheet (1932-1976)," unpubl. ms. (Cornell University), 8. I do not know the original source for this.

82. *Athipat*, 9 May 1975, 11; *Maharat*, 6 September 1975, 12.

83. *Chaturat*, 17 August 1976, reviews this campaign well.

84. Quotations from *The Asian Student*, 20 December 1975 and 5 January 1976.

85. A brief chronology of these incidents following the DRV foreign minister's visit in *Chaturat*, 15 September 1976, 20-21. A copy of a very lengthy declaration of policy and list of complaints in detail against the refugees, distributed as flyers by the "Anti-Vietnam Refugees Group of Thailand," is on p. 22 of this issue. Other instances of violence against the refugees in these weeks are recorded in letters from 26 Vietnamese refugees in That Phanom District, Nakhon Phanom Province, to *Chaturat*, 7 September 1976, 2-3, and id., 28 September 1976, 3-4: letter from ten refugees from Muang District, Nakhon Phanom Province.

86. See interview with Interior Minister Samak in *Chaturat*, 7 September 1976, 31-35. For other inflammatory statements by the interior ministry, see *Chaturat*, 17 August 1976, 16-18.

87. The foregoing based on interviews with the persons mentioned by *Chaturat*, loc. cit.

88. Interviews with persons mentioned by *Chaturat*, 14 September 1976, 19-24.

89. *Chaturat*, 21 September 1976, 1; *Prachachat*, 16 September 1976, 11-12. On Liem Tran, see text, p. 23, and notes 31 and 59 above.

90. *Chaturat*, 28 September 1976, 6-7. On 18 September 1976 Premier Seni Pramot virtually scoffed at the AP Bureau news report stating that the DRV had announced that it would extend its influence to all the countries of Indochina—an announcement that was in fact, to my knowledge, never made in that context. See Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Thailand, 21 September 1976.

91. The "most reliable of all sources" in this case is one that naive Western press correspondents would never think of consulting: the Chinese Benevolent Society, known locally as the *Po Tek Tung*, which is by hoary tradition responsible for gathering up corpses in Bangkok. Anonymous #1, a source in Bangkok, obtained this information directly from the *Po Tek Tung*. The latter noted the figure 300 did not include bodies picked up by others, for which there was no count. It also noted that many bodies were too mutilated for relatives to identify.

92. *Washington Post*, (October 1976 (Simons, Bangkok); *Manichi*, 8 October 1976 (Shibata and Ito, Bangkok); *Le Monde*, 9 October 1976 (de Beer, Bangkok). The most sensible coverage of the coup was by Martin Woolacott in *The Guardian*, 17 October 1976. The most terrifying repercussion of the long-nurtured American image about an innately aggressive DRV came eight days after the coup when senior Thai officials asked the United States, through the embassy in Bangkok, for nuclear weapons to forestall an alleged Vietnamese attack: symbolically a bald request for the ultimate in American technology in the breech to forestall the tide of social revolution enveloping the elite in Bangkok. See Jeffrey Stein, "Thais Sought Nukes from the U.S.," PNS, Washington.

93. Examples of this reportage in *Le Monde*, 17 October 1976 (de Beer, Bangkok); *San Jose Mercury*, 19 October 1976 (UPI, Bangkok); *New York Times*, 3 November 1976 (AP, Bangkok); *Washington Post*, 27 October 1976 (L. Simons, Bangkok).

94. Indochina Resource Center, *A Time to Heal: The Effects of*

War on Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and America, Washington, 1976, 4 ff.

95. Quotations from *New York Times*, 3 November 1976 (AP, Nongkhai); *Washington Post*, 27 October 1976 (L. Simons, Nakhon Phanom). The latter's (Simon's) phraseology, particularly, suggests that he had just been reading the works of Poole and Keyes cited elsewhere in this study (see esp. note 71 above). The reportage of other established press correspondents such as Patrice de Beer, George Macarthur and David Andleman was interspersed with similar cliches and uncritically applied stereotypes.

96. *New Asia News*, 26 November 1976.

97. *Mainichi*, 19 November 1976 (Shibata, Bangkok).

98. *New Asia News*, 26 November 1976.

99. Interview with Samak in *Chaturat*, 7 September 1976, 31-35.

100. After his own elevation to the top interior ministry post, Samak immediately instituted personnel shifts, including the transfer into the ministry of Pol. General Sirisuk, as a vice minister, and the elevation of Pol. Lt. General Monchai Phankhonchoen to be acting police director. Anonymous #1.

101. The date December 9 would be December 8 in the Western hemisphere. Samak's conference reported in *Bangkok Deli Thaim*, 9 December 1976, 1, 3, 16. A day earlier Pacifica News Radio, Berkeley, quoted a Reuters dispatch saying Thai defense ministry officials claimed to have secret documents proving the DRV was going to invade Thailand within two months.

102. *Thai Samakkhi* (an opposition newspaper published in the United States in Thai language), 1 January 1977, 4, cites *Nan Dhan* and other Vietnamese newspapers reacting to the wild charges of the interior minister.

103. Boonsanong, "Minority Groups . . .," 24.

He was returning home from a party in his car, alone. When he slowed to turn into his lane off the main highway, he met two gunmen. There were three shots, the fatal one hitting him in the neck.

Boonsanong Punyodyana

Boonsanong Punyodyana: Thai Socialist and Scholar, 1936-1976

by Carl A. Trocki

Dr. Boonsanong Punyodyana fell to an assassin's bullet at about 1:30 a.m. on 28 February, 1976. At the time of his death, he was the Secretary-General of the Socialist Party of Thailand. There is little doubt that his death was politically motivated. Since few among Thailand's ruling elite regretted his passing, not many expect his murderers to be apprehended. He will be sorely missed however, by his wife and two daughters, by his academic colleagues, and by the Thai people.

Boonsanong was both a brilliant scholar and a tireless fighter for his political ideals. He was one of those rare social scientists who was able to excel on both the abstract and the practical levels. Among the many who mourned him there were thousands of students, academicians, writers and artists, farmers, laborers, civil servants, especially the nation's progressives. More than 10,000 people attended the memorial orations held at Thammasat University a few days after his death. They recognized his death as a symbolic blow to themselves and to democracy in Thailand.

As one of the founding members and leaders of the Socialist Party of Thailand, Boonsanong worked to build this political group into a people's party. He was the party's mentor and wrote most of its platforms and policy statements. He wanted the party to educate and mobilize the people to build democratic socialism in Thailand.

This task was not an easy one. As he pointed out in a paper delivered at a symposium in Tokyo which appropriately coincided with the October 14, 1973, uprising, few Thais, including intellectuals, had a clear concept of what socialism was. Under Thailand's military regimes the study of progressive social thought had consistently been forbidden. As a result he found it necessary to conduct regular study sessions for his own party members, most of whom were students or recent graduates.

The Socialist Party of Thailand was a new kind of party with a new brand of politics. Most political parties in Thailand have been, and remain today, mere groupings of politicians held together only by financial support and a general greed for power and the wealth that comes with it. The outcome of elections is determined by the number of votes which candidates can buy. Since the Socialist Party of Thailand championed the cause of the poor and exploited masses of the Thai people, it found little financial support. Since it had no wealthy backers it won few elections. In addition, by mid-1975 the party found itself first the object of a vicious slander campaign followed by bombings, official harassment, and ultimately assassination.

If anyone understood the repressive and exploitative nature of Thai society, it was Boonsanong. His research as a sociologist had given him a clear conception of the conservative underpinnings of the Thai social system. This awareness came partly from his study of Norman Jacobs' theory of "modernization without development,"[1] as well as from personal experience in community development work in Thailand.

In his writings, Boon attacked the concepts of Thai society which had been put forward by Embree and Phillips and other Western scholars.[2] As a Thai, he understood only too well the essential hypocrisy which lay behind the "smiling Siamese" facade. Thai society is not "loosely structured." Rather, the Thai peasantry is permanently and deliberately atomized in order to ensure continued domination by a very closed and rigidly-structured elite group. Thai peasants have been pictured as lazy, easy-going and obedient to elders and authority. Boon saw these attitudes as the peasants' simple acknowledgement of their condition. Why work harder when the surplus will only go to the landlord, the money-lender or the tax collector? Why fight when the only reward is a bullet in the head? Boonsanong's fate is proof of the effectiveness of his critique of Thai society.

From Scholar to Socialist

The Thai educated elite has had a clearly defined social status and role which David Wilson has characterized as follows:

> *The educated leadership of the nation is a career group. Their place in society is made. They have opportunities for useful, responsible and satisfying work for which their training is designed to prepare them. Such a group, having a substantial stake in society as it is presently arranged, would understandably be conservative insofar as fundamental social change is concerned.*

Boonsanong died because he deviated from this norm. As a student and then as a scholar, he had reaped the benefits that his society could offer him. An intelligent and ambitious young man from the northern Thai town of Chieng Rai, Boonsanong excelled in the highly competitive Thai educational system. In fact, at first he appeared to be closely wedded to the establishment. After graduating from Chulalongkorn University in 1959, he worked for the Thai government, preparing English translations of official manuals. His skill in English and his familiarity with the Thai

governmental structure gained him employment with the United States Information Service in Bangkok as a writer and researcher. In 1962, he won a Fulbright-Hayes Scholarship to study for the Master's degree in sociology at the University of Kansas. At that point, one would not have predicted that he would one day lead student demonstrators to rip the brazen eagle from the gate of the U.S. Embassy on Wireless Road, as he did following the Mayaguez incident last year.

After receiving the M.A., Boonsanong returned to Thailand where he joined the staff of Thammasat University as a lecturer in sociology. In 1967 he returned to the U.S. and spent five extremely productive years there. He completed a Ph.D. in sociology at Cornell University, published several articles, spent a year at Harvard and another year as Visiting Professor at the University of Hawaii. By the time of his return to Thailand in 1972, he had established himself as an internationally recognized scholar in his field. It was a record that few of his colleagues in Thailand could equal, including those who were many years his senior.

Boonsanong had gained more than just academic skills and titles during his years in America. The social and political context could not help but affect him. It was the period of the rise of the student movement against the war in Vietnam on American campuses, and the formation of the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars within Asian studies centers, including the Southeast Asia Studies Center at Cornell where Boon studied. In April 1970 he attended the second national CCAS convention in San Francisco, contributing a paper entitled "False assumptions: the sources of difficulty in Thai economic development." On his return to Thailand he was considered very "American" for his failure to maintain the correct social distance from the masses expected by other elites of a man of his status and background. He was open and non-elitist, rarely passing up an opportunity to engage a person in conversation, whether that person was a university dean or a man selling noodle soup from a pushcart in the street.

Back at Thammasat University in June 1972, he immediately became one of the university's leading activists. This was a time of general intellectual ferment. Boon was in his element, writing papers, attending meetings, carrying out research, organizing and lecturing to hundreds of rapt and enthusiastic young people. The student movement which was to overthrow the military dictatorship was beginning and Thammasat was its epicenter.

Political Activities

Boonsanong's life was profoundly affected by the events of 14 October 1973, when the students rose up and drove out the dictators, Prapas Charusathian, and Thanom and Narong Kittikachorn. Although he happened to be attending a scholarly conference in Japan on those fateful days, he had been a prime figure in the movement which led up to *sip-see tula*, the day from which everything is now dated. With about 100 of his colleagues and students from Thammasat and other universities he had signed a petition requesting a constitution and the restoration of democratic government. It was the arrest of thirteen of these petitioners on 12 October that had touched off the student demonstrations.

Boonsanong returned to Bangkok on the first available flight from Japan where he had, appropriately enough, delivered a paper on "Socialism and Social Change in Thailand." He immediately plunged into the ferment of political activity generated by the popular movement and the prospect of democratic government. As one of the authors of the petition for a constitution, he was in the forefront of the movement to build a progressive democratic structure in Thailand. With the National Student Center of Thailand (NSCT) leader, Thirayut Boonmee, and a number of others, Boonsanong founded the People for Democracy Group (PDG) in early 1974. The PDG was intended as a pressure group to promote democratic reforms, education in democracy for the people and to influence the government and the committees being formed to draft the new constitution. The PDG quickly became the vanguard of the progressive forces in the country.

Boonsanong was also chosen by the King as one of the 2600-odd members of the constituent assembly which was to elect an interim parliamentary body while the constitution and elections were being prepared. At this point he began to acquire some very serious enemies—the military, the senior bureaucrats, the King's Privy Council, the capitalists, and the police. He found himself marked as a radical and a "dangerous" person.

At this time, Boon began to move out of academic life and to become a politician. After the constitution had been written and elections scheduled, the PDG became the nucleus for a number of other progressive groups which included labor unionists, farmers' organizations, students, and the "old" socialists from the Northeast. About 50 meetings were held, mostly at Boon's house during December 1974. There were negotiations, positions hammered out, a platform and ideology was formulated, with Boon doing the pushing and most of the writing. All of this resulted in the formation of the Socialist Party of Thailand (SPT). Boon became secretary-general of the party, a position which he held until his death.

In the election of January 1975, Thailand's first under the new constitution, about 10 members of the new Socialist Party won seats. Having chosen to run in a Bangkok constituency which was a stronghold of the Democratic Party of Seni Pramoj, Boon was not elected. Throughout this period Boonsanong continued to be a major party activist, spending all his time educating, writing, speaking and organizing throughout the country. Because of his international reputation, he was able to project the voice of the people to an audience beyond the borders of Thailand. For example, the *Far Eastern Economic Review* of January 17, 1975, carried a long interview with Boonsanong entitled "The Socialist's Viewpoint." He took up the role of a gadfly and was very blunt and outspoken in criticizing government corruption, the inequities of Thai society, Thailand's involvement in the Indochina war and the U.S. military presence in Thailand. This did little to endear him to the entrenched military and bureaucratic officials who had remained in their positions since the Thanom regime. It was soon whispered that he was a "communist."

By the middle of 1975, the Thai right-wing had begun to make a comeback. They had been thrown into disrepute with the ousting of the "Terrible Trio," and had been maintaining a relatively low profile while the students, workers and farmers dominated the political scene.

Boon was at the center of the first major confrontation between the left and the newly mobilized right-wing activist groups. The death of an MP in Chieng Mai necessitated a by-election, and Boon was determined to capture the seat for

the socialists. He was the first to declare his candidacy and to begin campaigning. At first, he seemed to have a fairly good chance of winning. Then, a number of right-wing activist groups moved in to stop him and a great deal of money was thrown into a smear campaign. "Patriotic citizens" carrying M-16's and hand-grenades drove his canvassers out of the villages. His car was stopped at a police checkpoint and a number of illegal M-16's were discovered. Understandably his defeat in Chieng Mai made Boon somewhat disillusioned with electoral politics.

By the time Kukrit's government fell in January 1976 Boon had decided to resign from the secretary-generalship of the SPT and resume his academic career. He could see that social reform could not come to Thailand through the current legislative process. However, even this route was blocked. Reactionary forces were ready to smear him when he sought university positions. Therefore, although he was not a candidate for the April 4, 1976, elections, he remained as secretary-general and continued to help the party's candidates to campaign. He planned to resign after the elections.

Unfortunately, he never got the chance. He was returning home from a party in his car, alone. When he slowed to turn into his lane off the main highway, he met two gunmen. There were three shots, the fatal one hitting him in the neck. It was obviously a professional "hit." The gunmen quickly disappeared and police investigations have been conspicuously ineffective.

The impact of his two years and nine months in Thailand can still not be fully measured. Boonsanong represented the spirit of Thai democracy. The collapse of the Seni government in September 1976 is only the flesh rotting from the long-dead corpse. Boon's legacy is the body of his scholarly work and the Socialist Party of Thailand. The SPT is now in the process of falling back on the people in preparation for the coming wave of repression. Perhaps one day they will re-emerge from the ashes to rebuild the kind of society that Boon envisaged. ☆

Notes

1. See Norman Jacobs, *Modernization without Development: Thailand as an Asian Case Study* (New York: Praeger, 1971).

2. John F. Embree's article "Thailand—A Loosely Structured Social System" published in *American Anthropologist* in 1950 had a great impact on Thai studies. The opposing argument, that there are clearly defined classes in Thailand, is put in Hans-Dieter Evers, "The Formation of a Social Class Structure: Urbanization, Bureaucratization, and Social Mobility in Thailand," *American Sociological Review*, 31 (1966), pp. 480-488. For a discussion of the question from various points of view, including Boonsanong as the only Thai contributor, see Hans-Dieter Evers, ed., *Loosely Structured Social Systems: Thailand in Comparative Perspective*, Cultural Report Series No. 17, (New Haven: Yale Southeast Asian Studies, 1969).

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[The following interview with Boonsanong Punyodyana was conducted by Norman Peagam of the Far Eastern Economic Review *and printed in* FEER *in January 1975. Reprinted by permission.]*

Interview

How did you become involved in politics?

Since my undergraduate days, I have thought it the duty of everyone to be concerned about politics. I took an active part in demonstrations against Pibul (Field Marshal Pibul Songkhram) in 1957 and I have written in Thai and English about socialism and the future of Thailand. I have always admired my fellow-countrymen who sacrificed their comfort and freedom for the bettermen of Thai society; I have many friends who have been in prison for political reasons. Since I had the opportunity of a good education and come from a *petit bourgeois* background, I think it would be selfish and irresponsible of me to think only of the good life and isolate myself from the masses. When I returned from my professorship in the United States in 1972 (Visiting Professor at the University of Hawaii), I immediately became active in speaking and writing and joined student groups. Since October 1973, I have continued to be active. For example, helping the Civil Liberties Union and People for Democracy Group.

The Communist Party of Thailand was recently reported as saying that only the seizure of power by armed force could establish a "people's government" in Thailand. What do you think of that?

There is nothing new in that statement. In fact, the Communist Party of Thailand has engaged in armed struggle for about ten years and the Thai Government has found it impossible to disengage. We can understand why many people in this country are unwilling to show faith in elections. As you know, even in the present election, every candidate supported by right-wing parties is using huge sums of money and all sorts of non-political tactics to mislead the voters. You can count on your fingers the number of workers and farmers—and they constitute the vast majority of the population—who are able to stand for election. We have a few in our party, but they are the exception rather than the rule.

How would you deal with the problem of insurgency?

As long as our Government remains oppressive, as long as the economic and social system of this country continues to grant privileges to the elite, the ruling class, the capitalists and the bourgeoisie, and especially as long as the Government of Thailand maintains close ties with American imperialism, it is only natural that the freedom-loving people of this country will not cease resisting. The communists are a good example of such patriotic, freedom-loving people. The Socialist Party of Thailand seriously intends to bring about fundamental change to Thai society. If we are successful, it would also be natural, as one can reasonably expect, that problems of unrest and insurgency would automatically disappear.

In several countries with a parliamentary system, disillusionment and cynicism have become apparent as elected governments fail to respond to popular demand, prove unrepresentative or as elected leaders become arrogant or corrupt. Are you optimistic about the chances for parliamentary democracy in Thailand?

We cannot be optimistic with the parliamentary system. We are well aware of the failure of the parliamentary system in many countries, including big democratic capitalist countries like the United States and Britain. As a matter of fact, many socialists in Thailand are totally disillusioned with it. This is part of the reason why we cannot field candidates in all constituencies in this election. But at the same time, we must continue our struggle wherever possible, even when the rules of the fight are defined by the capitalists. It has already been said by General Prapan (Secretary-General of the right-wing League of the Free People of Thailand) that if the Socialist Party of Thailand won 70 seats in the new Parliament, there would be a coup d'état within six months. It might happen. But we are confident that the people of Thailand, especially those elements sufficiently organized such as some of the workers and farmers, would be equally ready to fight back.

Would you nationalize any major industries?

The Socialist Party's policy concerning important industries and businesses such as banking, mining and oil production and distribution is to nationalize them for the benefit of the people. Our plan calls for fair compensation to the existing private owners in the form of bonds or long-term payments by the Government. There are already 108 existing State enterprises and we intend to raise their standards of efficiency. At present they are, at best, an expression of State capitalism and do not represent a socialist model. They serve as an outlet for retired military and civil bureaucrats who take the lion's share of the profits of these enterprises at the expense of the country's economy.

What is your party's stand on land reform?

In the long run, all farmers would be assured of the right to cultivate land and benefit according to their needs from production. They would not have the right to transfer the ownership of land. But the exchange of goods and services would be carried out according to a total national plan so that production and distribution would not be interfered with by middlemen and other non-productive elements. The sale of rice would be handled strictly by the Government for the benefit not necessarily of "the State," but primarily of the people. In socialist Thailand, all people would benefit from free education and free health care. Planning for production would not be geared to profit-making, but to the betterment of living conditions.

Are you happy about the level of Japanese involvement in the Thai economy?

I must say that, even now, there is a great trade imbalance between Thailand and Japan. Japanese investment, as a rule, is beneficial to Japanese investors as well as big Thai capitalists. In a capitalist economy, investment and business are not planned for anything else except maximum benefit for the capitalists. As such, Japanese enterprises in Thailand as well as Thai-based factories have caused a horrible amount of destruction to the environment. The emphasis on luxury goods, such as cars, is very detrimental to the economy and the quality of life. In a socialist Thailand, international trade would be handled on a state-to-state basis. Imports must be controlled so that they are beneficial to the people at large.

The Government has said that hill tribes, numbering hundreds of thousands of people in the north of the country, will not be allowed to vote in the coming elections. What is your view on this?

We have a clear policy with regard to national minorities in Thailand, for example, the Vietnamese refugees who have lived in Thailand for nearly three decades and may have had children and even grandchildren born in Thailand, the Muslims of Malay origin in the south, and the Chinese scattered throughout the country. Our policy is to incorporate these national minorities into the mainstream of Thai political life and to permit them to establish their own administrative communities under the sovereignty of Thailand. In short, the orientation is towards full democracy and equality for all people in all spheres of life, political, economic and social.

The North Vietnamese Government has said it expects Thailand to pay compensation for the damage caused by Thai-based American planes and Thai forces in Vietnam during the war. What is your opinion about this?

I think they mean the reactionary government which cooperated with imperialist America. I do not think they mean to impose any hardship.

What is your policy on the presence of U.S. forces in Thailand?

We have established a policy of having them withdrawn immediately. We would establish and maintain friendly relations with all countries, including the U.S., on the basis of equality and mutual respect. ☆

The United States, the Soviet Union and the Indian Ocean: The Competition for the Third World

by Rex Wingerter

In April 1975 the State Department ended for the time being any chances for a naval arms limitation agreement in the Indian Ocean between the United States and the Soviet Union. The State Department justified its refusal on the grounds that, with the Soviet presence in Angola and Somalia, such an initiative "might convey the mistaken impression to the Soviets and our friends and allies that we were willing to acquiesce in this type of Soviet behavior."[1] Thus, Washington has once again legitimized the construction of a new American overseas military base as a reaction to Soviet armed adventures abroad. In this case, the United States' new military outpost will be a major air and naval base at Diego Garcia, an island situated in the Indian Ocean about 2,000 miles from East Africa, 1,000 miles from southern India, and 2,400 miles from Bangkok.

What makes the State Department's reasoning unique this time, compared to past policy rationales, is that since 1968 the Soviet Union has indeed ventured into areas outside its traditional foreign policy scope. The extent of Russian support in Angola, backed with Cuban troops, is in fact something new in modern Soviet foreign policy.[2] In light of the high priority placed upon the Third World in Brezhnev's February 1976 report to the Twenty-fifth Congress of the CPSU, some U.S. officials suspect the Kremlin's operations in Angola indicate a "new trend in Soviet-Third World policy."[3] As Brezhnev proclaimed: "From the rostrum of our congress we emphasize once again that the Soviet Union fully supports the lawful aspirations of the emerging states, their determination to rid themselves of imperial exploitation and to manage their natural resources themselves."[4] The Kremlin has also disregarded the fact that detente with the United States may be threatened by Soviet support for revolution and intervention in the Third World. "Detente," stated Brezhnev, "does not in the slightest way abolish, and cannot abolish or change the laws of the class struggle."[5] In fact, Moscow views detente as a way of advancing Soviet foreign policy objectives. As Brezhnev concluded: "We do not conceal the fact that we see detente as a way to create more favorable conditions for peaceful Socialist and Communist construction."[6]

Stepped-up Soviet activities in Africa and Asia since the early 1970s indicate Moscow's forward-looking policies. Increased U.S. naval activity in the Indian Ocean has been one way Washington has responded to Soviet thrusts in the region. But this superpower competition threatens to reduce the aspirations of the littoral country to meaningless verbiage. US-USSR competition for the littoral states will increase their dependency upon one of the two major powers. Superpower rivalry also threatens to exacerbate local, indigenous conflicts into major ones. One recent study has concluded that there has been "a significant increase in the quality and quantity of military equipment in the ocean region."[7] Through these arms shipments, Washington and Moscow are strengthening their domination over the recipient states.[8] But as countries in the littoral continue to arm, and local conflicts escalate, the chances for Washington and Moscow to be pulled into a face-to-face confrontation in the Indian Ocean rapidly increase.[9]

It will be shown below that U.S. policy in the Indian Ocean has long held one primary objective: to have the military capability to influence events in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. To that end, since the early 1960s the U.S. Navy and Joint Chiefs of Staff have sought to construct a major military base on Diego Garcia. The historical record reveals that these capabilities were to defend and expand uncontested Western authority in the Indian Ocean. The aim of U.S. military power in the region was to deter indigenous revolutionary activities that threatened to break the West's economic and political hold over the littoral states.

Since 1968 the projection of Soviet influence in the Indian Ocean has been seen as substantially altering these dependency relationships. In the West, Soviet activities have largely been publicized as a *military* threat: interdict Western shipping lanes, deny access to strategic ports and passageways, etc. The Pentagon has seized upon this subject to the point of deliberately overemphasizing Soviet naval power. This has been done, in part, so as to persuade Congress and the American public to support new military construction on Diego Garcia and to enlarge U.S. naval forces world-wide.

But to conclude that the principle Soviet threat to the U.S. is a military one is incorrect. The United States still has the ability to win a conventional war at sea against the Soviet Union. Where the real challenge lies is in the economic and political realm. It is Russian aid and trade that can end Western hegemony over Third World states, including those in the Indian Ocean area. In Angola and Mozambique, for example, the Soviets have already replaced the West as the dominant foreign influence. Soviet economic policy toward the Indian Ocean region, as pointed out by Gary Gappert, a professor of economics at the University of Wisconsin, has resulted in "important breaks with the colonial and post-colonial trade system" between the West and the littoral countries. As Gappert told a Congressional subcommittee in

1971, these breaks "have occurred due to the support of both the USSR and the People's Republic of China."[10]

Such persistent Soviet economic and political advances undermine Western prerogatives in the Indian Ocean. Current evidence indicates that Soviet foreign policy now seeks to supplant Western hegemony. Elizabeth Valkenier observed that "close [Soviet] economic cooperation [with the Third World], involving as it does measures of integrations, is bound to bring the developing nations into the Soviet orbit." She concluded that "a well-coordinated and well-executed economic program has in many respects successfully replaced political infiltration as a method of Soviet penetration in the Third World."[11] Also, a recent U.S. Library of Congress research report on Soviet policy toward the Third World observed that the "Soviet Union's trade pattern with the LDC's is remarkably similar to that of the highly industrialized nations of the West."[12] In what appears to be a classical imperialist relationship, Moscow imports raw materials from the Third World while exporting manufactured products and capital equipment. One specialist on Communist trade with the Third World concluded that Soviet-Third World trade relationships "has the effect of perpetuating a trade pattern which in another context the Communists label 'imperialistic.'"[13]

What we are witnessing in the Indian Ocean, then, is the deterioration of a world system created after World War II and dominated by the United States. As we will see, the original importance of using a military base at Diego Garcia against revolutionary activity in Africa, South Asia and the Middle East may now have been diminished by Russian economic advances. To understand how the United States is attempting to defend against Soviet imperial encroachment in the littoral states, we must first review Washington's original strategic plans toward the Indian Ocean.

Historical Background

Prior to the 1960s, U.S. policy relied primarily upon Great Britain to provide a stabilizing influence in the western Indian Ocean. England's "East of Suez" policy for dozens of years had helped to contain outbreaks of local insurgency and provided a symbol of Western power in a region where no other great power was active. The United States strongly supported Britain's role in the area. According to one British author, in 1962 the Kennedy Administration exerted "considerable pressure to keep Britain east of Suez," even to the point of informing London that it would rather see a reduction of British forces in Europe than in the Indian Ocean.[14] Nevertheless, by early 1962 at the latest, the Pentagon had concluded that in future years, Britain would be unable or unwilling to protect America's growing interests in the region. The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) then "recommended making arrangements with the British that would assure the availability of selected islands in the Indian Ocean."[15] A U.S. General Accounting Office report concluded that "by 1963, [the Department of] Defense had firm plans for facilities in Diego Garcia."[16]

Four factors prompted the Navy and the JCS to expand U.S. military activities in the Indian Ocean. First was the growing economic importance of the littoral regions to the United States; second, was the rapid spread of anti-European colonial revolutions; third, was the 1960 Congo situation; and fourth, was the 1962 India-China war.

First, U.S. exports to Africa and Asia totalled $1.9 billion in 1950. Ten years later this amount had increased to $4.9 billion and by 1965 to $7.2 billion. In 1970, the total export value of U.S. goods to the Indian Ocean area was $11.5 billion.[17] Between 1960 and 1965, therefore, U.S. exports to Africa and Asia averaged twice as much as they did in the preceding ten years and, compared to the 1950s, U.S. exports nearly tripled during the 1960s.

Thus, during the first half of the 1960s, Washington policy-makers began to perceive the economic importance of the countries surrounding the Indian Ocean. Since one of the historic functions of the U.S. Navy has been to protect overseas interests, it is not surprising that the Pentagon began to expand its military presence in the region.[18]

A second, related motivation for increasing U.S. military capabilities in the Indian Ocean was that the expansion of U.S. trade and investment is dependent upon the political security and financial opportunities of the potential host states.

Nowhere does the Soviet fleet have "access to full-service installations that can compare to the U.S. Navy facilities at Subic Bay in the Philippines, Yokosuka in Japan, or Rota in Spain." Diego Garcia can soon be added to this list, as could probably Simonstown, South Africa . . .

Investors and traders must be assured of a safe and hospitable climate in foreign countries for their overseas activities to continue. Yet during the early 1960s, the entire region was marked by political instability. Traditional dependency relations between the West and its former colonies had been altered. Also, expanding guerrilla warfare in Southeast Asia thoroughly alarmed a number of top level Pentagon officials. Indeed, the Pentagon Papers relate that in 1964, Secretary of Defense McNamara told President Kennedy that defeating insurgency in South Vietnam would be a "test case" for stopping other "wars of national liberation" in Asia, Africa and Latin America.[19]

McNamara's perception of the insurgency in South Vietnam demonstrated the Kennedy Administration's distrust for this rapid proliferation of new, unstable states in the Indian Ocean region. There was a real possibility that these nations, freed from Europe's direct control, would turn away from a Western capitalist orientation and toward socialism. Furthermore, indigenous revolutionary movements threatened to topple some pro-Western governments. The victory of such movements or the existence of such states could severely constrain U.S. access to raw materials and economic markets in the Indian Ocean region. Moreover, if such states were allied with Russia or China, the political implications in world affairs would be immense. In short, the region potentially was becoming too unstable and American interests there too large to be left unguarded. In 1971 Robert Pranger, then Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Affairs for Policy Plans and N.S.C. Affairs, summarized the U.S. government's fears and goals in the region:

> *[T]he endemic instability of many of the states of the region has caused events and outbreaks of violence that have not been foreseen with accuracy, and more such*

events can probably be expected in the future . . . the United States would not want to see the oil, population, territory, and other resources of the region to fall under the control of any adversary or combination of adversaries able to threaten the United States.[20]

The Congo situation in 1960 reinforced the Pentagon's early perceptions of the strategic importance of the Indian Ocean. To officials in the Navy and the JCS, these events may have seemed like prophecies come true. Washington believed Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba had successfully consolidated a radical nationalist regime in the Congo (now called Zaire) which was bent on strengthening its ties with the Soviet Union. In response, the United States initiated plans to bring down the regime, including the assassination of Lumumba by the CIA. After the Prime Minister's death, U.S. covert intervention continued via assistance and support to moderate groups. This ultimately helped to establish Zaire as a relatively stable, pro-Western ally.[21]

The fourth reason for expanding U.S. military capability in the ocean was the India-China war. When the conflict erupted in 1962, the suspicions of U.S. policy-makers were confirmed. The war "proved" to them that China was a combative aggressor against India, bent on expanding into all of Asia.[22] Faced with what they believed to be Soviet and/or Chinese-inspired guerrilla insurgency in the region, American policy-makers were further convinced by this war of the need to strengthen U.S. presence in the Indian Ocean. In fact, the conflict was a major impetus in the formulation of U.S. policy designs toward the area in the immediate years following the war. According to the 1971 Congressional testimony of Robert Spiers, Director of the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs of the State Department, the

Departments of State and Defense began thinking of the longer term strategic requirements of the United States in the Indian Ocean area. This was the actual inception of the British Indian Ocean Territory [agreement].[23]

The "Purchase" of Diego Garcia

By 1963 the United States had begun to formulate an Indian Ocean strategic policy. Diego Garcia became the focal point of U.S. planning and for many years these efforts were kept secret except for disclosure to a few high ranking officials. Testifying before Congressional hearings in 1973 on his role as a strategic planner in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations and the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1968, Rear Admiral (Ret.) Gene LaRocque stated that

many plans to establish new overseas naval bases were kept highly secret in order not to alarm foreign countries or the American people and Congress. Diego Garcia was selected because of its central location and potential for a major naval base rather than simply because it could serve as a site for a communications facility.[24]

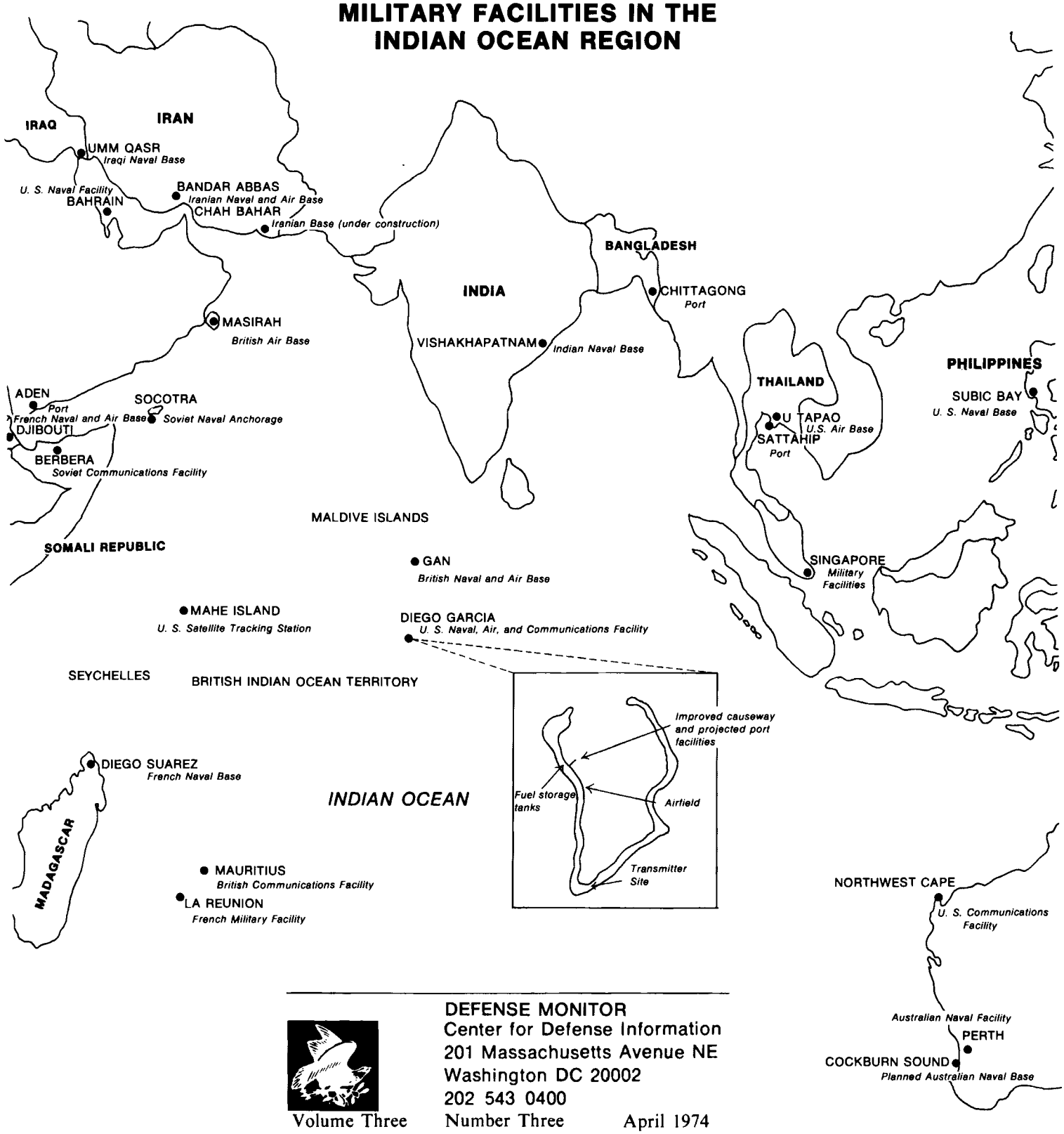
The Pentagon's reluctance to make the plans public was due to the strong likelihood that Congress would reject any proposals to build a military base on Diego Garcia. During a period of slow but growing public opposition over U.S. involvement in Vietnam, the military leaders decided that it was not the time to publicize plans to expand U.S. military presence in the Indian Ocean. The effect of this decision on policy planning toward Diego Garcia was twofold. First, officials in the Departments of State and Defense formulated and implemented policies without letting them be known to any publicly elected body that might have questioned them. Second, when some of these plans were made public, they were expressed in such a manner as to obfuscate their primary objectives. The overall result was that top U.S. Navy officials, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and high ranking State and Defense Department personnel consistently misled Congress and the American public.

In 1963 the Departments of State and Defense began to implement an Indian Ocean strategy. A request was submitted to the Pentagon's budget staff for military construction funds for Fiscal Year 1964 for Diego Garcia. But because the island was still owned by Mauritius and the Seychelles and basing rights were not yet available, the request was denied. To resolve this impasse personnel in the Departments of State and Defense assisted Britain in forming the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT), a group of islands which included Diego Garcia. In brief, this entailed helping Britain to purchase a number of islands belonging to Mauritius and the Seychelles. In December of 1966, the United States and Great Britain confidentially agreed to make these islands (now the BIOT) available for joint defensive purposes for at least fifty-five years. In a classified note to the agreements, the United States "agreed to provide up to half of the total British detachment costs, but not to exceed $14 million."[25] In the original plan, increments of this money were to be provided to London through a waiver of the usual five percent research and development surcharge on the 1963 U.S.-U.K. Polaris Sales Agreement. The total amount would have been paid over the following years. Yet because it was feared that deteriorating economic conditions in Britain would force an early British withdrawal from the area, secret financial arrangements were negotiated to expedite the process. On orders from then-Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, the Defense Department provided the entire $14 million to Britain shortly after entering into the 1966 agreement.

According to the General Accounting Office, these financial arrangements did not technically violate U.S. law. But two points are clear. First, State and Defense Department officials worked closely together to obtain U.S. basing rights on Diego Garcia. This became a "rush job" once it was suspected that Britain might be pulling its troops out of the area. Second, even though these agreements had great impact on U.S. foreign policy, it was years later that Congress was informed about them. As the GAO observed, "despite evidence that the financing method was seemingly settled by State and Defense as early as 1965, it was not until 1969 that these arrangements were first disclosed to a member of Congress." Such confidential practices effectively excluded Congress from any role in the policy process; Congress was left to rubber stamp decisions that were already finalized by the State and Defense Departments. The GAO report concluded that "the method of financing—a technique which masked real plans and costs—was clearly a circumvention of the congressional oversight role."[26] Nevertheless, U.S. basing rights on Diego Garcia were secured.

Soon after the conclusion of this agreement with Britain, the Navy and the JCS sought to expand the facilities on the island. Although the original 1964 intra-department request was for funds to build an "austere" communications base,

MILITARY FACILITIES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION



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even in that proposal the underlying future plans for Diego Garcia can be detected. For instance, a prerequisite for expanding a military presence anywhere is a system of communications lines. At Diego Garcia the plans called for the construction of a sophisticated radio system that would integrate the island into the Pentagon's communications network stretching from the North West Cape of Australia to Silvermine, South Africa. As a result, the United States would be able to track almost every vessel that might travel in the area. More importantly, the network would allow for the safe expansion of a U.S. naval presence in the Indian Ocean.[27]

The Systems Analysis Office of the Defense Department also questioned whether the JCS intended to limit construction of Diego Garcia only to communications facilities. In fact, Earl Ravenal, former Director of the Asia Division, Systems Analysis of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, argued at the time that such facilities were not needed. According to Ravenal, in the summer of 1967, the Joint Chiefs of Staff again requested the Defense Department to expand the facilities on the island. This project included, among other things, expanding communications capabilities. After a cost-benefit analysis, Ravenal and his associates rejected the proposal. They concluded that communications objectives would soon be provided by satellite, the littoral states would react unfavorably to the proposed expansion, and new military facilities on the island "would stimulate a competitive naval buildup in the Indian Ocean."[28] Nevertheless, in the spring of 1968, the Navy and the JCS resubmitted their proposal after having completed a survey of potential problems which could erupt around the Indian Ocean arc. This time their request was in the form of a traditional bureaucratic ploy, usually known as Option B.[29] On the one hand, the Navy and the JCS proposed a minimum option of doing nothing. On the other hand, a maximum option was offered, the original 1967 request: "oil storage, communications, air staging operations, staging of ground forces, forward basing of submarines and other vessels."[30] In the middle of these two extremes was Option B, a request the Navy and the JCS thought they could not convince the Defense Department's budget staff to grant. It called for expanding communications facilities and developing the island into a forward base for nuclear submarine deployments. The Systems Analysis office examined the proposal and again rejected it for reasons that were similar to the 1967 denial.

A U.S. military base on an unpopulated island meant there could be no problem from "natives." ... But a sizable community did live on the island. At least one thousand residents had to be forcibly evicted by the British authorities in order to satisfy the security demands put forth by the Pentagon. Furthermore, Diego Garcia was not the only island to be "depopulated."

In the meantime, the Nixon Administration had come to power, bringing new people and a new strategy for American foreign policy to Washington. The new Administration soon approved Option B in 1969 and the recommendation of the Systems Analysis was reversed, giving the Navy and the JCS their first "foot in the door" in Diego Garcia. In March of 1970, the Department of Defense requested and received from Congress $5.4 million for the first increment of funding for Diego Garcia. In 1971 and 1972 Congress approved two more requests totalling $15 million.

During this process, the Pentagon assured Congress time and time again that Diego Garcia was uninhabited. A U.S. military base on an unpopulated island meant there could be no problem from the "natives." This idea appealed to many Congressional representatives and made the passage of military construction funds easier for the Defense Department.[31] But a sizable community did live on the island. At least one thousand residents had to be forcibly evicted by the British authorities in order to satisfy the security demands put forth by the Pentagon. Furthermore, Diego Garcia was not the only island to be "depopulated." The neighboring islands of Salamon and Peros Banhos were also cleared of their inhabitants as well. All the islands' residents were moved to Mauritius, an island 1,200 miles away, between 1968 and 1971.[32]

Plans for the Future

It is evident that the Nixon Administration—like the Pentagon before it—seriously misled the Congress by arguing that Diego Garcia was uninhabited. Why did the administration and the Pentagon want all the neighboring islands depopulated if only an "austere" communications facility was to be built on Diego Garcia? The only logical answer to this question is that since the early 1960s the Navy, the JCS and the Departments of Defense and State had always intended to develop Diego Garcia into a major American military base. Given their experience in Southeast Asia, the Pentagon could not allow a base of this importance to share the island with a potentially troublesome indigenous population. Indeed, as a result of America's experience in Vietnam, U.S. global military strategy has increasingly turned toward island bases as launchpads for military operations—a design one perceptive student of U.S. foreign policy has aptly labeled "America's naval/island strategy."[33]

The primary purpose of Diego Garcia, therefore, has been to serve as a base from which to bring rapid and credible threats against any regional state in the Indian Ocean that might act against the interests of the United States. For instance, in regard to England's strategic planning, *The Economist,* believing in late 1967 that the island of Aldabra would be chosen for a basing site instead of Diego Garcia, argued the island's merits to Britain's military forces by predicting that

> *troops carriers could fly from Britain via the American base on the British island of Ascension, either across central or southern Africa, or if both were blocked to overflying, round the Cape of Good Hope. The Good Hope route would require no other government's permission for its use. From Aldabra the planes could then fly on to all points of the compass—to the Far East, to Australia, to India, to Arabia and the Persian Gulf, or to Africa. For operations in east or central Africa the island could also be used as a base for strike aircraft to support the infantry.*[34]

Because of surprisingly strong opposition from conservation groups in England (the island was the home of a near extinct species of bird), Aldabra was rejected for military use. Nevertheless, Diego Garcia can fulfill the same function for the military forces of the United States and Britain.

In the United States, some of the news media were coming to the same conclusions as *The Economist.* An article by *U.S. News and World Report* concerning the U.S. Navy's plans for "handling other 'Vietnams' " reported on the Navy's search for islands from which to operate "fast, nuclear power attack carriers." It said that Diego Garcia was a prime choice because it was within "easy striking distance" of the Indian subcontinent, East Africa, and the Middle East. It could offer protection for Australia and New Zealand, and the lagoon at Diego Garcia was large enough to hold the Pacific Fleet.[35]

The island's function was also indicated in the Pentagon's contingency plans. According to Earl Ravenal, in 1968 military officials had presented him with about two dozen potential problems which would call for the use of U.S. armed action. All of these problems were considered to be "far inland" from the coast lines of the littoral states. The conflicts envisioned by the JCS and the Navy were close to "the Himalayas and interior regions of Burma" and "all [were] located several thousand miles from Diego Garcia."[36] Furthermore, after considering these plans and reviewing the Pentagon's policies toward Diego Garcia, Ravenal concluded that this island was to be more than an "austere" naval facility. He told a House subcommittee in 1973:

> *It is my impression from reviewing these proposals in the Defense Department in the late sixties that it has always been the ultimate intention of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Navy to create a major, complete, multi-purpose base, not just a naval base but a base that is also capable of housing mobile projection forces—Marines or air-lifted Army divisions—and of course long range bombing planes. It would be a mere extension of the capabilities of the proposed base, for instance, to accommodate the outrigger wheels on the wings of the B-52.*[37]

According to Admiral Zumwalt, former Chief of Naval Operations, these interventionist activities are necessary to protect and enforce U.S. interests in the Indian Ocean and thus to defend America's position as the world's foremost hegemonic power.

> *"Our interests in the Indian Ocean," he argued in 1974, "are directly linked with our interests in Europe and Asia . . . it follows that we must have the ability to influence events in that area, and the capability to deploy our military power in the region is an essential element of such influence. That in my judgment, is the crux of the rationale for what we are planning to do at Diego Garcia."*[38]

Zumwalt's reasoning was echoed in more immediate terms a few months later by Admiral John McCain, former commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet. When asked to comment on the revolutions in Mozambique and Angola and the subsequent closure of U.S. naval port rights there, McCain concluded that "what has happened in Mozambique and Angola makes our possession of Diego Garcia more important than ever. But it also means that we absolutely need access to the South African naval facilities at Simonstown and Durban."[39]

The necessary infrastructure that would allow Washington to practice gunboat diplomacy is currently being built on the island of Diego Garcia. By early 1979, the expected date when the facilities will be fully operational, the United States will have a permanent military base in the Indian Ocean. First, communications facilities that will allow the United States to monitor all naval traffic in the ocean are being built. Second, the harbor will be dredged and widened and a 500-foot berthing pier will be built to accommodate a carrier task force (one carrier and four destroyers). This type of task force according to Admiral Zumwalt "is the principle element of naval power that would be supported out of Diego Garcia."[40] In addition, the harbor will be able to host Polaris and Poseidon submarines. Third, the runway will be lengthened from 8,000 to 12,000 feet to permit large cargo aircraft, tankers and strategic reconnaissance aircraft to operate safely. Long-range patrol aircraft like the P-3 Orion ASW will operate from Diego Garcia to search for submarines or surface warships almost anywhere in the central region of the Indian Ocean. Once the runway is lengthened, it will be able to accommodate the massive C-51 cargo transport plane which can carry 80 combat troops equipped with tanks or trucks and howitzers. Although there is dispute over whether or not B-52s would be able regularly to use the runway, Pentagon officials have admitted that in a pinch a B-52 could land. But even if it could not, the KC-135 tanker which refuels the B-52 in flight would be able to use the island. To service and operate the increased number of U.S. naval and air forces, the fuel storage capacity on the island will be increased to hold 700,000 barrels of fuel. Living quarters will also be expanded to accommodate at least 600 military personnel.[41] Finally, there is a possibility that the Joint Chiefs of Staff may create a separate operations division, perhaps called the Middle East Indian Ocean command, to coordinate American military activities in the region.[42] Some observers, such as former Senator Mike Mansfield, see these developments as the beginnings of a three-ocean navy, "with costs as high as $8 billion to construct a third fleet and up to $800 million annually to maintain it."[43]

Since 1945, small U.S. warships have operated from a small naval base at Bahrain in the Persian Gulf. Their principle missions have been to visit African and Red Sea states as a demonstration of American interest and presence in the region. However, after the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the Middle East took on added importance in the Pentagon's contingency plans. On December 1, 1973, then-Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger announced the establishment of regular U.S. Navy visits to the Indian Ocean, visits that would include major destroyers and aircraft carriers. Later, Admiral Zumwalt justified further expansion of the military facilities on Diego Garcia by saying that they would "enhance our capabilities to bring power to bear in the Indian Ocean and this [would] have a stabilizing effect on a Middle East crisis and make it likelier that the situation which results is . . . favorable to U.S. interests."[44] Another contingency plan is to project U.S. armed forces against the Persian Gulf states. When President Ford and Henry Kissinger initiated such a policy during the Arab oil embargo, they had to rely upon a task force sent from Subic Bay in the Pacific. Once Diego Garcia is fully operational, this dependence on the bases in the Philippines will no longer be necessary. Yet the oil-rich Middle East would not be the only area included in Washington's plans. Once the

construction on Diego Garcia is completed in 1979, the entire landmass around the Indian Ocean will be vulnerable to the threat of swift U.S. armed intervention.

Throughout the initial planning and implementation of American Indian Ocean policy, the Soviet Union was never seriously regarded as a direct threat to U.S. interests in the region. Only since the late 1960s have the advocates of an increasing U.S. military presence in the Indian Ocean based their arguments on the Soviet Union's expanding naval activities. According to spokesmen like Alvin Cottrell, Director of Research at the Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies, and R. M. Burrell, professor at the University of London, Moscow has been building a well integrated, offensive navy that may soon be able to neutralize U.S. naval power anywhere in the world. They insist that the Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean is a direct threat to U.S. commercial shipping, particularly to oil tankers leaving the Persian Gulf.[45]

Although a thorough examination of the changes and developments in the Soviet navy is beyond the scope of this essay, evidence to support three propositions will be advanced in the following pages. First, the Soviet Union's naval activities in the Indian Ocean are largely to deter and to defend against U.S. ballistic missile submarines and carrier-based nuclear forces; second, the Russian navy has neither the necessary support facilities nor the naval capabilities to sustain a conventional[46] war at sea. The United States still maintains a superior and more effective navy; and thus, the possibility of Soviet interference against Western shipping lanes in the region is highly unrealistic. Thirdly, in addition to deterring a nuclear strike from U.S. forces based in the Indian Ocean, the role of the Soviet navy is to expand Soviet political and economic influence in the area and to protect their regional clients from a U.S./NATO attack.[47] It is these last two roles that have disrupted the Pentagon's original intentions and calculations for making Diego Garcia into a military base. This has thus forced U.S. policy-makers to revise American strategy in the Indian Ocean to adjust for Soviet economic and political, not military, advances in the region.

I

In support of the first proposition one need only look at the structure and deployment of the Soviet navy. Ever since the United States perfected and refined the Polaris system, the USSR has been attempting to redress the American strategic advantage. When U.S. aircraft carriers were equipped with nuclear attack forces in early 1966 and operated in regions within striking range of the Soviet homeland, this added to Russia's vulnerability. In response, the Soviet government began to construct various types of warships to defend against these threats. The Soviet fleet has made impressive strides in its antisubmarine (ASW) and anticarrier capabilities. Indeed, one observer noted that "anticarrier operations are accorded a central role in all major Soviet naval exercises."[48] At the same time, the Soviet navy has developed an extremely formidable strategic offensive capability to deter a pre-emptive U.S. nuclear strike. The development of highly effective cruise missiles gives the USSR an impressive antisurface ship capability. Moreover, the high priority the Soviet Union has placed on the development of advanced strategic submarines "now gives [them] a credible, sea-based strategic missile force. As such, for the first time, the Soviet Navy presents a direct [nuclear] threat to the continental United States."[49]

It is clear that if nuclear conflict between the superpowers were to occur, the Soviet navy currently possesses the capability to inflict "excessive" costs on the United States. Equally clear is the Soviet Union's concern over U.S. sea-based nuclear forces.

This concern was first demonstrated by Soviet naval deployments in the Mediterranean. A meticulously documented study by Goeffrey Jukes, of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, points out that when the United States began negotiations with Spain for a Polaris base there, Soviet ASW ships soon appeared on a sustained basis in the Mediterranean. Jukes concludes that while "the Soviet

forward deployment no doubt served flag-showing purposes as well, the primary reason for it must have been the emergence of the Mediterranean as an area from which a serious [U.S.] threat was posed . . ."[50]

The Soviet Navy's entrance into the Indian Ocean strongly suggests that their motivations were similar to those which initiated the Soviet deployment in the Mediterranean. Jukes observed that when the advanced Polaris A3 became operational in 1963, it opened new Russian territories for potential U.S. nuclear strikes. Jukes concluded that by 1964 the Soviet leadership must have calculated that Polaris A3 missiles launched from "the north-west corner of the Indian Ocean (the Arabian Sea) exposed to attack all areas between the Western Soviet border and Eastern Siberia, on an arc extending almost as far north as Leningrad and including all main industrial areas from the Ukraine to the [Kuznetsk Basin in western Siberia]."[51] Substance was given to this threat when the United States announced in 1963 that a naval communications facility would be built at the North-West Cape of Australia. The facility was thought to be part of a contingency plan for deploying missile submarines in the Arabian Sea.[52]

The Soviet Union's reaction to these developments was a proposal at the United Nations of December 1964 calling for a nuclear-free Indian Ocean. Whatever the propagandistic purposes of this plan, it did reflect a degree of genuine interest in arms control: some proposals were used in later, more thorough negotiations.[53] Nevertheless, when this approach failed, the Soviet Union turned to a military solution to cope with the nuclear threat from the Arabian Sea. In March 1968 Soviet warships for the first time entered the Indian Ocean. The force was composed of three ships, armed with surface-to-air (SAM—defensive only) and surface-to-surface missiles (SSM—offensive capabilities). This deployment corresponds with the patterns observed in the Mediterranean. It therefore suggests that "the role being exercised in the Indian Ocean is similar, namely that the force is equipped to defend itself against attack by [U.S.] carrier aircraft long enough for the SSM to be launched against the carrier."[54] From 1968 to 1971, Soviet naval activity in the Indian Ocean rapidly increased. Since then, the number of missions have been about two or three annually. As Jukes concluded, "the Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean has at no time been large, and it has been self-contained in that its supply ships accompany the warships."[55] Furthermore, these deployments "probably represent a combination of flag-showing force and area-familiarization detachment orientated (a mix of SSM, SAM, and ASW ships) to an anti-Polaris and/or anti-carrier role, with the additional political objective of securing de-nuclearization of the Indian Ocean."[56]

II

The growth in the Soviet Union's nuclear defense and deterrence naval capabilities has clearly been impressive. Yet at the same time, the Soviet navy has severely neglected factors that would allow sustained operations against U.S. combat vessels during a conventional war at sea.

First, compared to U.S. logistical support bases in and around the Indian Ocean, the Soviet Navy is seriously handicapped. Nowhere does the Soviet fleet have "access to full-service installations that can compare to the U.S. Navy facilities at Subic Bay in the Philippines, Yokosuka in Japan, or Rota in Spain."[57] Diego Garcia can soon be added to this list, as could probably Simonstown, South Africa, if conventional war between the superpowers erupted. Without such overseas naval bases, Russia would have to restrict substantially its naval deployments in such a conflict.

The Soviet Navy's presence in the region has been only a recent concern to the United States. In fact, high level State and Defense Department officials have stated that America's military involvement in the area would have occurred regardless of Soviet activities . . . Instead, Diego Garcia was chosen not as a response to a Soviet military threat but as a site from which to project U.S. armed force, or the threat of it, against Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

The Soviet Union has attempted to rectify this situation by increasing its presence in Berbera, Somalia. In late 1973—after the United States had announced its plans to expand the facilities on Diego Garcia—Soviet military construction teams began to build missile storage houses on Berbera. Today, the Soviet navy has access to a moderately sized supply and storage base in Somalia. Included are petroleum storage facilities that hold about 190,000 barrels, dock and port facilities and a naval communications center. An airfield is currently being widened and lengthened. There is also an elaborate and well-stocked supply of SSM, ASM and possibly SAM missiles for the Soviet navy. A group of U.S. Congressional representatives who visited Berbera in July 1975 reported that these facilities were

> *clearly beyond the present needs and the technical capabilities of current Somali military forces and personnel. The missile facility can store or handle naval missiles of a substantial size. The Somali Navy has no known capacity for using naval missiles at all.* [58]

To assist and support these activities in Berbera are about 3,000 Soviet military technicians. Undoubtedly, this represents a relatively substantial increase in Soviet naval support facilities in the Indian Ocean.[59]

At the same time, though, evidence strongly suggests that when Soviet activities were first confirmed by U.S. intelligence agencies, top level defense leaders did little or nothing to deter this buildup. Rather, they seem to have used the Soviet presence to gain Congressional support for expanding the facilities on Diego Garcia. According to former U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia James Akins, in 1975 the Saudi Government offered to finance some $15 million in economic and military assistance to Somalia. The objective of this assistance was the elimination of the Soviet presence there. Yet this offer was "stopped dead in Washington." Akins imputes Washington's vetoing of the Saudi aid to the fact that the Defense Department was then pressing Congress for additional construction funds for Diego Gardia.[60] Why the Saudis did not give aid to Somalia directly is unknown. Nevertheless, it is true that at that time the Pentagon was pressuring Congress for construction funds. In early June 1975, Secretary of Defense Schlesinger devoted nearly his entire testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee to the threat of Soviet facilities on Berbera. Soon afterward,

Congress approved $13.4 million for Diego Garcia.

Although this evidence does not prove conclusively that Washington perceived no threat from the Soviet's presence in Berbera, it does show that Berbera was manipulated by the Pentagon to influence Congressional opinion toward Diego Garcia. And, again, Congress was never informed about the Saudi aid offer during the Indian Ocean debate. Not surprisingly, the Pentagon's highly publicized warning over the Soviet activity in Berbera quickly ceased after the passage of funds for Diego Garcia. High-level policy-makers were apparently more concerned with expanding Diego Garcia than with reducing actual Soviet influence in Somalia. But even with a base at Berbera, the Soviet navy still falls short of matching the U.S. overseas logistical support facilities.[61]

The Soviet navy suffers from a second handicap. It has no "true attack carriers and thus cannot maintain air superiority over its naval forces on the high seas."[62] In the words of a Brookings analyst, the "absence of sea-based surface air power in the Soviet Navy limits the force's ability to maintain surface units at sea in a hostile environment."[63] Furthermore, with few support ships and overseas bases to rely upon, the Soviet Navy would be placed at a distinct disadvantage in any conflict. Because the two navies have different operational and logistical capabilities, the United States would have a commanding long-term advantage over the Soviet fleet during a conventional war at sea.

The Soviet fleet could still inflict serious losses on the U.S. Navy during a conventional war. But, according to former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld in 1976, they could "threaten our Navy task groups in open areas, and seriously threaten, but not cut, the lines of communication to U.S. allies."[64] This overwhelming U.S. superiority in maintaining conventional naval warfare capabilities severely handicaps the capability of the Soviet Union to interfere with commercial shipping anywhere in the world. Indeed, current evidence strongly suggests "that interdiction missions are of limited importance in Soviet planning."[65] In regard to the Indian Ocean, such operations by the Soviet Navy become even more unlikely. First, for reasons already analyzed, the Soviet Navy cannot sustain such actions against an expected U.S./NATO response. Second, the Soviet high command knows that access to its own Black Sea and Baltic ports, through which 88 percent of its seaborn trade passes, would be equally vulnerable to a similar counteraction.[66] In short, if the Soviet Union was to attack Western shipping lanes, clearly it would not choose to do so in the Indian Ocean.

There are occasions when top-level Pentagon officials have admitted the Soviet Navy's weaknesses and limitations. These acknowledgments are infrequent and rarely publicized, however. For example, former Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld pointed out in 1976 that the Soviet Navy has

> *a poor capability for sustained combat operations . . . a limited ability to provide logistics support to their forces at sea, and their logistic ships are highly vulnerable. Finally, they have little capability to project power ashore in distant areas because they have no sea-based tactical air power, and their amphibious forces are designed for short duration amphibious lift near the homeland.*[67]

In more general terms, former Defense Secretary Schlesinger said that a "basic asymmetry" existed between the naval capabilities of the superpowers. While the United States emphasizes "sea control and the projection of power ashore, the Soviet Union stresses defense against U.S. power projection efforts."[68]

These conclusions reinforce my contention that U.S. military expansion in the Indian Ocean has been primarily directed toward influencing events in the countries surrounding the Indian Ocean. The Soviet Navy's presence in the region has been only a recent concern to the United States. In fact, high-level State and Defense Department officials have stated that America's military involvement in the area would have occurred regardless of Soviet activities. For instance, in 1974, Admiral Zumwalt stated that plans to expand Diego Garcia "would exist independently of anything the Soviets are doing"; James Noyes, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, agreed that if "there were no such entity in the world as the Soviet Union," the United States would still expand the facilities at Diego Garcia"; and Seymore Weiss, Director of the State Department's Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs stated, "I have every confidence in the world that . . . if there were no Soviet naval forces in the area whatsoever that we would want, and indeed it would be in our national interests, to maintain a presence there . . . I can say without any qualification that we would retain [a military] capability in that area whether or not there were Soviet Forces."[69]

It is clear that the protection of Western shipping lanes against possible Soviet attack was not the rationale behind the building of Diego Garcia. Instead, Diego Garcia was chosen not as a response to a Soviet military threat but as a site from which to project U.S. armed force, or the threat of it, against Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

Yet only in the past four or five years have all top U.S. policy-making branches agreed upon the need for a large military facility on the island. The consensus took a relatively long time to form because of the Vietnam War and the overwhelming attention it absorbed. Once that conflict began to wind down, the Nixon Administration initiated its "naval/island strategy" for the post-Vietnam era and the need for Diego Garcia increased. From this Indian Ocean base, U.S. naval forces will be able to defend and assist client states and regional allies whenever and wherever necessary. As Admiral Zumwalt pointed out in 1972, U.S. naval forces stationed at strategically located bases, can "support distant U.S. forces overseas, and under the Nixon Doctrine, when required, the indigenous armies of our allies, necessitating forward defense, sea control, and the ability to project power ashore."[70] With these strategic concepts in mind, high-level policy-makers rapidly closed ranks in their support for Diego Garcia. Indeed, President Ford in 1975 certified to Congress that funds for Diego Garcia were "essential to the national interest."[71]

III

Any success in these U.S. objectives has now been dampened by the Soviet Union. Moscow too has acquired the naval capabilities to protect and defend its overseas allies and clients from either domestic or foreign threats. To Pentagon and State Department officials, the Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean threatens to restrict or discourage U.S. armed intervention.

What alarms U.S. defense leaders most, however, is the Soviet Union's efforts to expand its influence and control in the ocean area through *non-military* means. Since the mid-1960s, Moscow has aggressively widened its penetration into the Third World by foreign aid, trade, and investments.

The Soviet foreign aid program is one method that has substantially contributed to Soviet successes in the underdeveloped world. But unlike American foreign aid programs, Soviet assistance is limited to a small number of what it considers to be strategically important countries. Geographically, the recipients of 80 percent of Soviet aid are "a narrow band of nations, extending from the Mediterranean to China's southwestern borders."[72] The most notable of them are Somalia, Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Vietnam, and Indonesia.[73] From the inception of its economic assistance program in 1954 to the year 1975, the Soviet government has pledged a total of $11 billion to the Third World. However, in the second half of the program (1966-75) average *annual* aid pledges more than doubled (to $677 million) from the first half *total* of $310 million (1954-64). Furthermore, "aid reached a new annual high when more than $1 billion was extended for the first time in 1966. Commitments exceeding $1 billion were repeated in 1971 and 1975."[74]

Along with this assistance have come Soviet technicians. From 1970 to 1975, the number of economic technicians in the Third World increased from 10,600 to 17,785 (if Eastern Europe is included, the increase is from 15,900 to 31;700). The 1975 total of Soviet technicians doubled the number a decade before. In the Near East and South Asia, where the largest contingent of adviors are located, the number of technicians jumped from 6,455 to 11,500 during 1970-75. In Africa, the number increased from 4,010 to 5,930.[75]

Almost "without exception, Soviet aid is tied with Soviet equipment purchases. Rarely are commodities or hard currency provided."[76] Very little outright grant aid is given; 95 percent of all Soviet aid is in credits. Since 1964, some credits have required a 10 to 15 percent downpayment, repayment over 5 to 10 years and at least a 3 percent interest rate. Repayment of Soviet aid has thus caught many recipients in a tight financial bind. In fact, repayment equalled about 40 percent of the Soviet's aid deliveries between 1974-75, and in 1975 alone, totalled $300 million or twice the 1969 level. The consequence is that India has been paying back more than it has received in new loans for each of the last several years. Last year, Egypt owed more than it received.[77]

Soviet inroads in the recipient countries continue to expand as aid programs progress. Joint ownership adventures are on the increase, a practice that parallels U.S. private foreign investment. Moscow's concentration on heavy industrial aid, "showy industrial projects"—steel mills and power plants—is another method of penetrating Third World countries. These practices also result in considerable economic benefit for the Soviet Union, as a Congressional study pointed out:

> *Soviet aid was at first directly responsible for the sharp rise in trade with LDCs [less developed countries] and now indirectly responsible for its continued growth. The U.S.S.R. has found aid recipients to be important capital goods markets and supplementary suppliers of raw materials and consumer goods.*[78]

The importance of trade to the Russian economy was made clear as far back as 1961. At the Twenty-second Congress of the CPSU, Anastas Mikoyan announced that it "will be necessary to make use of foreign trade as a factor in economizing in current production expenditures and in capital investment."[79] Although Mikoyan did not specifically refer to it, trade with the developing countries was on the minds of Soviet policy-makers. By 1975, V. Morozov, First Deputy Chairman of the State Committee for Foreign Economic Relations, acknowledged that "the USSR's cooperation with the developing countries is one of the major sectors of the Soviet Union's foreign economic relations."[80]

In addition to gaining economic benefit from Third World trade, Moscow is very aware of the political ramifications of its actions. One Soviet writer on trade matters recognized "the strong bonds which tie most the developing countries of the World capitalist market are still yet intact and put foreign trade in a special place among neocolonialism's instruments." Soviet policy is thus aimed at replacing Western trade to the developing countries with its own. As the same Soviet author wrote, "An alternative to the existing situation is offered by the extension of economic cooperation between developing countries and the countries of the Socialist economic system."[81] Thus, this process of Soviet aid, trade, and investment to the Third World threatens to weaken the Western-dominated international economic structure. Soviet trade and investment penetration has already supplanted U.S. and European supremacy in some African and Asian countries.

Economic and military assistance and heavy industrial projects have considerably strengthened Soviet influence in Somalia, Uganda, Mozambique, Angola and India and threatens to increase elsewhere.

Soviet economic and political thrusts in the Indian Ocean have clearly been on the rise. These activities have been supported by a growing Soviet military presence and they reflect basic Soviet foreign policy goals. Geoffrey Jukes has observed that "the entire thrust of Soviet diplomacy since the death of Stalin has been to urge Third World countries toward non-alignment which is consistent with reception of good will visits from Soviet warships."[82] This objective is currently being sought with new vigor and supported by an impressive display of Russian naval flag-showing. It began in 1968 when Soviet warships first entered the Indian Ocean to counter U.S. strategic initiatives. But possibly even more important was that those naval visits coincided with the withdrawal of British forces from the Persian Gulf. The role of the Soviet Navy in this case was clearly to support Moscow's diplomatic objectives of expanding its political influence in the Persian Gulf. Barry Blechman has pointed out that Soviet warships in the Indian Ocean reflect the new function of the Navy:

> *Whereas in the past the Soviet Navy was designed and operated primarily as a defensive force—to deter and if necessary to defend the Soviet homeland from attack from the seas—the modern Soviet Navy seems to be assuming a wider range of roles. The most important include deployment of strategic nuclear weapons, deterrence of Western sea-based interventions on the periphery of the USSR (for example, in the Middle East), and carrying out various peacetime missions, such as show-the-flag cruises and other military demonstrations. In general, the Soviet Navy is changing from a force reserved only for wartime contingencies to one used to support Soviet foreign policy in peacetime.*[83]

The serious consequence for U.S. defense officials is that in the past eight years the Soviet Union has successfully challenged "U.S. political-military initiatives in areas which were once exclusive Western preserves."[84] But the crucial point is that these Soviet activities represent a political and economic and not a military challenge to the United States. It is the political challenge, with its vital economic ramification, which worries and frustrates Washington policy-makers so much. As Admiral Zumwalt lamented to the Armed Services Committee, the Soviet Union now has "acquired the ability to compete most effectively with us in the peacetime, *para-diplomatic* use of naval power." (emphasis added)[85]

Soviet political inroads in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East present defenders of the Nixon Doctrine—or their successors in the Carter administration—with a serious problem. The Soviet Navy's para-diplomatic role may substantially undercut U.S. influence and authority because it may be seen by some Third World countries as a possible deterrent against possible U.S. intervention. This, in turn, threatens to fragment further world political alliances and hence to weaken America's position as the world's foremost hegemonic power. In short, the continued expansion of the Soviet Navy's influence and visibility in the Indian Ocean may thwart the fundamental purpose of Diego Garcia in U.S. global strategy.

What alarms U.S. defense leaders most, however, is the Soviet Union's efforts to expand its influence and control in the ocean area through non-military means. Since the mid-1960s, Moscow has aggressively widened its penetration into the Third World by foreign aid, trade and investments . . . As Admiral Zumwalt lamented to the Armed Services Committee, the Soviet Union now has "acquired the ability to compete most effectively with us in the peacetime, para-diplomatic use of naval power."

Conclusions

U.S. policy-makers have responded in various ways to prevent this slow decline of America's world authority. Under the Nixon Doctrine certain U.S. allies were pressured into playing a more salient role in their particular regions as Washington adjusted to domestic and international changes. But as the Soviet Union's political-economic challenges have increased, U.S. strategy has been framed with a new focus in mind. Pentagon policy-makers now seem to be placing special emphasis on generating their own particular type of "threat/perception" abroad. To a large extent, this has been accomplished by exaggerating to Congress and to U.S. allies the Soviet Union's military power. That is, Pentagon leaders have misrepresented the Soviet threat as a military problem while in fact it is an economic challenge. The goal has been to gain domestic support for the Pentagon's plans and to strengthen U.S. foreign alliances.[86] But an important byproduct of this process has been to minimize peaceful, diplomatic initiatives in international conflicts and to exacerbate indigenous regional tensions through the sale of U.S. arms and equipment. A survey of events in the Western Indian Ocean demonstrates how this operates:

- In the Persian Gulf, the United States has encouraged Iran's and Saudi Arabia's perception of the Soviet Union's military th at (in Berbera and in the Indian Ocean) and of Soviet-supported insurgency (in Dhofar and in Southern Yemen). As a result, Iran and Saudi Arabia have rapidly modernized and expanded their military forces and have taken active steps in crushing local insurgent movements. The United States has wholeheartedly supported these policies. In 1975, for example, 56 percent of all U.S. foreign military sales went to Iran and Saudi Arabia. Thousands of U.S. military and civilian advisors have accompanied these sales.[87]
- In East Africa, the same tactics have been used with similar results. By pointing to Soviet influence in Angola and Somalia, and to Amin's erratic behavior in Uganda, Washington again has emphasized the Soviet menace to pro-Western African states. This has further exacerbated indigenous regional tensions. Ethiopia, Kenya and Zaire are prominent U.S. allies: all three countries have recently received large deliveries of U.S. arms. Total transfers in 1974 and 1975 to Ethiopia were $27.9 million; Kenya, $1.9 million; Zaire, $1.5 million, for a total of $31.3 million. These arms deliveries underline Washington's new policy toward east Africa when contrasted to the total of $6.2 million to the same countries between 1970-73.[88]
- In southern Africa, Washington has purportedly shifted to a policy of supporting the gradual creation of moderate, pro-Western, black majority governments. Wide-

spread rebellions in Rhodesia and South Africa in the last year have made this goal more urgent. Yet the current intransigent ruling white minorities are already allied with the West, and South Africa is important to the U.S. Indian Ocean strategy. Thus, the United States and NATO continue to supply military equipment to South Africa. On the one hand, the political leaders in Pretoria have attempted to pressure white Rhodesians to grant piecemeal reforms, while on the other hand, South African and Rhodesian soldiers have carried out counterinsurgency campaigns against black guerrilla forces. But because of increasing amounts of Soviet and Cuban military and economic assistance to Angola and to other African revolutionaries, the U.S. gradualistic approach will only heighten armed conflict.[89]

If this characterization of present-day U.S. strategy is correct, then the Indian Ocean region clearly has become one critical focal point of U.S.-Soviet competition in the Third World. It is clear that Washington initiated its Indian Ocean policy to repress the revolutionary potential of the region; but it has recently had to alter some of its strategic precepts to contain the Soviet Union's expansion into the Indian Ocean area. Moscow's attempt to deter U.S. nuclear sea-based strategic forces there was both logical and legitimate, but their strategy of undercutting U.S. influence through political and economic means raises different questions and implications. Inclusion of the littoral states into a USSR strategic deterrent scheme implies the replacement of U.S. domination by Soviet domination. The evident economic benefits accrued from penetrating the Third World offer a compelling reason for Moscow to continue this strategy. The earlier example of Egypt, and to a lesser extent India, shows that initial Soviet support to "national liberation movements" can grow into imperial control and exploitation. At military installations in Berbera, visiting Congressional investigators reported that "the Somalis admitted the Soviet presence, that the Soviets were in command, and that the American team had been refused entry even though it had been requested by the Somalis."[90] In Angola, a U.S. Library of Congress report concludes that the "Soviet KGB (secret police) was said to be effectively in control of the departments of information and security."[91] To minimize the Soviet Union's political and economic advances, Washington will find it difficult to turn to a diplomatic non-military type of solution and still keep dependency relations intact. It now appears that arms sales and gunboat diplomacy therefore will become the primary means of maintaining and enhancing U.S. overseas interests. As the Soviet Union continues to threaten to replace U.S. power and authority by implementing similar policies, the chances of a naval arms limitation agreement in the Indian Ocean between the two superpowers grows dim. Thus, the structure of current imperial relationships, and their contradictions, dictates the present-day policies of both the United States and the Soviet Union.[92] Unless substantial alterations occur within this structure in the next decade, we can expect the rapid militarization of the Indian Ocean, continuing contention between the two major powers, occasionally punctuated by outbreaks of fighting in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Clearly the stability so desired by the United States—as symbolized by the construction of the base at Diego Garcia—is quite elusive; the imperial thrusts of the Soviet Union—as shown by their control in Angola—are quite ominous; and the revolutionary potential of the region is undiminished. ☆

Notes

1. *New York Times,* April 22, 1976.

2. See U.S. Congress, House Committee on International Relations, *The Soviet Union and the Third World: A Watershed in Great Power Policy?,"* Report. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1977). (Hereafter cited as *The Soviet Union and the Third World.*)

3. Ibid., pp. 105-109.

4. Ibid., p. 104. A *New Times* editorial linked Soviet operations in Angola and Brezhnev's speech more definitely: "[Soviet] assistance contributed to the successes of the Angolan patriots in their armed struggle against colonial rule, and now helps them defend the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of their country." Ibid., p. 106.

5. Ibid., p. 104.

6. Ibid., p. 104.

7. Dale R. Tahtinen, *Arms in the Indian Ocean* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1977), introduction.

8. See Michael T. Klare, "Arms and Power," *NACLA's Latin American & Empire Report,* March 1975, pp. 12-17.

9. The report *The Soviet Union and the Third World* continuously indicates the chance for this superpower face-off. Tahtinen, op. cit., gives a general review of potential area of future U.S.-USSR clashes. For a specific study, see Tom J. Farer, *War Clouds on the Horn of Africa: A Crisis for Detente* (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1976).

10. U.S. Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on National Security and Scientific Developments, *The Indian Ocean: Political and Strategic Future,* Hearings (GPO, 1971), p. 121. (Hereafter cited as *Indian Ocean Hearings.*) While the PRC has aided in this shift, Chinese aid and trade has been substantially smaller than the USSR's.

11. Elizabeth K. Valkenier, "Soviet Economic Relations with the Developing Nations," pp. 235-36, in Roger E. Kanet (ed.), *The Soviet Union and the Developing Nations* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974).

12. *The Soviet Union and the Third World,* p. 66.

13. Ibid., p. 66.

14. Phillip Darby, *British Defense Policy East of Suez, 1947-1968* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973).

15. U.S. General Accounting Office, *Financial and Legal Aspects of Certain Indian Ocean Islands for Defense Purposes,* Departments Defense and State, Report of the Comptroller-General of the United States, ID-76-30 (January 7, 1976), p. 4 (hereafter cited as *GAO Report*).

16. Ibid., p. 4.

17. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis: *Survey of Current Business,* 1975 Statistical Supplement (May 1975), p. 109.

18. For the early relationship between U.S. overseas economic interests and the development of the U.S. Navy, see Walter Lafeber, *The New Empire, An Interpretation of American Expansion 1860-1898* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963), pp. 62-149. For present-day analysis and perceptions, see Edward Luttwak, *The Political Uses of Sea Power* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974) and J. M. Dunn, "The Third Century for 'The First Commercial Nation,' " in *Sea Power,* October 1975.

19. New York Times. *The Pentagon Papers* (New York: Bantam Books, 8th printing), p. 255.

20. *Indian Ocean Hearings,* pp. 170-71.

21. For further discussion, see Stephen R. Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo 1960-1964* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974) and Immanual Wallerstein, "Africa, the United States and the World Economy: the Historical Bases of American Policy," in Frederick S. Arhurst (ed.), *U.S. Policy Toward Africa* (New York: Praeger, 1975). Concerning the CIA's plans for Lumumba, see "The CIA Report the President Doesn't Want You to Read," *The Village Voice,* Special Supplement, February 16, 1976.

22. For further examination of the India-China war, see Neville Maxwell, *India's China War* (New York: Doubleday, 1972), Peter Van Ness, "Is China an Expansionist Power?" in F. Horton, A. Rogerson, and E. Warner, *Comparative Defense Policy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974) and Ishwer C. Ojha, *Chinese Foreign Policy in an Age of Transition* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), chapter 6.

23. *Indian Ocean Hearings*, p. 164.

24. U.S. Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on the Near East and South Asia, *Proposed Expansion of U.S. Military Facilities in the Indian Ocean*, Hearings. (GPO: 1973), p. 90 (hereafter cited as *Proposed Expansion Hearings*).

25. *GAO Report*, p. 4.

26. Ibid., p. 4.

27. Michael T. Klare, *War Without End* (New York: Vintage Books), pp. 348-62.

28. *Proposed Expansion Hearings*, p. 83.

29. See Morton Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1974), pp. 210-12.

30. *Proposed Expansion Hearings*, p. 83.

31. See *The Congressional Record*, April 14, 1974, pp. H2616-H2626.

32. *The Times* (London) September 21, 1975. See also, U.S. Congress, House Committee on International Relations, Special Subcommittee on Investigations, *Diego Garcia, 1975: The Debate Over the Base and the Island's Former Inhabitants*, Hearings (GPO: 1975) (hereafter cited as *Diego Garcia: 1975*).

33. Michael T. Klare, "The Nixon/Kissinger Doctrine and America's Pacific Basin Strategy,' *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, Vol. 7, no. 2, April-June, 1975.

34. *The Economist*, Nov. 11, 1967, p. 595.

35. *U.S. News & World Report*, Oct. 23, 1967, pp. 59-60.

36. *Proposed Expansion Hearings*, p. 82, 124.

37. Ibid., p. 123.

38. Ibid., p. 130.

39. *Washington Post*, October 21, 1974.

40. *Proposed Expansion Hearings*, p. 150.

41. "The Indian Ocean: A New Arms Race?," *The Defense Monitor*, April 1974; U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Armed Services: *Disapprove Construction Projects on the Island of Diego Garcia*, Hearings (GPO: 1975). (Hereafter cited as *Disapprove Construction Hearings*).

42. U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *Briefing on Diego Garcia and Patrol Frigate*, Hearings (GPO: 1974), p. 27.

43. Tahtinen, p. 23.

44. *Disapprove Construction Hearings*, p. 150.

45. See Alvin Cottrell and R.M. Burrell, "Soviet-U.S. Competition in the Indian Ocean," *Orbis*, Winter 1975.

46. The difference used here between conventional and strategic war is that the former is a non-nuclear conflict, usually confined to a geographically specific area. Strategic war implies a nuclear conflict on a global scale.

47. The examination presented in this essay concerning U.S.-Soviet naval capabilities is largely drawn from Michael T. Klare, "Superpower Rivalry at Sea," *Foreign Policy*, Winter 1975-76. Unless otherwise stated, all following citations of Klare refer to this *Foreign Policy* essay.

48. Barry Blechman, *The Changing Soviet Navy* (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1973), p. 16.

49. Ibid., p. 11.

50. Geoffrey Jukes, "The Indian Ocean in Soviet Naval Policy," *Adelphi Papers*, #87 (May 1972), p. 56.

51. Ibid., pp. 6-7.

52. Ibid., p. 7.

53. Ibid., pp. 7-10. See also Barry Blechman, *The Control of Naval Armaments* (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1975), pp. 39-41.

54. Jukes, pp. 27-28.

55. Ibid., p. 18.

56. Ibid., p. 22.

57. Klare, pp. 164-65.

58. U.S. Congress, Committee on Armed Services, *Special Subcommitee to Inspect Facilities at Berbera, Somalia*. Report (GPO: 1975), p. 9.

59. Ibid.; see also *Disapprove Construction Hearings*; and U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Soviet Military Capability in Berbera, Somalia*, Committee Print (GPO: 1975).

60. *Washington Post*, May 5, 1976.

61. See "CIA Testimony on Soviet Presence in the Indian Ocean," *Congressional Record*, August 1, 1974, pp. S14092-S14095. See also, "Base Necessities; U.S. Predominate in Some Areas, USSR Elsewhere," *Sea Power* (August 1974), and Jukes, p. 19.

62. Klare, pp. 164-65.

63. Blechman, *The Changing Soviet Navy*, p. 29.

64. *Annual Defense Department Report Fiscal Year 1977*, p. 99 (hereafter cited as *Defense Dept 77*).

65. Blechman, *The Changing Soviet Navy*, p. 27.

66. Jukes, p. 21.

67. *Defense Dept 77*, p. 100.

68. Quoted in Klare, p. 166.

69. *Proposed Expansion Hearings*, p. 34, 53, 134, 149.

70. Letter from Admiral Zumwalt to Senator Proxmire, *Congressional Record*, June 12, 1972, p. S20492.

71. *Diego Garcia, 1975*, pp. 12-13.

72. Orah Cooper, "Soviet Economic Aid to the Third World" in U.S. Congress, Joint Economic Committee, *Soviet Economy in a New Perspective—A Compendium of Papers*, Joint Committee Print (GPO: 1975), p. 189. The following discussion on Soviet economic relations is based on Cooper's essay.

73. Soviet and Eastern European economic credits and grants from 1954-76 totalled: Somalia, $159 million; Syria, $1,195 million; Iraq, $1,118 million; Pakistan, $736 million; Afghanistan, $1,291 million; India, $2,430 million; and Indonesia, $377 million. From *The Soviet Union and the Third World*, pp. 124-25.

74. Cooper, p. 190.

75. U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, *Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1975*, July 1976, p. 8.

76. Cooper, p. 190.

77. In addition to Cooper, see David K. Wills, "Soviet hit on 'Third World' aid," *Christian Science Monitor*, October 5, 1976 and Christopher S. Wren, "Soviet, Despite Effort to Court Third World, Limits Its Foreign Aid," *New York Times*, August 20, 1976.

78. Cooper, p. 192.

79. Quoted in Valkenier, p. 219.

80. Quoted in *The Soviet Union and the Third World*, p. 64.

81. Ibid., p. 65.

82. Jukes, p. 20.

83. Blechman, *The Control of Naval Armaments*, pp. 12-13. See also George C. Hudson, "Soviet Naval Doctrine and Soviet Politics," *World Politics*, October 1976.

84. Klare, p. 162.

85. Quoted in Klare, p. 162.

86. "Criticism of defense budget declines amid perceptions of growing Soviet military power," *Gallup Opinion Index*, April 1976, pp. 19-20.

87. See Michael T. Klare, "The Political Economy of Arms Sales, United States-Saudi Arabia," *Society*, Sept./Oct. 1974; Barry Rubin, "Sub-Empires in the Persian Gulf," *The Progressive*, Jan. 1975; "U.S. Arms to the Persian Gulf: $10 Billion since 1973," *The Defense Monitor*, May 1975; Maurice Pearson, "The Persian Gulf has a Deadly Little Arms Race," *New York Times*, Dec. 15, 1974; Richard Burt, "Iranian Navy Growing as an Indian Ocean Power," *Christian Science Monitor*, Aug. 22, 1975.

88. See Bernard Winraub, "Zaire to Get More U.S. Weapons," *New York Times*, June 20, 1976; "U.S. to Sell Kenya 12 F-15's in $70 Million Arms Deal," ibid., June 17, 1976; George Shepherd, "U.S. Arms for African Wars," June 1976 (mimeo); "Kenya Sets Off on the E. African Arms Race," *African Development*, June 1976; Leslie H. Gelb, "U.S.-Soviet Stakes in Africa," *New York Times*, July 18, 1976; Randall Robinson, "Gulf Oil's Strategy to Appease and Oppress," *The Black Scholar*, Dec. 1973-Jan. 1974.

89. See "Allies in Empire, the U.S. & Portugal in Africa," special edition *Africa Today*, July/Aug. 1970; "Southern Africa and U.S. Foreign Policy," special edition *Africa Today*, July/Sept. 1976; D.C. Watt, "The Continuing Strategic Importance of Simonstown," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, Oct. 1969; Geoffrey Rippon, "South Africa and Vital Strategy: the Importance of South Africa," *The Round Table*, July 1970; George Shephers, *The United Nation's Arms Embargo on South Africa and the Cape Route*. Presented to the 16th Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, Washington, D.C., Feb. 20, 1975; C. Munhamu Botsio Utete, "NATO and Southern Africa," *The Black Scholar*, May 1976; Peter D. Jones, "NATO, South Africa and the USA," *WIN Magazine*, Nov. 20, 1975; Chester A. Crocker, "The African Dimension of Indian Ocean Policy," *Orbis*, Fall 1976; Michael C. Jensen, "U.S. Checking Mobil's Role in Rhodesia," *New York Times*, Aug. 2, 1976.

90. *Soviet Military Capability in Berbera, Somalia*, p. 15.

91. *The Soviet Union and the Third World*, pp. 104-109.

92. See Johan Galtung, "Conflict on a Global Scale: Social Imperialism and Sub-Imperialism—Continuities in the Structural Theory of Imperialism," *World Development*, March 1976; and Jan Øberg, "Arms Trade with the Third World as an Aspect of Imperialism," *Journal of Peace Research*, 1975, no. 3.

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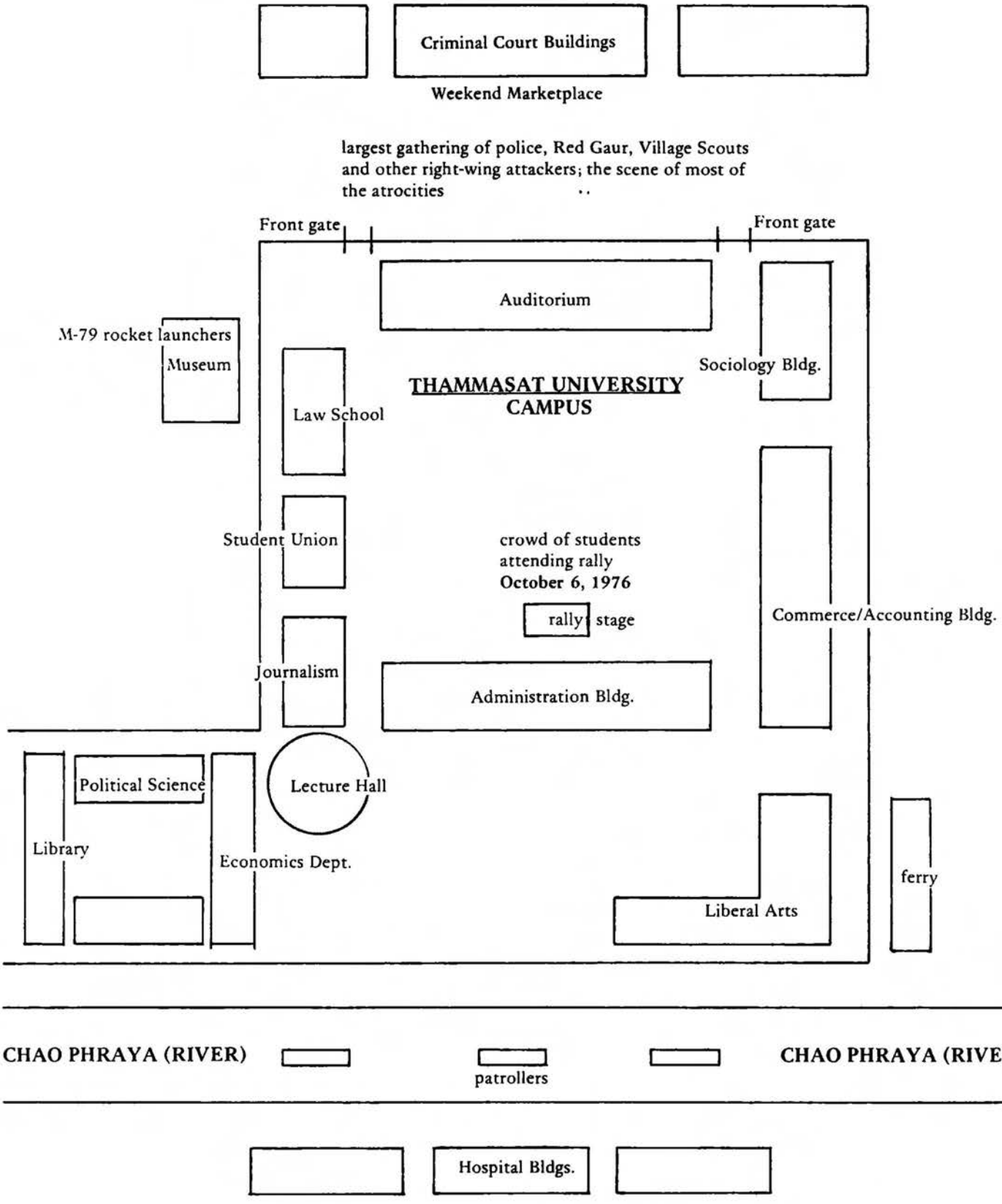
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