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HUMAN RIGHTS IN THAILAND REPORT

JANUARY - FEBRUARY

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HUMAN RIGHTS IN THAILAND REPORT
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INTRODUCTION

This report continues to follow the same format used in the last two reports, and is divided into four self contained parts for the convenience of our readers. Those who are interested in the legal aspects of the human rights situation should refer to the first part. The second part deals in broader terms with the general human rights situation and includes further information on the misuse of government power, a detailed analyses of the situation of two villages in sensitive areas, information on the assassination of labour leaders and other harassments of unionists, and on academic freedom. The third part analyses the progress and problems faced by human rights groups and workers in the country. In the fourth and final part we attempt an analyses of an extremely confusing political situation, and summarise important news relating to the human rights situation.

In the lead article of Part One we include details of a case which is obviously of great concern to all of us at the moment - the arrest of two CGRS workers, Chaiwat Yao-wapongsiri and Sukhon Tanthakeyoon (along with their local guide Miss Boontham Chindawong) in Ban Na San in Surathani province in the South of the country. Our analyses of this case provides us with some extremely important insights into the complete lack of any basic human rights in "sensitive" areas (a very significant proportion of the whole country), and also leads us to believe that the whole of CGRS is on trial and at risk at the moment.

On the first point we realise the power of local spies, who can order arrest and establish the charge, and once the arrest has been made the police are powerless to order a release, such a release being dependent on the army. Strong pressures are put on the accused to go voluntarily to army reeducation centres (thus precluding the need for any trial, and involving a tacit acceptance of guilt on the part of the accused). Once someone is arrested, even if there is no evidence, the police, and other government officials automatically assume the accused is guilty, and start trying to dig for unrelated dirt in the accused's distant past. In addition, even in well publicised cases such as this one, somewhat inhuman methods of interrogation are used, and the local officials make up completely false stories for release to the press, slandering the accused.

On the second point, the district officer, the provincial governor, the fourth army commander, the special branch in Bangkok are all taking an extremely active interest in the case, which suggests involvement at the highest levels of government, and a great potential danger for CGRS. We have been heartened by the high level of support we have already received from our foreign friends on this case, and request that our friends continue to take all possible action until such a time as the three are released, and the threat over CGRS's head is removed.

In order to help our readers with their campaigns, we also include short biographical sketches of the three arrested, as well as excerpts from a long letter written by Chaiwat in jail.

Part one continues with reports on the major political trials that are taking place. The trial of 18 Oct 6th defendants is notable for its slowness. In the first two months of hearings only two of the 82 prosecution witnesses have been heard, thus it seems that the trial will

be one of the most long and drawn out processes in the legal history of Thailand. At its present rate it could take as long as 8 years to complete. Even if defendants are acquitted in the end, the 18 (most of whom are in their early twenties) might have to spend up to ten years in jail).

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Also significant at this trial is the fact that up to now the prosecution has not presented any evidence, but has only described perfectly legal student activities, and reported slanderous subjective allegations.

During the first few hearings there was a danger that right wing forces would try to create an incident at the court, but thanks to prompt and determined action by the lawyers, and by well wishers at the court such an incident is less likely now.

In terms of the other trials which we are following, three points are causing us concern, and should cause concern to all who are interested in human rights. The first point is that the hearings (even preliminary hearings after maximum legal detention periods have expired) are frequently postponed so that all such trials will take years to complete. The second point is that even when those involved in political trials are acquitted by the court, the police often immediately rearrest the accused under some other charge (see for example the report on the Thai Blanket Workers trial, and that on the trial of Nikom Fridakul). The third point is that the standard of the evidence presented by the prosecutor is often very low (between 50% and 75% of accused people are acquitted by the courts). Thus all in all it seems that authorities purposely misuse the legal process to detain people that they do not like for very long periods of time.

Nevertheless those who are being detained and tried in Bangkok are as it were the fortunate tip of the iceberg, since they are at least relatively well treated in prison, and have legal representation. Up country it is extremely difficult to get any lawyers to take on political cases, and thus normally the court appoints a defence lawyer. This lawyer is paid 300 Baht (\$15) for the case, and thus his main concern is to complete it as quickly as possible, thus he normally persuades the accused to plead guilty.

In part two we continue to follow up stories of the gross misuses of police power, and the official murders that frequently take place. With the callous killing of a kidnapper and his two hostages (including a little baby) in Bangkok on Maha Bucha (one of the holiest days in the Buddhist calendar - 22nd. March), the image of the police in the country has sunk to about zero. The culprits have been arrested, but often in the past police have been arrested only to be guilty released later (e.g. the five policemen arrested for hanging to two workers in Nakornphatom in September 1976).

Despite the fact that the present government is trying to create a positive human rights image for itself many people continue to be arrested for "endangering society" and others are illegally held on the same charge. At last we have obtained some official figures of the numbers held as endangering society prisoners in Correction Department Vocational Training Centres since Oct 6th, 1976 - 7,300 people according to Director General Thawee Chu'sap. (according to him only 572 still are

in detention). Since this figure does not include the many people illegally detained in police stations (see our report on the prisoner strike in Nakornsrithammarat) our original estimate of 8,000 arrests in this category seems very close to the reality.

In our reports from up-country we continue to discover misuses of government power wherever we look. For example in our report from the south (perhaps the last for a while!) we include details of the very serious problems that villagers face in sensitive areas, and the way in which the armed forces, by misusing their power, tend to drive people into the arms of the communists. In other words through the suspicion, bad behaviour, and heavy handed operations of suppression forces, the same sort of mistakes that occurred in Vietnam are being repeated in sensitive areas here. From the N.E. we get a clear idea of how anyone who has the slightest progressive ideas, immediately is suspected, harassed, or arrested by local authorities.

Despite overtures by the government to Union Leaders, the trades unions still have very limited freedom. For example during the period covered by this report two labour leaders were fired because of their involvement in the amnesty campaign for Oct 6th defendants, and a confederation of 20 labour unions was not allowed because one of its objectives was to "promote democracy". In the section on labour we also include a special summary report on the assassination of labour leaders over the last few months, and on the teacher strikes that rocked the country in mid January.

In terms of academic freedom, the authorities are still extremely wary of students and the more liberal of the university professors. Thus there are still severe restrictions on student activities, through these restrictions do not take place without some student opposition, (see our report on State University Bureau regulations, and the protest demonstration at Thammasat University). There also continues to be considerable bureaucratic interference in the running of universities. (see Konkaen University story). In addition people are banned from participating in public discussions in universities, and also new information on university professors losing their jobs is coming to light. Generally the atmosphere of fear and mistrust that existed during the Thanin period at the universities continues, relatively unchanged.

In part three of the report we discuss the activities of CGRS, and other human rights groups and workers in Thailand. Throughout the period CGRS and its committee members have been under attack by right wing groups and press. The attacks have basically concentrated on two points: firstly that religious groups should not be involved in political activities (it is strange that the same right wing groups remained silent when four monks from Phra Kitwuto's university were caught with a large arms cache destined for free Khmer forces); secondly that any organisation involved in helping political prisoners (most of whom are inevitably leftist) and their families, must itself be leftist and part of the united front. As much as possible CGRS has tried to ignore these attacks and continue working quietly, openly, and non-violently.

The arrest of 2 out of 8 full time workers at CGRS has not had

the detrimental efforts that might have been expected, because just before the arrests a special training seminar was held for CGRS volunteers to draw them more closely and actively into the group. Thus new volunteers immediately stepped in to fill the gaps created by the arrested workers.

Thus despite the period of the most serious crisis in CGRS's history, the work of the group in terms of visiting and helping prisoners and their families, attending trials, finding legal assistance for accused people, investigating misuses of power, etc., continues unabated. In addition during the past two months CGRS has mounted a special campaign to raise bail money for four arrested workers in the Om Noi case, and to conscientize people about this case. Over 2,000 leaflets were distributed and more than 25,000 Baht collected most of it in small donations from ordinary workers and students. Secondly CGRS called a special meeting of leaders of most of the groups listening to the Oct 6th trial, to prepare a strategy to prevent right wing demonstrators or agent-provocateurs from creating incidents at the court. A leaflet was produced and widely distributed on this matter.

Other human rights groups, notably the human rights promotion association, and the human rights research group, are beginning to crystallize and become active. Finally we briefly report on the visit of Mr. David Hallmark, a British Lawyer, who came to Thailand for a month as observer of the International Commission of Jurists. Throughout his stay in Thailand he cooperated closely with CGRS, and expanded his terms of reference to cover many issues of human rights violations in addition to his original Oct 6th assignment. Everyone interested in the human rights situation in Thailand should try to get a copy of his report from ICJ as soon as it is issued. He also took an extremely great interest in the arrest of the CGRS workers, which provided the group with encouragement and help.

In part four, in response to requests from some of our readers we have changed the format in which we summarise the news about the political situations, and provided a short analytical article of the major trends. In our analyses, apart from in the international community, it seems that the power base of PM. Kriengsak Chammanan is gradually being whittled away, and this applies equally in the armed forces, amongst right wing groups (late news, the head of the village scouts Police Major General Charoenrij Charnrasromeran has been moved to an "inactive post") and amongst the labour unions, and to a lesser extent even amongst the press. Thus the situation has again become completely unstable, with rumours of coups spreading like wildfire almost every day. However though we see P.M. Kriengsak's power very much reduced, it does not appear that his opponents have yet found any real issue around which they might unite to overthrow him.

We also summarise the main news items relating to human rights, and the increasing armed conflict that is taking place in all parts of the country, and which we are trying, in our own quiet way, to stop from developing into a fully fledged civil war.

The situation is becoming increasingly difficult for people like these involved in CGRS, who are struggling to find a middle way, a spiritual and human centred path, between the dual forces bent on destruction. However hope, faith, and commitment are being maintained, for without these three pillars there can be no peaceful and non-violent future for the country.

PART ONE

POLITICAL PRISONERS

1) CGRS Human Rights Workers Arrested in the South of Thailand and Accused of Communism.

At 10 a.m. on Thursday 16th February 1978 two full time workers of the Coordinating Group for Religion in Society (CGRS) were arrested with their local guide in front of the market in Ban Na San, Suratthani province, Chaiwat Yao-wapongsiri, and Sukhon Tanthakeyoon full time staff of CGRS, and their local guide Miss Boontham Chindawong were arrested by three low level local policemen in plain clothes, who were acting on false information provided by a village spy named Sunthorn. Chaiwat has been working with CGRS from its inception in 1976, Sukhon only joined two months ago, and Miss Boontham has never been involved before, but is just the younger sister of an ex-endangering society prisoner, Wichai Chindawong, who has been helping CGRS on a part time voluntary basis since his release.

For those of you who have been reading the reports "Human Rights in Thailand" over the past year, you will be aware of the atrocious human rights situation that exists in the South of Thailand (particularly in Nakorn Srithamarat, and Suratthani), and the excellent work that CGRS, and Chaiwat in particular, have been carrying out to expose this situation. Previous reports have included substantiated and confirmed reports of a journalist being arrested, and later his decapitated body found; three monks being murdered whilst in detention; thirteen detainees being shot dead over graves they dug themselves; people being tied to rubber trees until they died; large numbers of villagers being arrested and then completely disappearing etc. In addition information has been gathered about illegal police and army detention centres, illegally detained endangering society prisoners, and other political prisoners. In part II of this report we include detailed information about the problems faced by two villagers. Legal and illegally detained prisoners have been visited and provided with necessities, and their families given essential financial assistance. Since all these activities have been taking place in sensitive areas, where spies abound, murders and assassinations are common occurrences, and where the army and its paramilitary arms have complete power, these activities have required great courage and commitment. However it has always been Chaiwat's feeling that only if senseless brutality (particularly in sensitive areas) and misuses of power can be prevented, does Thailand have a chance of a future where love and non-violence can replace hate and violence.

Chaiwat and Sukhon left Bangkok on the evening of the 12th of February, and arrived in Nakorn Srithamarat on the 13th in the morning. That day they visited Banrong Kaew Suwong in the central prison of Nakorn Sri Thamarat. He is being charged with communism, and has no lawyer. They discussed about his problems and those of his family, and then tried to arrange legal representation for him. They then went to visit Pairot Petkom at the central police station. Pairot, a 2nd year Runkamheang student was arrested in January 1977, and has been illegally detained as an endangering society prisoner since then (illegally, since after 30 days endangering society prisoners are meant to be transferred to special vocational training centres). Later that day they met with CGRS volunteers in Nakorn Sri Thamarat to discuss the work that they should be doing during the coming month or two. On the 14th February they went to see

a Buddhist monk and CGRS committee member, Phra Maha Sward, and met him at a merit making ceremony. On the 15th February they travelled to Amphur Ban Na San in Surathani, and then to house 52, Mu 3, Tambon Ta-ang, Amphur Ban Na San, to meet Wichai Chindawong. CGRS had visited Wichai many times whilst he was detained as an endangering society prisoner, and Chaiwat had visited him twice before in his village, as a part of our follow up programme of released prisoners (checking that they are living a normal life and do not face intimidation etc.). On this particular occasion CGRS had hoped that Wichai would help make arrangements for the relatives of five villagers who had been arrested on May 11th 1977, and from whom no word had since been heard, to travel to Bangkok to present a petition to the Ministries of Interior and the Ministry of Defence asking for information about the whereabouts of those arrested.

Unfortunately Wichai was not home at the time, so Sukhon and Chaiwat stayed the night at his house with his sister Boontham. In the morning they went to the market to buy food, and were arrested.

At the time of their arrest they had the following property with them:-

- 1) Chaiwat Asahi pentax camera, with film of the merit making from the day before. Cassette tape recorder, with three tapes (two empty, and one with music from a popular film), 3 copies of the CGRS newsletter, 16 copies of the form outlining duties and responsibilities of CGRS volunteers. Details of political prisoners in three areas (Na San, Flupli, and Ban Son) and details of the five people who had been arrested and disappeared from Ban Son. Names and photos of released endangering society prisoners. Report on his activities on the 13th February 1978. Note book and address book. Forms for prisoners to appoint lawyers.
- 2) Sukhon Torch, Two note books, 235 pills to prevent asthma, since Sukhon is asthmatic. (in Suratthani, according to a fourth army region announcement two years ago it is illegal to possess more than 100 pills. This is only a misdemeanor subject to a 50 Baht fine).
- 3) Boontham 17 Baht of pork. 3 Baht of vegetables. 4 Baht of mara. 50 Baht cash.

The spy charged them with being communists, and of being a danger to the security of the state. Later the charge of having too many pills was added. Under the communist charge they can initially be held for a period of 30 days, then for three further periods of 60 days (with permission of the police department), and then for three further periods of 90 days, before any court proceedings need to take place. The trial would take place in a military court, with no right of appeal and the maximum sentence would be death.

Because of the extremely dangerous position the three were in (being caught in an area where they had been exposing murders, torture etc. by the authorities) CGRS took immediate and emergency action, issuing press statements, rushing a lawyer down with a CGRS committee member, and requesting urgent support from our international friends. Given the speed and strength of our action their lives were saved, and thus now we have the complicated task of trying to obtain their release, for if they are tried, it is the whole of CGRS that will be on trial.

In order to provide you with a better insight into the complexity of this case, in the following paragraphs we will provide some indications of the main actors involved:-

Chaiwat Engineer. For a six month period after the 1973 student uprising was involved in leftist activities, including 3 months as business manager of the student newspaper atipat. However he became disillusioned with the violence and lack of spirituality of traditional leftists, and thus in mid 1974 helped found the ahimsa movement. Since then he has worked helping teach in slum schools, organising vocational training projects for slum dwellers, on intermediate technology, designing water supply systems for the slums and for villages, and translating a book by vietnamese buddhist non-violent leader.

In late 1976 he joined CGRS., in April-June 1977 he visited non-violent spiritually based movements in India and Sri Lanka, and in December 1977 became coordinator of the CGRS. He is also an extremely gifted musician.

Sukhon Whilst a student he was involved on the fringes of various student groups, In the fourth year he could take the pressure of his studies no more and dropped out of university. He then worked as a clerk, and then a salesman. Two months ago he became increasingly aware of the activities of CGRS. and decided that these could give some meaning to his life. At the time of his arrest, he was in the trial period prior to being accepted as a full time worker on a long term basis. His main interest is the problems of workers and he was only on this trip to familiarise himself with all aspects of CGRS's work. He is a asthmatic, silent and introverted, but extremely committed and dedicated.

Boontham She is a 21 years old village girl, who to the best of our knowledge has never been involved in any political activities. She is a rubber tapper by profession, and after her early morning work, looks after the house and cooks meals for her family. (short biographies of Chaiwat, Boontham and Sukhon are annexed. It should be noted all are Buddhist).

Wichai Boontham's brother, much more an activist, has been involved for many years in exposing corruption and misuse of power in Ban NaSan District. Shortly after Oct. 6, 1976 was arrested for "endangering society" and held for six months in Bangkok in Bangkok, which was where CGRS first came in contact with him. Since then he has, from time to time been helping CGRS.

Suthorn A village spy from Wichai's and Boontham's village who denounced both Wichai (as endangering society) and the CGRS workers. He is probably paid by "results", though the police deny this.

Capt. PonPet Kemkeow Chief investigation officer at Ban NaSan police station. He is convinced that the three are 'guilty', though at the moment he admits that the evidence is very weak. He does not want to hear any good points either about the three accused, or about CGRS. He has interrogated Chaiwat twice, each time for about an hour, Sukhon twice, each time for fifteen to thirty minutes, and Boontham four times each time for two hours. The first time late at night on 17/2/78, the second time at midnight on 19/2/78, the third time at 2 a.m. on 20/2/78, and the fourth time at 2 a.m. on 22/2/78. He claims he has the right to interrogate at any time convenient to him, he also claims that the lawyers of the three (Wasan Fanich from Bangkok, and Dusit Nasomjai from Surathani) can be present during his interrogation, except that he cannot inform them when those would take place (and only a madman would be out in Nasan, a communist infested area at midnight). All three have signed statements, but their lawyers have not been given copies, and until all their interrogation was finished they were not even allowed pencil and paper, to make notes for their lawyers about their statements.

Capt. Pon-Pet claims that the police do not have the right to release the three, and that only the commander of the 4th Army Region can authorise their release. His investigation report is sent to the fourth army region, and the decision about further action is taken there without even consulting with police. This report will be complete by the 15/3/78. Capt. Pon-Pet feels that the three should voluntarily agree to go to an army reeducation camp. In this way all charges will be dropped, but there is also an admission of guilt.

Nai Amphur (District chief) Ban Nasan. He is also convinced that the three are guilty, particularly Chaiwat, because of his student activity past, and quite unusually is taking a special interest in the case, and trying to find as much evidence against the three as he can. His opinion will be included in the investigating officers report. It seems likely that he is the person who is responsible for the release of a large amount of false information on this case to the press (eg. that Chaiwat said that Thailand is a US imperialists lackey, that Boontham is a communist guerrilla, that the three were returning from visiting the guerrillas, that the three claimed they were working for the International Commission of Jurists - ICJ etc.)

Unknown Army Officer Has "chatted" with each of the three accused individually to try and persuade them to voluntarily accept to go for reeducation at the army reeducation camp at Ban Chain in Nakorn Sri Thammarat. It is claimed that at that place the conditions are comfortable, the food good, and in six months (or when they have completed their "course") they will be released. However this offer is a trap that many peasants fall into, by accepting to go to reeducation, guilt is admitted, and it is often difficult to get out of the camps.

Chalit Pimolsiri Governor of Surathani. He believes that CGRS is an organisation with Buddhist, Christian and Marxist Lenninist religions. He believes Chaiwat has the marxist religion, and that all three are "guilty". He claims that he knows Boontham's brother as a member of the CPT, but did not even know where he had been sent for reeducation, or for how long. The governor claimed that he had followed Chaiwat's and CGRS activities in his province for many months, and has a thick file on Chaiwat. He has questioned Chaiwat in his office in front of TV. cameras. He did not understand why CGRS is only interested in helping political prisoners and not the 'millions of poor people in Thailand'. He claims that the communists kill 3 people (mainly officials) a day in Surathani province. The Governor and Capt. PonPet do not like lawyers as "they only help the guilty ones escape from their just punishment". The chief of police of Surathani shares this opinion.

The governor claimed that the investigation report would be completed within 30 days (the chief of police said it might take longer) and the fourth army had to decide what further action should be taken, though a copy of the investigation report would be sent to the police department.

Col. Chalart Sengchuto Special branch police section five responsible for visas an immigration, but has a personal interest in the Buddhist Sangha. For the past year Col. Chalart has been carrying out a personal, and it appears unauthorised harassment of CGRS and the ahimsa group. It seems that he is taking direct control of the investigation, even though such an investigation does not fall under his responsibility, and wants to use this case to get at the whole of CGRS and the ahimsa movement. Over the last year he has "by chance" turned up where CGRS workers have been working up country at least 10 times, and we have discussed with him many times, only to find his mind completely closed to understanding our work. He was first seen in Ban Na San within 24 hours of the arrest (whether he was there earlier we do not know) and claimed that he just happened to be there and

wanted to chat with these arrested (one at a time of course). However he is working closely with the governor, and cross examined Boontham in the governors office on 22/2/78 in the morning at great length. He is extremely dangerous, particularly since we had tried to stop his interference through various high level contacts a couple of months ago.

General Pin Thammavri Commander of the fourth army region, and the man who has to decide whether the three will be released or granted bail, taken to court charged as communists etc, or sent to an army reeducation camp. All that we know, is that even before we had made an application for bail, he sent a radio message to Surathani, ordering that bail not be granted until the investigation is completed. He is the one crucial actor who we have not yet managed to contact (27/2/78).

The following human rights issues have surfaced from our involvement and investigations into this case:-

1. Spies are extremely powerful, and can arrange for the arrest of people, even establishing the charge.
2. Once a person is arrested, the police do not have the power to release him (even if they think there has been a mistake), nor do they decide what further action should be taken. Only the commander of the fourth army can decide these things. The people CGRS have been exposing thus have the power to decide what happens to the three.
3. Despite admittedly weak evidence, everyone involved is a-priori convinced that the three are guilty, and are struggling hard to find proof, however far back in the past they have to dig.
4. Many false remarks have been made in public by people involved in the case (including the Governor, and the Nai Amphur) thus prejudicing consideration of the case.
5. The interrogation of Boontham, frequently at 2 a.m. in the morning, seems somewhat inhuman.
6. The pressure from the army (and the police investigator) to get the three to voluntarily agree to go to an army reeducation camp (which according to the army in Bangkok do not exist) explains why so few 'communist' cases ever go to court. Most peasants do not understand that by voluntarily agreeing to go to reeducation, they are admitting guilt without the benefit of any trial.
7. The three can be held for 480 days before any trial begins, and then will be tried in a military court (i.e. by the people that they have been exposing).

All possible help from friends overseas is requested, not only for the sake of Chaiwat, Sukhon, and Boontham, but also for the whole future of CGRS and open, indigenous, human rights activities in the country. When religiously motivated human rights workers are arrested and charged with offences that can carry a death penalty the greatest possible protest is needed (polite of course), for in a country where human rights activists are not allowed to operate, there can be very little real human rights.

We would therefore like you to take all appropriate action, and would suggest at least the following:-

1. Cables and letters about the case to
 - Prime Minister Kriengsak Chamanand
 - Ku Faa Building
 - Bangkok 3
 - Thailand

- General Prem Tinasulanonda
Deputy Minister of Interior
Ministry of Interior
Bangkok
Thailand

2. Letters expressing concern to the Thai Ambassador in your respective countries, from as many influential people as possible.

3. Getting your governments at the very least to show a diplomatic interest in this case.

4. Helping raise funds for a special bail and legal defense fund for the three, (and for anyone else in a similar position in future). The CGRS committee members have got seriously in debt in order to post a 300,000 baht cash bail bond for the three, and thus any financial assistance, however small, would be highly appreciated.

Could you please also keep us informed of the initiatives you are taking.

In conclusion, the only really good news that we can give you is that the three are now being treated well (thanks to national and international publicity), and are (at least the two CGRS workers) in good spirits, more worried about the group than about themselves. The first message that we received from Chaiwat read as follows:-

"Dear friends at CGRS,

Don't be worried, I'm well, I would like all friends in the ahimsa group to commit themselves to CGRS even more than before. If we want to achieve important and valuable results for the society, we must be ready to sacrifice important and valuable things (even our freedom) in turn. I am not worried about myself, but am very very worried about CGRS. My friends, please all be very careful until things are safe again.

All my love to everybody,
Chaiwat"

Such a message is an inspiration to us at CGRS, and we hope it is also an inspiration to all our friends overseas too.

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Annex: Biographies of those arrested

Name Mr. Chaiwat Yao-vapongsiri
Birth: June 20, 1953
Address: 218/20 Charern-mueng Road, Patoomwan, Bangkok 5.
Closest Relative Address: c/o Coordinating Group for Religion in Society
Marital Status: Single. No children
Education: Graduated from Chulalongkorn University, Faculty of Engineering in 1976
Past Activities in Brief:

	1973	a member of the committee of Chulalongkorn Student Academic Club
March-June	1974	a volunteer of the Democracy Propaganizing Program under subcommittee of the Constitution Drafting Commission (in Frae province, North region of Thailand.
July-December	1975	a member of Ahimsa (non-violent) group a volunteer teacher at Klong Tuey Slum Villagers' School and an organizer there.
January-April	1976	a coordinating organizer with a group of monks for rural dry-season projects in few villages.
	1977	a full-time worker of the Coordinating Group for Riligion in Society

Vision and Wishes

My country is like a house on fire and every member of the house is trying to survive, selfishly, by stepping on the others, not knowing that they are falling into the fire too. To pass this crisis, we need men with sincerity and courage, men who are willing to sacrifice their lives to lessen and to take away the troubles from the others, like Jesus Christ has done. We must bild up such a man in ourselves and in others. We must fight against the selfishness, hatred, ignorance and egoistical ambition which are the real enemies in us. And finally, we must love all our fellow men and be loved by them.

Name: Mr. Sukon Tanthakeyoon
Birth: 1953
Address: 304 Soi Sarapee 3, Amphur Klongsarn, Bangkok
Closest Relative Address: c/o Coordinating Group for Religion in Society
Marital Status: Single. No children
Education: Former student in Faculty of Science, Chulalongkorn University. Dropped out of the university in Fourth Year in 1976

Past Activities in Brief:

1974-1976	Member of the Chula-People Party
1976-1977	Clerk in Ranong Province, South of Thailand
1977	Salesman in an aluminium goods shop
Dec 1977-present	Full-time worker of Coordinating Group for Religion in Society

Vision and Wishes:

I feel that the workers in private factories and plantations in Thailand are very often mistreated by their employers, and do not even receive the protection they are due under the law. The way to solve these problems, and similar problems faced by villagers is not to create open conflicts, but to use progressive and creative non-violence. Only when all people in my country accept their common responsibility for the future of the country, can the country expect to have future

Name: Miss Boontham Jindawong
Age: 21
Address: 52 Moo 3, Tambon Ta-shi, Amphur Na-sarn, Suratthani Province
Marital Status: Single. No children.
Education: Primary School
Occupation: Rubber Plantation Worker

Miss. Boontham is a younger sister of a released endangering society prisoner. After her brother was arrested and detained as an endangering society prisoner for 5-6 months, she became conscious of the injustices that many villagers were facing and agreed to assist CGRS officials when they were in her area.

Annex: Chaiwat's letter from the prison

The Police Station, Amphur Na-sarn
Suratthani Province

February 26, 1978

Dear friends,

I think all of you already know that I have been arrested. I expect you are quite excited. The news about my friends and I has been written in an exaggerate way even though newsmen have never asked us any questions, they only came to take some photographs.

During the 10 days I have stayed here, I have met a lot of people. On Sunday 19th and Monday 20th, there were C.I.D. officials from Bangkok who came to investigate us. On Tuesday, I was interrogated by the provincial governor and Special Branch Colonel Chalard. The T.V. also came to make a video tape film, but I don't know whether the pictures were used or not. On the same day I also asked the governor why he said in an interview with newsmen that I gave a statement that Thailand followed the buttocks of USA, as I have never met the provincial governor before. He answered that he got the news from a report sent by Nai Amphur. In the morning of Wednesday Captain Aporn from the mutual news centre came to interrogate me, and in the afternoon the deputy provincial governor (on the military side), Colonel Thongchai, came and talked with me. On Thursday Captain Aporn continued to interrogate us. On Friday, the lawyer from the International Commission of Jurists came to visit us. He asked us about our living conditions, why I was arrested, and how many times I was interrogated. The District officer stayed with us all the time, so I asked him why he reported to higher officials that I said that Thailand followed the buttocks of the USA. He told me that he summarised this from the report of ISOC official who had interrogated me. However I am still puzzled because I had never said such a sentence. On Saturday the lawyer Dusit Nasomjai came to post a bail for us with a ~~฿~~ 300,000 cash cheque. Lawyer Dusit told us that he had already talked with the provincial governor. The latter, with Colonel Chalard, was willing to allow all of us to be bailed, but final authority rested with the commander-in-chief of the 4th army region.

Our life in jail is very boring because we have no freedom to go anywhere. Eating and then sleeping are our daily activities. If we get a newspaper, we read almost every letter of it. At the beginning we were not allowed to bring anything into our cells, but now we can have paper, pens and Dhamma books (books on Buddhism) in the cells. This makes us feel a little bit better.

I usually get up at 6.30 a.m. and take a bath after taking exercise for a while. We have breakfast at about 8.00 a.m. The breakfast is usually rice and curry. The police give us one plate and we buy another one. After breakfast we read (if there is something to read) or sit down or sometimes sleep. By mid-day I will take exercise again. I wash at about 16.00 p.m., have dinner at about 5.00 p.m. and go to sleep at about 9.00-10.00 pm. The others spent most of their time asleep because they don't know what to do.

I don't know how you are. I am very happy and thank you for your letters. From now on I think we have to be more adult, more responsible and be braver and more determined. When we want to see nice things in our society, we must be brave enough to create such nice thing first in ourselves.

Love and Peace,
Chaiwat

P.S I am enclosing for your information what we can remember from the interrogation by the police investigators.

Interrogation at the Inquiry Level Chaiwat Yaowapongsiri:-

1. Precise Personal record:

I am the son of Mr. Pajja Yaowapongsiri and Mrs. Sui-keng Tang. I finished primary school at Pei-ang School (a chinese school) at Songwad Rd, Bangkok, finished upper primary school at Sajjaphittaya School at Bangrak, finished secondary school from Wachirawut Witthayalai School and finished the Bachelor of Engineering Degree from Chulalongkorn University in 1976, but didn't receive the degree because it cost a lot of money and a lot of time to practice receiving the degree. I worked as a teacher for a short time and then went to work in the Mae-Klong Basin Development Project of Dr. Pucy Ung-pakorn. After the 6 October 1976 uprising, I worked as an employee at Thongchaipanich Co. Ltd. for 2 months and after that I was persuaded to work in CGRS. Seeing that the work of CGRS was very more useful, I resigned from the company to work there.

2. The Coordinating Group for Religion in Society:

The Coordinating Group for Religion in Society has the following official founders 1. Bishop Boonluen Mansap (Catholic) 2. Dr. Withawat Kongkakul (Protestant) 3. Dr. Gotham Arya (Buddhist) 4. Rev. Prasit Samanchit (Catholic). The objective of this group is to bring together the different factions in Thai society through peaceful methods, and to help the political prisoners to receive legal justice. (See the details in the instruction leaflet for the voluntary workers of CGRS in the provinces) The group receives financial support from many foreign organisations such as 1. Bread for the World (Germany) 2. World Council of Churches (Geneva) 3. Amnesty International (England) 4. Quakers and Mennonite (USA). This group was formed in March 1976, and is still waiting for the registration application as a society to be approved by the Police Department.

3. Activity in the South:

Sukon and I traveled to the South in the name of the group. We came here by the Nakornsrihammaraj train on the evening of February 12th and arrived at Nakornsrihammaraj at about 05.30 am. on February 13th, 1978. After getting off the train, we came to find the rooms at Nakorn Hotel. In the afternoon we went to visit Banloam Kaewsuan, a prisoner in a communist case, at the central prison. Knowing that he would be sent to the court on February 23rd, we told him to write to Fuchong, his brother, and that we would help find a lawyer for him. Then we asked the officials to visit Plien Chunum and Nivitre Lim (also prisoners in a communist case), but they had already been released. After that we went to see Somchai Pangcholachit, a teacher of Sri Nakornthammaraj Suksa School who was a friend of Pairoj Pethkong (an endangering society prisoner at Amphur Muang Nakorn police station). We asked him about Pairoj

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and also asked news about the demonstration of the teachers on Valentine's day. He told us that it was only a rumour because in fact the local teachers would not demonstrate but would only send Valentine cards to each other. We then went to visit Pairoj Pethkong at the police station of the central district. He was being accused of for offences as follows 1. endangering society 2. communist 3. trying to kill officials 4. fighting against officials. On the 3rd and 4th charges he had already been sentenced. On the 3rd charge he was acquitted, whilst on the 4th charge, he has to wait 2 years before being sentenced. At present he was still detained at the police station for the 1st and 2nd charges. After paying a visit to Pairoj, we went to rest at the hotel.

On February 14th, we went to the front of Wat Manao-wan by taxi "Nakorn - Chandi" and went a further 4-5 km. to Wat Tamnak to visit Pra-Maha Swat who had previously been an endangering society prisoner at Bang Khen. We stayed with him one night. In the morning of February 15th we went to Nakorn railway station by car and went on the train "Hadyai - Chumporn" to Na-Sarn station. From there we went by car to the house of Vichai Chindawong (an released endangering society prisoners from Bang Khen) at 52 Moo 3 Tambon Tachi, Amphur Na San. We did not meet Vichai because he had gone to help his father prepare a plantation at Amphur Kien-Sa, so we asked Boontham Chindawong, his sister, to bring us to meet him. We spent one night at Vichai's house. On the morning of 16th February, all of us went to the market at Na San. At about 10.00 am. 3-4 policemen came to search us whilst we were getting on a bus. Due to the documents of CGRS found in our bags, they brought us to the police station and accused us of 1. being communists 2. bringing more than 100 tablets of medicine into a controlled area 3. endangering both the internal and external security of the kingdom. All of us denied every charge except that of the medicine, because Sukon had Asthma, and thus he always brought a lot of medicine with him whilst travelling.

Sukon Tanthakeyoon:-

I was born in September 6th, 1953. Now I am 25 years old. I am a son of Mr. Yong and Mrs. Jung Tanthakeyoon and I am the 4th son of 5 sons and daughters. I finished prathom 4 from Charuwatthanukul School, finished prathom 7 from Wat Prayoonrawongsawat School and finished MS. 5 from Suankulab School. After that I continued my studies at the Faculty of Science, Chulalongkorn University, until I was in the 4th year when I resigned because of my illness (asthma) in the middle of 1976. In December 1976 I worked as a clerk at Udomchai Co. Ltd. (a powdered fish manufacturing company) in Ranong Province, I resigned later because of the bad smell and because of my illness. I joined CGRS in February 1978. I was accompanying Chaiwat in visiting prisoners and detainees, political prisoners already released and still detained, who were in Nakornsriathammaraj and Suratthani, as outlined in Chaiwat's statement.

Boondham Chindawong:-

Question: When did you know Chaiwat ?

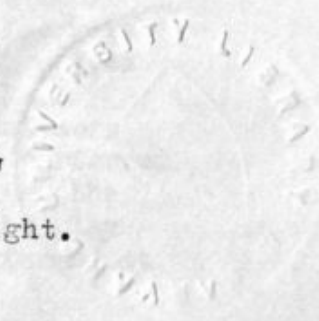
Answer: About 3-4 months ago.

Question: When did he come for the first time ? with whom ? and how many nights did he stay at your house ?

Answer: At the end of September. With Wanee. They stayed one night.

Question: Did he and Wanee sleep together ?

Answer: No, he slept with Vichai and Wanee slept with me.



- Question: What did he talk about with Vichai, and you with Wanee?
Answer: I didn't know. With Wanee, we didn't talk together very much because she was tired from the travel. We only talked about general things such as the fact that the south was more comfortable than Bangkok.
- Question: The second time, with whom did he come here? When? Did he have anything to give you? How many nights did he stay?
Answer: He came alone in the beginning of November. He gave us nothing. He stayed here one night.
- Question: Who went to send him to the market? Why did Chaiwat come to your house?
Answer: No one went to send him to the market. We only sent him to the road and he got on a car to the market himself. He went to visit Vichai as his friend.
- Question: The third time, whom did Chaiwat come with? Did he meet Vichai? How many nights did he stay?
Answer: He came alone and met Vichai. He stayed 2 nights because there were floods.
- Question: Had he ever given you money or things?
Answer: No, never.
- Question: Did you know what Chaiwat and Vichai talked about?
Answer: Did he talk to you?
I didn't know because I didn't listen to them.
- Question: We talked together only at mealtimes. The fourth time, this time he came with Sukon. Had you ever met Sukon before?
Answer: No, never. This was the first time I met him.
- Question: Why did Chaiwat come here several times?
Answer: He went to visit Vichai as in previous times, but this time he didn't meet him because Vichai went to work in the plantation at Ban Bang Yai, Amphur Kien Sa.
- Question: What was his objective in meeting Vichai?
Answer: He thought of Vichai as his friend.
- Question: How did he know Vichai?
Answer: I don't know.
- Question: Do you think Thailand is a democratic country or not?
Answer: Why?
I think in Thailand there is no democracy, and no justice. Because even my father was mistreated by the soldiers while being detained.

Keep up the work.

Chaiwat



2) Trials and Legal Processes

A. Oct. 6th Defendants

1. The trial of Boonchart Sathienthammani at the Criminal Court

January 6th, 1978

Prosecution witness : Mr. Suwan Tapparangsri, deputy director of the Civil Aviation Training Centre.

Prosecutor The witness said that Boonchart was a student of the center but he had not know Boonchart until after the October 6th incident when he saw on the center's announcement board the picture of the hanging cut out from a newspaper. He did not know who put that picture on the board. The witness then took the picture down and asked people in different departments who the man in the picture was. Finally, he found out that the man was Boonchart, a student in the Aeroplane Maintenance and Repair Department. He called Boonchart and questioned him. He also noted down Boonchart's statement and got him to sign his name at the bottom of the statement. Then he informed the director about the case. The director informed the police and also told them to arrest Boonchart.

The witness claimed that his duty was to supervise the students so that they would act according to the director's policy that the students should not take part in any political gathering or demonstration.

Cross examination : The witness said that besides academic issues, the administration of the center was under the responsibility of the director. He admitted that the policy which forbids the students to take part in politics was not a written policy. He also said that after Boonchart was arrested, he was expelled from the center, but if he is acquitted, he would be able to study again.

January 20th, 1978

Prosecution witness : Mr. Sawaeng Boon-utit

Prosecutor : The witness said that on October 4th, 1976 he passed the front gate of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University at 11:00 a.m. Hearing students' speech^{es} through the loudspeaker, he went in and saw the students' theater performance. The first performance was about the October 14th incident and after it ended it was followed by a play about the hanging of a man. The witness stood 10 metres from the stage and saw that the hanged man was made up so that he looked like the Crown Prince. He saw the play for 5 minutes and then left the university campus.

On that day (Oct. 4th) at 5 p.m. he bought the Dao Siam evening newspaper because the picture of the play he had seen in the morning was printed.

Cross examination : The defence lawyer persistently asked through which gate the witness had entered and exactly where he had stood. The witness was very confused and said that he went through the gate near Sanam Luang (which is the front gate) and stood about 20 metres from the front fence whilst looking at the play.

Remarks : It seems clear enough that the witness had not actually seen the play, because in fact the play was performed near the back gate and it was thus impossible for anyone to see the play if he stood 20 metres from the front fence. Besides, the play about the October 14th incident and of the hanging were performed at

the same time, (not one after the other as mentioned by the witness) so as to make a comparison of the two incidents.

Moreover, the Dao Siam newspaper which the witness claimed he had bought in the evening of October 4th, had in fact first appeared in the market in the evening of October 5th.

February 3rd, 1978

Prosecution witness : Pol. Lt. Col. Ulit Kanjanampa, deputy-superintendent of a Police Precinct Department of Investigation.

Prosecutor The witness had the duty of photographing and inspecting places where incidents had occurred. The witness could prove both for coloured and black and white films, whether they were touched up or not. The investigating committee for this case had sent the negatives to the Department of Investigation. The witness said that all the films sent to him were those taken by photographers of the different newspapers. He also claimed that all these films had not been touched up.

Cross-examination : The defence lawyer asked the judge for a postponement of his cross-examination, as he had not enough time to study the documents and the films. The judge agreed. The next hearing was fixed for March 3, 1978.

2. The Trial of the Bangkok 18 at the Military Court of Bangkok, Army Quartermaster's Division of the Royal Thai Army, Nontaburi Province.

January 9th, 1978

First Prosecution Witness : Pol. Lt. Col. Sakhon Suwanna, deputy superintendent of the 2nd Sub-Division of the Special Branch Police.

Before the witness gave his disposition, Judge Col. Piboon Chantraratvong referred to the Document of the Defendants, No. 253/2520 (defendants' statement - see Human Rights in Thailand Report : Nov. - Dec. 1977, p.17-18) dated December 15th, 1977, in which the defendants claimed that legally the military court of Bangkok had no authority to proceed with and to judge over this case and also asked the court to reject recent amendments to the Communist Suppression Acts, which were unfavourable to the defendants. Judge Col. Piboon said that such a statement was an insult to the court and should be corrected. Mr. Tongbai Tongpau, leader of the defence lawyers, said to the court that such a petition was not an insult to the court but a statement of legal facts and opinions which will be pursued throughout the trial; however, the defendants and their lawyers would reconsider it again.

Pol. Lt. Col. Sakhon Suwanna told the court that he had been assigned to follow the activities of the students and of

the now-defunct National Student Center of Thailand (NSCT) since it was first established in 1969. He listed the activities and demonstrations conducted by the NSCT and by the students unions at Thammasart, Ramkhamhaeng and Chulalongkorn Universities. He also listed the names of the NSCT secretary generals, from the first one, Thirayuth Boonmee, up to the last one before NSCT was disbanded after the October 6th Coup, Sutham Saengprathum, a defendant in the case. He also submitted to the judges 73 documents, 357 pages long, to support his verbal evidence.

He cited several student activities and demonstrations including for example the protest against Japanese products in 1972, the protest against the use of a state owned helicopter for a private hunting trip in 1973, the demonstration to expel American troops from Thailand in 1974, the demonstration against Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, and finally the protests against the return of Prapass Charusathien and Thanom Kitikajorn in 1976.

He claimed that the students' demonstrations and panel discussions at various places had created unrest in the country as well as dividing the people in the country into two groups, and also stressed that the NSCT had never legally registered itself.

General Situation About 3,000 people attended the trial. Most of them came very early, some at 6 am. with the hope of obtaining one of the limited green cards which allowed the holders into the courtroom. However they found that only 50 seats were allocated for common people and relatives of the prisoners. Among the 300 seats available in the courtroom, about 50 seats were for the defence lawyers, diplomats and foreign observers, while another 200 seats were occupied by village scouts, who had a special pink card, and went into the court through a special entrance without an I.D. card or body checks. Throughout the trial proceedings, these village scouts showed no signs of interest the trial. They were there only fill up the seats, so that the interested people and the defendants' sympathizers might not get in. Buses were provided to take these village scouts from their homes to the court, as was a free mid day meal (by whom?).

Outside, in the compound, although many loudspeakers were installed, most of the time they did not work, and the people could rarely hear anything. However, these people greeted each other and the defence lawyers warmly with paper flags and paper flowers with small slogans proclaiming "Fight for justice and freedom", "Flowers of freedom bloom today" etc. Also, about 3,000 baht was collected from the people present for the "Bangkok 18 defence fund" and given to Lawyer Tongbai Tongp. u in front of the courthouse after the hearing.

Outside the compound, another group of about 200 right-wing people gathered in a counter demonstration against those who had come to listen to the case attaching and scolding the people present (particularly the defence lawyers), and throwing stones wrapped in paper at the defendants' buses. Hundreds of policeman and soldiers who were supposed to 'preserve the order and prevent any unrest and disorder' there did not do anything against these right wing demonstrators.

January 16th, 1978

First Prosecution Witness: Pol. Lt. Col. Sakhon Suwanra (continued)

The trial was postponed to the following Monday after all the 42 defence lawyers boycotted the hearing in protest against a spate of threats by some groups of people. All the 18 defendants and their lawyers petitioned the court before the hearing for a postponement, arguing that the defendants, the lawyers and the public attending the trial were being harassed while authorities failed to provide them adequate protection. As no lawyers were present, Sutham Saengprathum read the petition from the lawyers and defendants to the judges as follows:-

Military Court of Bangkok

January 16, 1978

Criminal case between- Prosecutors of the Military Court of Bangkok- Prosecutor
Sutham Saengprathum and his friends - Defendants
(total 18 persons)

I, Sutham Saengprathum, with my 17 friends,
age : 24 address : BangKwang maximum security
road: - prison.
amphur : Muang tambol : -
changwad : Nonthaburi

ask to submit a petition to the court as follows:

1. Owing to some events that have happened, with the intention of being against the process of this court, we (the defendants and the lawyers) request that the court considers the following:-

a. There have been a group of persons in front of the gate of Quartermaster's Department since the first hearings. This group of persons have signboards with some phrases written on them attacking the defendants' lawyers in various ways such as, "The 18 defendants are a danger to the throne" etc. Such phrases could influence the court and persuade people to think that the defendants are certainly guilty. In addition, the group of lawyers has been attacked with such phrases as "Slave of the Communists!", "Beware yourself!" Such attacks, because they are worrying, reduce the efficiency of our work.

b. Some lawyers are directly taunted or insulted whilst walking past this group of persons. We the lawyers have been given bouquets of tuberoses bound with black ribbons. And some of us, such as Chan Kaewchusai have received "dok mai-chandra" (a wooden flower used in funerals) at our offices.

c. Many lawyers such as Thongbai Thong-u Chan Kaewchusai, Paisarn Peudmongkol, Wasan Panich, Sutthipong Laocharoen, Chatchai Chanthadaraplaisai and Wiboon Khunponglikit have been followed by mysterious men. This sort of thing poses a threat to our lives and is designed to effect the morale of all the lawyers in the October 6th case.

2. From the behaviour outlined in 1 above, the lawyers are trying to avoid a serious event, which could easily happen, by asking the court for permission to drive into the court compound. When the court allows us to do so, the Quartermaster's Department doesn't agree, thus both sides must agree.

In addition, every lawyers has his person and possessions/ searched during the proceedings, from their first step to their last step, going into the court, out of the court and even when going to the toilet. All of us have been checked by soldiers with weapons on their shoulders. These actions are oppressive, terrorize us and are also an insult on us, lawyers who are central part of the judicial process, as important, as the judges and prosecutors. This creates an unpleasant situation in the courtroom. Thus, it should be considered as a big obstacle to the proceedings.

3. From the events outlined in 1 above, we in the name of the lawyers of the 18 defendants ask the court with respect to tell that such events may cause a serious situation which could be very dangerous to the lives of people, police, soldiers, to official property and also to us lawyers. We have appealed to the officials who have been responsible for this case, but no results have been achieved.

4. The defendants and their lawyers ask the court with respect to tell that if the types of event mentioned above can not be prevented, there could be a serious event, such as a confrontation between the people going to hear the proceedings and the group of persons outside the court. This would interfere with and damage the unity of the nation, and may be dangerous to the lives of the people and their lawyers. The lawyers therefore submitted a paper to the officials in order that they would take steps to solve this problem of security as soon as possible.

5. All of the lawyers realize very well the duties and responsibilities that the profession of "lawyer" entails. We intend to strongly maintain justice with all our ability and will try to complete these proceedings as soon as possible. However owing to the above facts and reasons, we (the defendants and the lawyers) think that the lawyers are in considerable danger, and that we are risking our lives. These dangers should be eliminated before becoming a serious threat to life and body, especially to the lives of the people.

It is necessary for us to ask the court, as a special case, to use your honour and power to get rid of the above dangers. And so, we ask the court to postpone the hearings today until the same day next week.

signature/ ^{of} 24 lawyers and signature/ ^{of} 18 defendants.
Thongbai Thongpau Editor

Judge Col. Piboon argued against the lawyers' claims. He said that the carrying of arms by soldiers outside the courtroom was to maintain security and did not constitute in anyway a threat against the lawyers or the defendants. He also said that a search prior to entering the courtroom was a court regulation which included everyone, even lawyers. "Officials have reported that some lawyers had secretly tried to bring tape-recorders into the courtroom which is prohibited", he said.

Judge Col. Piboon maintained that the security outside the court's perimeter was beyond the court's jurisdiction. He, however, noted that the cheering and appl: use given to defendants by supporters outside the courtroom might provoke hostilities and requested the supporters outside the courtroom to remain peaceful throughout the hearings. At one time the judge threatened to discontinue the installation of the loudspeakers for listeners outside the courtroom if the situation continued to prove undesirable. (for the prosecution?)

Judge Air Vice Marshal Sansern Vanich said, "if the lawyers are afraid of danger, other lawyers should be appointed to replace them. Or you may want the court to help you find lawyers". Defendant Tongchai Vinijakul said that the lawyers were willing to defend them and should be provided adequate protection. "Who will guarantee that the new lawyers will be safe if they replace the old one," he added. Sutham also said, "Those defending the case have already proved themselves to be brave enough." But the defendants were finally shut up by the judges who said that their statements were provoking disorder among the listeners. The court accepted the complaint from the lawyers and agreed to postpone the hearings to the following Monday.

General Situation: Over 1000 people attended the trial. No right-wing protesters were present, which might have resulted from the fact that the government, after having been attacked in the press for the whole week, did not want to loose face or to appear too "weak".

It should also be noted that after the trial was declared postponed, a poster written "go to Bangkwang" was held up and a group of 300 people went there. At Bangkwang, 10 people were allowed in at a time after having obtained a permission card. But after a while, all the Oct. 6 prisoners were let out, right to the front of the main gates, without any chains or shackles, and were greeted by the 300 supporters outside. Many people looked at this type of situation with worry, feeling that something bad might easily have occurred, and wondered from whom the custodians got permission to let the prisoners freely come to the front gate?

Further Comments Firstly it should be noted that the judges reaction to the lawyers and defendents justifiable petition for greater security, showed that they were not as impartial as judges should be, but instead indicated that they were more against the defence lawyers, and the supporters of the defendents, than against the right wing demonstrators who were trying to create an incident.

Secondly, CGRS workers decided that positive action should be taken to prevent incidents occurring in the compound of the court. A meeting was therefore called, with representatives from the main universities to draw up a plan of what should be done in different eventualities (i.e. if a bomb were thrown in the crowd) and to establish certain codes of behaviour amongst supporters (e.g. not to sing revolutionary songs). An instruction leaflet was drafted at this meeting, and distributed as widely as possible by the university representatives.

January 23rd, 1978

First Prosecution Witness: Pol. Lt. Col. Sakhon Suwanna (Continued)
Cross examination by Lawyer Tongbai Tongpau

The defence lawyer tried to point out the fact that all the NSCT's movements, demonstrations and activities referred by the witness or appearing in the 351 pages of documents were performed peacefully and legally according to the Constitutional Law with the sincere hope of helping to solve the country's economic, social and political problems, and that the governments of that period had later on frequently accepted the NSCT's suggestions as their policies.

Pol. Lt. Col. Sakhon, the state witness, admitted that the

NSCT. was established openly with its secretary-general and deputies being chosen through election and that its provisions and objectives did not violate the law of land or the principles of democracy. He also admitted that the NSCT. had co-operated with the previous governments in several undertakings, for instance, in spreading democratic ideals to rural areas during Sanya Dharmasaki's administration, had cooperated with the Seni Pramoj government in surveying farmers' debts, and had surveyed rice and sugar prices during the Kukrit Pramoj administration. The activities of the NSCT during 1974-1976 period were legal according to the Constitution of 1974.

He admitted that the administration of Thanom Kittikajorn was a dictatorship and the reasons the students demonstrated against his return was because they were afraid that this might bring about another dictatorship. The demonstration was performed peacefully, and aimed at persuading the government either to send Thanom out of the country or to start a legal action against him. He added that Sutham had petitioned to the Prime Minister Seni Pramoj through Mr. Surin Masadit, former Minister of Prime Minister's office, asking for police protection during the demonstration. But when asked if the government wanted Thanom to leave the country or not, the witness said that he could not remember.

The witness admitted that the students had the right to hold their debates openly, and that they had also invited people from outside the university to join the debates, including Prime Ministers, ministers and M.P.s.

Regarding the students going to rural areas, the witness admitted that it was written in his report (No.C. 50) that when the students went to Ban Kudchum Village, Nong-boa-dang District, Chai-yapum Province to give advice on the up-coming elections and to protest against the building of a dam which would cause 21 villages in the district to be flooded, the provincial ISOC leader told the villagers not to believe the students "because the students got their ideas from the Communists and would cause unrest in the village. The villagers then argued that the students behaved like their own children and had not caused unrest in the same way as had ISOC officials and village defence volunteers, who ran a gambling house, got drunk and used firearms to threaten the villagers.

January 30th, 1978

First Prosecution Witness: Pol. Lt. Col. Sakhon Suwana (continued)

Cross-examination by Lawyer Tongbai Tongpau

The witness said to the court that the October 6th coup d'etat was performed by the NARC which was a different group from the student group. The NARC had thereafter abolished the Constitution the government and the parliament. He admitted that the defendants and other activists were arrested at around noon of October 6th, 1976, several hours before the implementation of Martial Law. He also admitted that there were several other groups of people, besides the students, including former Prime Minister Kukrit Pramoj who protested against the return of Field Marshal Thanom Kittikajorn. He knew that on the morning of October 6th, a group of students, including Mr Sutham Saengpratin, the first defendant, went to former Prime Minister Seni Pramoj's house and were arrested at that time under Lese Majeste charges. When asked why in the Special Branch report given to the court there was no report about the events of on October 6, 1976, the witness said that his subordinates did not make any report on that day.

Cross-examination by Lawyer Krirk Rawangpai

The witness admitted that the student movements were conducted within the framework of student unions which were legally set up and in some cases the government officials also participated in some of the activities.

Cross-examination by Lawyer Vasant Panich

The witness admitted that several political groups including the Red Gaur, the Housewife Group and Navapol Group were formed with the purpose of obstructing the student movement. The obstruction had resulted, at many times, in the injury of several students. For example, the throwing of a bomb at the demonstrators during the American "Mayaguez" protest on March 21, 1976 had caused injury and death to several students. He also admitted that several activists who participated in students' movements had been assassinated.

Cross-examination by Lawyer Suthee Puvapan

Regarding the students' popular slogan "sovereignty from the people", which was sometimes mistaken as a "communist" slogan, the lawyer asked the witness if there was a constitution for administration under the democratic system at that time. The witness hesitated until the judge prompted him to reply. "Yes, there must be such a constitution." The lawyer added: "Then the constitution obviously stipulated that sovereignty and ruling power must come from the people, mustn't it?" The witness's reply was "yes".

The witness also admitted that the constitution allowed public demonstrations and that the student activities were conducted under the stipulation of the 1974 Constitution. He also admitted that under a democratic system people are allowed to openly protest against the government within the framework of the law.

Cross-examination by Lawyer Marut Bunnag

The witness admitted that whenever he and his subordinates who spied on the students found any illegal action had been committed, they would have to arrest the offenders and file a lawsuit against them. The lawyer then asked: "But you have never filed a lawsuit against any students activities." So it means that the students never committed any illegal action?" The witness replied "yes".

Questioned by public prosecutor

The witness said that although the NSCT's stated policy and its objectives were not illegal, the founding of the student organization had never been legally accepted. Regarding the students' anti-American demonstration, he said that the American presence was guaranteed by the SEATO pact, with Thailand still retaining its sovereignty.

Regarding the students' demonstration to evict Field Marshals Thanom and Prapass from the country, he said that the two persons were of Thai nationality and thus were eligible live in this country.

February 6th, 1978

Second Prosecution Witness: Mr. Thanong Laowanit, President of the Boonrawd Breweries Labour Union.

The prosecutor asked the court that the trial be held secretly since the evidence likely to be given by Mr. Thanong Laowanit could touch upon the monarchy. The judge asked the defendants if they would oppose this request or not. The defendants did not oppose this. The judge then declared the trial to be held in camera and everybody had to leave the room, including the British and German observers from International Commission of Jurists and Bread for the World.

February 13th, 1978

Second Prosecution Witness: Mr. Thanong Laowanit

The trial was held secretly.

Comments on the Hearings of 6th and 13th February

Mr. Thanong Laowanit has an extremely tainted reputation as a man who tends to cooperate and work more for right wing groups than for the workers. At an ILO meeting last year, he was sent by the government as the representative of the "Thai Unions" but was completely boycotted at this meeting and thus rapidly had to return to Thailand (see 'Human Rights in Thailand Report Sept-Oct 1977 P.)

The evidence he gave in the closed court hardly touched on H.M. the king at all (we cannot print what he said for fear of being accused of Lese Majeste ourselves), but mainly consisted of slanderous comments about the students and the workers and worker leaders that had cooperated with the students (for example he claimed that the students and workers frequently had sex with each other). It seems that no real evidence was presented by Thannong.

Two possible explanations have been presented as to why the court was held in camera. The first was that Thannong's evidence was so weak and slanderous, that the prosecutor did not want the newspapers to comment on it. The second was that the court did not want the ICJ representative to listen and report on the proceedings. However Mr. David Hallmark from the ICJ delayed his departure from Thailand so he could observe at least one hearing.

February 20th, 1978

Second Prosecution witness: Mr. Tanong Laowanich

The witness was first cross-examined by Mr. Tongbai Tongpao who questioned him about the establishment of the labour confederation and labour unions in the country. The witness also said in his reply to the defence lawyer's questions that the labour confederation and labour unions had adopted the resolution to oppose the return of former Prime Minister Thanom Kittikachorn to Thailand from Singapore.

The labour confederation and labour unions had appointed representatives to meet the then Prime Minister Seni Pramoj to demand Field Marshal Thanom's ouster from the country. They had also demanded the government to find the murderer, who killed 2 electricians at Nakornpathom, and insisted that if there were a coup, the labour unions would staged big strike. He also told the court that the NSCT had also had demonstrations planned against the return of Thanom.

The witness admitted that the demonstration at the Pra Rup Ground (which was the demonstration against the student demonstration in Thammasart University) was against the law as it blocked the traffic. However, he said that the protest march to the Government House and the demand made by the demonstrators for the ouster of three Cabinet members was lawful.

Asked whether the demonstrators had forced open the gate of Government House, the witness told the court that the demonstrators had not stormed the gate but that it had "opened up by itself".

The judge stopped the lawyers' question about the hanging of men and women in front of Thammasart University by a group of people.

The witness accepted that he went to make a speech at the Yan Krao radio station on the day before the massacre took place. There, he said that the students had done wrong and the news that the labour unions would cut off electricity and water supplies to support the student demonstration was not true.

The witness also said that on the morning of the October 6th, he brought the Bangkok Post newspaper and saw the picture of the hanging scene in the students' theatre performance, and he had brought that picture to the demonstrators at Pra Rup Ground. He had said to the demonstrators that they should ask the Prime Minister about the students' deeds.

Another defence lawyer Suthee Fuwapan asked Mr. Tanong about his own history and later engaged in a brief argument with the witness. Mr. Tanong was told to answer every question posed by the lawyer but the witness argued that he was not a head of cattle and the verbal argument ended at the request of the court.

One remarkable thing about this witness was that he always refused to answer, always saying "I don't know" "I cannot remember", etc., although most of the questions put to him were about facts which concerned himself directly.

3. The Trial of Nikom Fridakul

The case of Nikom Fridakul is notable for his frequent arrests. Nikom was first arrested in the October 6th incident and was released on March 3th, 1977 as all the charges against him were dropped.

He was rearrested on August 13th, 1977 after having been followed by the police for some time. At that time he was asked to select his own charge, out of the 3 offered, including those of robber, communist, and drug peddler. He chose the charge of robber. After having been detained at the Special Prison of Bangkok for about 2 months, he was released in early October 1977 as the judge acquitted him from the charge due to inadequate evidence.

On January 25th, 1978 he was arrested for the third time. On that day he went to listen to the trial of Supap Pasa-ong and his group at the criminal court. After the trial whilst he was walking at Sanam Luang, four vocational students suddenly came up to him and hit him with sticks. He fled into a bus and got off at the Pra-rup grounds

where there was at that moment a military parade, and a large crowd of interested people. Nikom fled into the crowd and was arrested by the police. The policemen charged him of gangster although there was no evidence against him. At present he is still in prison.

Regarding the trial proceedings, up till now the prosecution has been postponed 3 times. At the last hearing it was postponed to March 7th, 1978. If on that day there is still no prosecution, the authorities will have the power to detain him for only a further 12 days, and after that they will have to release him.

B. Those Arrested Before Oct. 6th

1. The Trial of Workers of Thai Blanket Factory at the Criminal Court.

December 27th, 1977

The defendants were cross-examined. After the first and second defendants had been cross-examined on December 13th, 1977, (see Human Rights in Thailand report, November-December) this time it was the turn of the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 7th defendants. (the 6th and 8th defendants were absent)

What was remarkable at this hearing was that none of the four defendants were at the place when the incident happened. On April 2nd, 1976 Mrs. Chaloc Sriluesang, the 3rd defendant, had left the factory before midday to take her relative to the Northern Bus Station and came back to the factory only in the evening. The 4th defendant, Mrs. Saman Intraruengsri was pregnant and when the strike occurred she did not join it, but went to stay at her relative's house on March 28th and did not return until April 4th. The 5th defendant, Miss Ampan Chaipong did not join the strike either. After the strike occurred on March 25th, she stayed at the factory for 5-6 days and then went to stay with her sister. On April 2nd, when the incident happened, she was staying with her sister.

The 7th defendant, Mr. Prateep Prakkratoke, was a worker of Thai-American Textile factory. He did not take part in the strike at Thai Blanket Factory at all. He did not even know when the strike there occurred. But on the day when he went to the Labour Department to negotiate with his employer, the workers of the Thai Blanket Factory also went there to negotiate with their employer. Prateep mentioned that the owner of the Thai Blanket Factory and the Thai-American Textile Factory was the same person - Mr. Sukree Pottirattanangkul, and the employers representative from the two factories was also the same person - Mr. Montri Sukkanit. Prateep also mentioned that his opposition to his employer had made him become a defendant in the same case as the workers of the Thai Blanket Factory.

February 1st, 1978

The 6th and 8th defendants were cross-examined.

The 6th defendant, Mr. Sombat Sukpluem, was one of the 7 workers who went to the Labour Department to negotiate with their employer on April 2nd, 1976. On that day he left the factory at 8 a.m. and came back at around 8 p.m. He did not know what happened at the factory before he returned. When asked by the defence lawyer, Mr. Tongbai Tongpau, why his statements given to the police and the court were different, the defendant said that the police had not read his statement to him before getting him to sign his name at the bottom of his statement. He also said that the statement was different from what he had actually said during the investigation. "The truth is what I have spoken here in the court", he said.

The 8th defendant, Mr. Sam-ang Suntranon, said that he was a worker of the Tayin Poliester Co. Ltd, and that he had not taken part in the strike at the Thai Blanket Factory. He mentioned that on April 3rd, the workers from the Thai Blanket Factory came to his factory to collect donations to help the striking workers there. The workers told him what had happened at the Thai Blanket Factory. Sam-ang told the workers to ask for justice at the Labour Department. The workers then asked him to be a consultant for this, he agreed and went to the Labour Department on April 7th, 1976.

On September 28th, 1976 he was arrested. He said that he was tortured by 3-4 police investigators and consequently he had to say what they wanted, including saying that he was at the Thai Blanket Factory on April 2nd at 2 p.m. He also said that the Thai Blanket Factory had purposely mistreated him because he had helped the workers there.

Remarks: Although Sam-ang was bailed out not long after he was arrested, he was dismissed from his work at the Thai Tayin Poliester Co. Ltd.

February 9th, 1978

First defence witness: Miss. Suchada, a daughter of Mr. Kulap, the guard who died in the incident.

On April 2nd, 1976 when the incident occurred, the witness reached the factory gate at 12.00 a.m but could not enter the factory. At 4 pm. a factory bus tried to go out, but the gate was closed. The witness's father was carried out of the bus, so the witness helped to carry her father through the gate. She said that no workers obstructed the way or blocked the door, but helped to clear a way for them. The witness saw the first defendant 3 metres from the crowd. The defendant did not obstruct the way; on the contrary, she persuaded other people that the sick person should be taken to hospital rapidly in a hired car.

The witness did not go with her father to the hospital, but she could smell some alcohol in her father's breath while she was carrying him. She said that her father had high blood pressure and the doctor did not allow him to drink. After her father had died, her step-mother made a complaint to the police, "because her employer told her to do so".

The witness mentioned that the reason for her being a defence witness in this case was because she wanted to see that justice be done to the defendants who were not guilty of her father's death.

Second defence witness (defending the 8th defendant): Mr. Chitakorn

The witness worked at Tayin Poliester Factory, in the Fiber Department where the 8th defendant was the head of the department. He insisted that the defendant was working as usual in the Tayin Poliester Factory when the incident occurred in the Thai Blanket Factory. He gave the time card of the defendant as evidence.

Third defence witness (defending 3rd defendant): Mr. Charoon

The witness was a cousin of the defendant. He came to visit the defendant in Bangkok. He mentioned that at the time when the incident occurred, the defendant was with him at the Northern Bus Station.

Fourth defence witness (defending 4th defendant): Mr. Klaew

The witness was the husband of the 4th defendant. He said that his wife stopped working on March 25th, 1976 because she was ill. He took the defendant to stay in another factory on March 28th and came back to the Thai Blanket Factory on April 4th. On April 2nd the defendant was not in the factory.

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Fifth defence witness (defending 4th defendant): Mr. Somkuan Poonsawat
The witness was a guard at the factory where the 4th defendant went to stay. He said that the reason the defendant preferred to stay at his factory than at the Thai Blanket Factory was because she was ill and wanted to rest.

February 16th, 1978
Judgement of the Court

The judge acquitted 3 defendants, namely:
Mrs. Saman Intraruengsri, the 4th defendant
Miss. Ampan Chaichap, the 5th defendant
Mr. Prateep Prakkratok, the 7th defendant
As for the other 5 defendants, the judge did not make any decision. If the prosecutor did not appeal in 15 days, the defendants would all be set free.

As for Prateep Prakkratoke, although he was acquitted, a new charge of gambling was filed. At present he is being detained at Tanyaburi prison in Nontaburi Province. It seems that for workers leaders there can be no justice, for even when they are acquitted by the court, the authorities find some way to continue punishing them. In this case, Prateep has been in prison for almost two years, and other acquitted workers fired from their jobs. When and how can we ensure that poor workers can find justice when the rich and powerful employers do not like them.

Mr. Sukree Pottirattanangkul is a man who frequently appears in incidents where labourers are fired, tried in court, assassinated, or in other ways mistreated. (See article on Assassinations and Attempted Assassinations of Labour Leaders in Thailand, in section 4 of Part two of this report)

2. The trial of Supap Pasa-ong group

January 11th, 1978

Prosecution witness: Mr. Prasit Chaitongpan (continued)
Cross-examination: The witness said that the workers in the labour unions area part of the United Front of the Communist Party of Thailand. Democracy was also a step in the communist revolution. But when asked by the defence lawyer if the Kriengsak coup d'etat was also an active planned by the United Front, the witness said that it was not.

The witness also admitted that there had been many high-ranking officials in the Labour Department who were accused of being communists. For example, Mr. Ob Wasurat. He also admitted that before October 6th, two ministers, namely, Mr. Chuan Leekpai and Mr. Surin Masadit were also accused by Dao Siam newspaper of being communists.

February 1st, 1978

Prosecution witness: Pol. Maj. Faiboon Siriwan, police deputy inspector for investigation, Sampran District.

Prosecutor: The trial proceedings could not be heard, because no loud-speakers were provided. Even the people who sat in the front row of the court hardly hear anything. The trial proceedings lasted only half an hour. After the trial ended, one listener gave flowers to the 7 defendants.

February 6th, 1978

Prosecution witness: Pol. Cap. Songpon Vongtongkam
Prosecutor: The witness was among the group of policemen who arrested Supap and his 8 friends on March 30th, 1976. He said that he had observed the workers' strikes since January 1976. He knew that Sanguansri,

Pisit, and Supap, the defendants in this case, were the consultants of the Omnoi Labour Union, most members of which were workers at the factories in Omnoi District. He said that the policemen had found many documents, fire arms and correspondence with foreign countries while arresting the defendants.

The witness said that most of the people who interfered with the workers' strikes at Omnoi were directly from or introduced by the Omnoi Labour Union. He mentioned the strikes at Petkrasem Factory, at Hara Jeans Factory where Pisit, the defendant, took part as a consultant, at Nan-yang Weaving Factory where Supap, the defendant, took part, at Sri-ampon Co.Ltd. where Wimut, the defendant, was "the one who ordered the workers to stage a strike" and Pisit was the consultant of the strikers and at Thai Technique Industry where Wimut was the leader of the strike.

The witness also claimed that during the strike the workers would attack the employers, the government, the police and sometimes the monarchy. During the strike at Thai Technique Industry there was also a reading of "Communist books" for the workers.

February 15th, 1978

Prosecution witness: Pol.Cap. Songpon Vontangkam (continued)

Prosecutor: The witness said that the reason for the arrest of the 9 defendants on March 30th, 1976 was because on March 29th, the witness's spy had reported that the defendants moved their things in a mini-bus to another house. The policemen then planned to search two houses, at Kratumban District and Om-yai. The witness searched the house at Om-yai. The four defendants, namely Supap, Pisit, Nipapan and Sa-nguansri were sleeping in the house. The policemen found 2 guns with bullets, a duplicating machine, and coloured posters of the portraits of many communist leaders. At Kratumban district, the policemen charged the arrested persons with many charges, including having communist activities, endangering the security both inside and outside the kingdom, inciting workers to strike, and possessing firearms without permission.

The policemen also searched the house of Mr. Samrit Nobsri, as there was a report that things were moved from the labour union office to this house. Policemen found 9 sacks of books and documents there. Mr. Samrit told the policemen that Miss. Sa-nguansri, the defendant, had asked him to keep them for her.

C. From Sensitive Areas

1. The Trial of Udorn Pka-krong Group at the Criminal Court

January 12th, 1978

Prosecution witness: Mr. Nit Waiwat, a public health official at Tasala District

Prosecutor: The witness graduated from Vachira Nurses College and has worked as a public health official at Tasala District since 1972. He had made an autopsy of the 12 people who died in the attack at the Military Camp at Ban Song Prag, Tasala District. He mentioned that there were 6 people who died from gun shot wounds and another 6 people who died in the fire. The witness had not known the defendants before.

Cross examination: The witness said that although it appeared in the autopsy report that the six people died from the "guerillas' shooting", in fact he had not mentioned that. He did not know from which kind of gun the bullets that killed these people came from. He claimed that he had not said that three soldiers were shot by machine gun as it was noted in the autopsy report. When asked how the statement appeared on the report, the witness said "the investigator wrote it".

January 13th, 1978: The trial was postponed to February 23 - 24 th, because the prosecutor witness did not come to the court.

February 23th, 1978

Prosecution witness : a Surgeon at Kai-vachirawut hospital in Nakornsrihammarat Province.

The witness had treated three wounded soldiers and one village defence volunteer. He admitted in his answer to the defence lawyer's questions that he could not see from the wound that the soldiers and the volunteer were wounded from the 'guerrillas', but he had noted that in his statement because he was informed of this by the local official.

Prosecution witness : Pol. Lt. Pongsak

The witness worked at the Tasala District Police Station. He went to inspect the village defence volunteer camp and military camp after the fighting had stopped. He told the court about the general situation of the place after the attack. He said that it was the guerrillas who attacked the camp but he did not know exactly who, until February 21st, when he searched the house of Mr. Chau Chainrong, the defendant, and found one loudspeaker in the house, which was the one borrowed from the district office to be used in the village defence volunteer camp. On July 10th, the policemen arrested Chau Chainrong under robbery charges.

D. Endangering Society

1. The Trial of 'Royal Pavilion Bombers' will begin soon

On February 4th, 1978, Police Director General Montchai Pankongchuen disclosed that the police investigation report on the 4 suspects held in connection with the bombings near the royal pavilion in Yala province would be passed on to the prosecutor soon.

The four suspects, identified as Mr. Abdul Rokmae Harong, Mr. Mae Prachoo, Mr. Sae-ee and Mr. Laho Seemae, have been detained on endangering society charges since their arrest in the southernmost province of Yala on Oct. 10th, 1977. They will be charged with possessing explosives, damaging official property, attempting to take the life of His Majesty the King and treason. The two last offences are punishable by death.

The incident occurred on Sep. 24th, 1977 during a ceremony in which the King and Queen were to present scarfs to village scouts. Two home-made bombs exploded, one after the other, during the ceremony. Some 40 persons were injured by the explosions which occurred some 55 metres and 110 metres from the royal pavilion. No one on the pavilion was hurt and the ceremony proceeded after a brief security clearance in the area.

Police also reported that the 4 suspects were members of the Pattani United Liberation Organization (FULO), a secessionist movement demanding autonomy for the four muslim-dominated southern provinces of Thailand.

The whole case is shrouded in mystery as at the time it occurred, the incident was seen as an attempt to discredit Samak, Interior Minister in Thanin's government. The case was certainly one of the main factors that led to the overthrow of the Thanin government. It was also reported at that time that the four suspects did not speak Thai, and that the first interpreter used by the police mysteriously 'disappeared'.

E. Communist charges.

1. The trial of Somboon and Vichai Banlusilpa

Somboon and Vichai were arrested under endangering society charges in October 1976. After having been detained for 5 months under this charges, a further charge of communism was filed against them. (See Human Rights in Thailand Report : September-October 1977 for details about their arrest)

The case of Somboon and Vichai is notable for its slowness and the frequent postponements of the trial. The first trial hearings were scheduled for January 9th, 1978 and this was the latest date allowed under the communist suppression act as it was 270 days after the communist charge was first filed. (Under the communist suppression act, those people arrested in non-sensitive areas, can only be held on communist charges before the trial starts for 270 days) And it is also notable that in fact Somboon and Vichai had been detained under endangering society charges for 5 months before they were accused of communism, but these 5 months were not counted.

The first trial hearings, earlier scheduled on January 9th, 1978 were postponed again to January 20th. However, when that day came, the trial was postponed again to February 9th and then postponed again to March 27th and 28th. In conclusion, after having been detained for one year and four months, the two brothers have been brought to the military court four times already, not to prove their innocence but merely to hear of further postponement in their trial.

It should be noticed that such continuous postponements and delays is a common trick of the government authorities against all political prisoners. A communist charge was filed against the two brothers, in the same way as against the 18 October 6th defendants, so as to be able to bring them to the Military Court and also so as to lengthen the pre-trial detention period. After this detention period is over, although there is still not enough evidence, the trial is "supposed" to begin, but never actually begins. On the contrary, it is postponed again and again. The reason for this is that the government does not want to set any supposed "political prisoners" free, so they have at least theoretically to start the trial whether the military prosecutor is ready or not. Since the authorities can in any case continuously postpone the hearings to suit their convenience, this allows people to be detained for much longer than legal detention periods.

PART TWO

THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION

1) Misuse of Government Power

In the same part of the last report we discussed some examples of the harrassment of ordinary people committed by local officials and policemen. Unfortunately more and more information about such gross misuses of government power are coming to us, including examples of disappearance after official arrests, torture, rape, and murder in jail, and other killings. All these things were done by military officials, policemen and prison wardens. It is also a pity that most of the time the real murderers or criminals are not punished for the crimes they have committed, that innocent people after having been killed are accused of having been "communist guerrillas" which in the eyes of the government makes such killing legal and justifies.

Again, we would like to emphasize that the cases reported in the following paragraphs are merely the tip of the iceberg of the misuse of government power which ordinary people have faced, and are still facing. We are sure that there are many more unreported cases than those which see the light of day, for most local people are so afraid of those officials that committed the crimes that they dare not complain.

1. Murder of Miss Vimolsri Rujvanichkul and 2 men by Marines in Nakornsrihammarat

Miss Vimolsri, aged 23, a 4th year student of the Faculty of Mass Communications, Chulalongkorn University was shot dead with two men, Sawat and Virat, while going on field study to interview some students who had responded to the General Amnesty announced by Kriengsak's Government. Miss. Vimolsri was an editorial staff member of "The University Students Monthly". She left during the semester break at the end of October for Nakornsrihammarat Province, a declared "infiltrated area" and under night curfew, which was her own hometown.

On October 31st, 1977 she went to Tambon Promloke, Promkiri Sub-district to do the interview. At 10 am. while she was crossing a waterfall near Promloke Falls with two men. Sawat and Virat, the marines shot her and the two men dead and after that changed their clothes into Uniforms of communist guerrillas and left their dead bodies near the waterfall.

However, the news reported in the newspapers were in contrast with the real incident. The local press on November 1st reported at clash between Marienes and communist guerrillas in which three terrorists two men and one women were killed. On November 2nd, the Dailynews and Banmuang newspapers headlined on their front page that the Marines had a clash with communist terrorists in which three terrorists were killed.

2. Three civilians killed by policemen in Saraburi

On December 30th, 1977 three men were shot by four policemen in Suraburi Province. The three men were identified as Mr. Chammong Tincharoen, aged 42, a chief of the Thai-German Agricultural Training Centre, Mr. Chaleo Samrantalung, aged 41 and Mr. Suwat Klongvuth, aged

17. The three were eating in a shop on Prem Frachakorn Road when men in uniforms entered and fired on them with pistols. Mr. Chaleo and Mr. Suwat died on the spot and the 17 years old boy was seriously injured.

After the shooting, the men examined the bodies of their victims and apparently realising that they were not the criminals they wanted, sped away in a police patrol car.

The four policemen were identified as Pvt. Thira Boonavanich, Pvt. Samnuek Boomherd, Sgt. Vichien Meesuk and Pol. Co. Thawatchai Singthuew.

3. Five men arrested and disappeared in Rajburi Province

Mr. Suthet Chansor, aged 43, and Mr. Boonchuey Klinpian, aged 48, were arrested by Pol. Maj. Wasant Chokepichit, Pol. Lt. Veera Suebsanoh and Pol. Corp. Viroj Boonkhun in Damnoen Saduak District of Rajburi Province on July 25th, 1977 and have disappeared since then.

On August 20th, 1977, Mr. Bonchai (alias Dam) Sae-eung was arrested by Pol. Corp. Viroj in Damnoen Saduak District and has never turned up since then. His wife later claimed that her husband had withdrawn 10,000 baht from their bank account prior to his disappearance.

Later, on October 12th, 1977, Mr. Choon Chomroonsok, aged 40, and Mr. Sod Trabpee, aged 38 were arrested by Pol. Lt. Veera and Pol. Corp. Viroj in Damnoen Saduak and also have not been seen again since.

On January 3rd, 1978 a group of 5 wives of the disappeared men filed a complaint at the Interior Ministry claiming that their husbands had disappeared after allegedly being arrested by three policemen from Damnoen Saduak police station. But they failed to lodge the petition with the Deputy Interior Minister Gen. Prem Tiasulananda and instead submitted it to the Petition Office of the Interior Ministry as the Deputy Interior Minister was away attending a Cabinet meeting.

4. Murder of Mr. Pew Kaewmani in jail

Mr. Pew Kaewmani, aged 39, was arrested on July 26th, 1977 at Ila.m. under unclear charges and was detained at a police station in Supanburi Province. During that night he was tortured to death and in the morning a group of policemen took him to a temple and buried him secretly without the permission from the chief monk.

Four or five days later his father, Monk Somboon Kaewmani, aged 75, discovered about Pew's death. He questioned the policemen about the charges and the reason for his son's death and was told that his son was a drug addict and died of heart-attack. The monk did not believe that because he knew that his son was not an addict and was a strong man. He was suspicious that his son might have been murdered by the policemen as they hurried to burn him without telling the relatives.

Therefore, on November 28th, 1977 Monk Somboon went to Bangkok to petition to the Minister of Interior for justice and for an investigation into the case. The outcome of his petition is still unknown.

5. Murder of Miss. Vee Vorawat in jail

Miss Vee Vorawat was arrested in late September 1977 for being a prostitute by policemen from the Central District police station in Luei Province. On November 17th, 1977 she was brought to the court. She was fined of 120 baht and released. But a police sergeant named Samrit took her back to the police station. On the next morning (18th) Sargeant Samrit told the woman in charge of the brothel that Vee had poisoned herself and had died and that she should let the undertaker burry Vee quickly. The funeral was held on that evening at Nakung Temple and many people came to see the corpse. They saw that the whole body of the girl was bruised by torture; her nose and neck were broken, her eyes were coming out. On the next morning Sargeant Samrit called the undertaker and told him to dig up the corpse and burn it, promising 2,000 baht to the undertaker if he did this. But he refused to do so, because he felt that the policeman wanted to clear away all the evidence against himself.

At present we still have no more information about the outcome of the investigation into this case; neither do we know if there has been an official investigation or not.

6. Murder of Mr. Surachai Nilratanabannot in jail

Mr. Surachai, aged 26, was a prisoner charged with drug offences. On January 13th, 1978 he was sent from Samuprakarn Prison to Samutprakorn hospital. The doctor there found that his body was bruised as if he had been severely tortured and hit by hard instruments. Three hours later Surachai died.

Consequently, Doctor Pairoj Tanvichien sent his body to the Autops, Department at the Police Hospital, noting that Mr. Surachai died unnaturally, and that he suspected that he had been tortured to death.

The outcome of the autops, is still unknown.

Concerning Mr. Surachai's death, Siam Rath newspaper of February 2nd, 1978 printed a letter from an ex-prisoner of Sumutprakarn Prison, Mr. Moe Sudiem addressed to the editor of the newspaper. Mr. Moe claimed that he had seen the incident with his own eyes, and decided to write the letter after he was released from prison, for the sake of justice and for the security and lives of his friends in the prison.

He wrote that Surachai was accused by the prison warden that he had taken drugs. The wardens then kicked him and stamped on him with their feet and hit him with wooden sticks. Seeing that Surachai was dying, the wardens sent him to hospital. He also wrote that while Surachai was being beaten up by the wardens, his leg was shackled with big iron chains, and after he died at the hospital the shackles were still on his legs, and the doctor had to ask the warden to unlock them.

He also claimed that the prisoners there had to work very hard, making furniture from illegal timber. Sometimes they had to work at nighttime also.

7. Mrs. Ad Pinkachorn, Raped in jail

Mrs. Ad Pinkachorn, alleged that she was raped in jail by Surgeant Arthit Polruan while she was being detained on a charge of theft at Central District Police Station at Saraburi province. Mrs. Ad complained that she was raped in the presence of other male detainees in the jail on Saturday night of January 21st, 1978.

Mrs. Ad complained to a journalist who went to the police station for some information. After the case was printed in the newspaper, Sgt. Arthit was called in for official investigation. Three male detainees, Mr. Kao Sae-lim, Mr. Thawee Thoothong and Mr. Vichai Nanthaphong backed up the accusation during the investigation.

The Chief Inspector of the police station said that punitive action would be taken against Sgt. Arthit if he was found guilty.

2) Arrest, Detention and Releases

On page 32 of the last report we included details of 458 endangering society prisoners who were released on February 6th, 1978. Amongst these were three political prisoners being held in Bangkok:

-Surin Suanpan. Age 47, a carpenter and member of the socialist party of Thailand. On his release he was moved to the Special Prison of Bangkok charged with endangering National Security. (Decree 116) He was brought to court on Feb 28th but the lawyer did not turn up, so the hearing was postponed to April 28th.

-Sunthorn Satsabachalasin. Former Thammasat University Student, Faculty of Commerce and Accounting.

-Sirisak Sae Ung. Former 4th year Thammasat University Student, Faculty of Economics. Originally from Yala province.

All three were originally arrested, because they were distributing leaflets attacking the Thanin government. Now no endangering society prisoners are held in Bangkok Vocational Training Centre, most being held in the four special regional centres at Korat, Ayudhya, Phisanulok, and Songkhla.

According to newspaper reports in January the remaining 116 endangering society prisoners being held in the special centres would be released in March. We still have no definite information on this.

The official statistics about endangering society prisoners are always unreliable. According to the Director General of the Corrections Department, 7,300 have been held by his department and 572 people are still being held. However when one adds up these who have been released officially in the seven releases so far (3,888 people) with the 611 still claimed to be held, this only adds up to about 4,500, which means that 2,800 prisoners are still unaccounted for. Where these are we do not know.

Since the change in government last October, there have been few arrests of people specifically as endangering society, but instead people have been arrested for other political reasons, and the endangering society charge is added to enable the police to detain people for a longer period than would otherwise be allowed by the law. In fact however the holding of people for endangering society in local police station for more than 30 days is against the principles of Decree 22 of NARC. In this category we know of 32 people in Nakornsri Thamaraj (see the article on the prison strike in this report), 4 Royal Pavillion bombers in Yala (see details in article on the trial of these people), 12 people in Udorn, many in Nongkhai and 9 new arrests in Nakorn Panom, etc. Altogether we estimate that 200-300 people are being illegally detained (i.e. for more than 30 days) in local police stations as endangering society, whilst authorities try to find evidence for more serious political charges.

The most recent use of endangering society arrests, holding the arrested in a local police station occurred in Nakorn Panom when 9 people, 2 Thais and 7 Laotians were arrested in a joint police-military operation at a house in the provincial seat of the northeastern province of Nakorn Panom on Jan 13th and charged with endangering society and espionage. The police found

many heavy weapons e.g. 12 M.16 cartridges, 6 M.60 cartridges.

The nine prisoners were

2. Thais - Chaiphong Maneechot (25)
- Pratheep Saengsawang (20)

7 Laotians - Prasertsak Foosakul
- Fong Chaisaeng
- Thongsawat Chaikosi
- Mek Chairaj
- Sagant Supakit
- Nakhon Yadej
- Bandith Chullanee

(They were from 15 to 24 years old.)

In conclusion it can be said that Decree 22 of NARC is no longer being used for its original purpose, but is now being used to enable police to prolong pretrial detention at their convenience.

Finally it should be mentioned that several hundred suspected communist sympathisers are being sent to reeducation camps, every month, without any specific trial or even charge. These camps are mainly in the N.E and South of Thailand, and some cannot be visited by anyone (i.e. one in Pattani province) not even by the relatives. Many people sent for army sponsored reeducation disappear.

Another category of people who are frequently arrested, are indochinese refugees who arrive in Thailand without papers and do not stay in Refugee camps. For example:-

Ms. La Thi Loan, a Vietnamese, was born on October 16th, 1938. She was arrested because she had no visa and is now detained at a prison in Pattani Province.

Many other people are in the same category as her, whilst many other refugees are even in a less fortunate position, being sold into prostitution.

Finally, we have some more informations about those who are being detained under Lese Majeste charges, namely:-

1. Mr. Vichai Pichaidit was a teacher at Rathurana school before being arrested. He was arrested under Lese Majeste charges after the October 6th incident and detained at the Special Prison of Bangkok. Later he was convicted of Lese Majeste and was sentenced of 2 years imprisonment. He is now detained at a prison in Rajburi. Here he claims that he has been tortured. He reported to us that there had been some cambodian prisoners there too. These cambodians were much more severely tortured than him, but at present he thinks that they have all been set free.

2. Mr. Anuchit Tanakornsombat was a student of Suansunanta Teacher College before his arrest shortly after Oct 6th. He was convicted of Lese Majeste and was sentenced of 2 years imprisonment. Up till now he had been detained for 16 months. The reason for his arrest and conviction was because he had not stood to attention and saluted whilst the Royal Anthem was playing at Sanam Luang Ground (a public place in Bangkok).

3. Mr. Chen Changchai was convicted of Lese Majeste and sentenced to 3 years imprisonment.

4. Mr. San Suksawat was a student of Chulalongkorn University before his arrest. He was convicted of Lese Majeste. Now he has been set free.

5. Mr. Suntorn Chantarangsri, a journalist of Korat Raiwan newspaper, was arrested under Lese Majeste charges. He has

yet to be convicted.

From these examples it can be seen that Lese Majeste charges are not uncommon, are normally settled quite quickly, and do not carry a very heavy penalty (2-3 years imprisonment). Thus though Lese Majesty is the main charge on the Bangkok 18 (and Boonchart) they have almost already served any sentence they might have to served if found guilty.

Prisoners' strike On December 16th, 1977, 96 prisoners being held at the local police station in the Central District of Nakornsrithamaraj Province went on strike. The strike started by them refusing to eat breakfast to protest against the inadequate and dirty food provided and the illegal regulation which forbade the prisoners' relatives from bringing food for them.

Later on, the prisoners petitioned to Chayan Chumvisut, deputy inspector general of police in charge of Nakornsrithammaraaj Province, claiming that the prisoners were treated unjustly and got inadequate food. They also mentioned that the endangering society prisoners after having been detained for 30 days, were not sent for reeducation at the Reeducation Camp at Songkla in accordance with the Decree 22 of NARC concerning endangering society prisoners. Some of the endangering society had been detained at the police station illegally for more than 4-5 months.

Among the 96 prisoners at the police station, there were 34 prisoners charged with endangering society, 48 with criminal charges. The other 14 prisoners were said to have minor charges.

It is notable that one big reasons that encouraged the prisoners to strike and to petition to higher officials about the injustices in the prison was because four policemen at that police station, including Pol. Maj. Gen. Sakrapee Paimueng, police inspector in charge of the police station, were arrested as they were suspected to have killed Mr. Baen Kitpadung, who was arrested by police at that police station. This murder by the police had caused a massive demonstration by people in the province against the police on November 30th, 1977. (See Human Rights in Thailand Report, November-December 1977, page 27)

Prisoners ask for Justice On February 24th, 1978, representatives of prisoners all over the country petitioned the Constitution Drafting Commission to consider the problems concerning prisoners and to establish in the constitution a law concerning the rights of prisoners.

The prisoner representatives, identified as Mr. Somsak Namuongsak, Mr. Chaiwat Sriwieng, Mr. Dee Mankarn, Mr. Saengnapa Mangklakiri and Mr. Chom Lacluedlam listed the problems of the prisoners including the problem of the bail which should be decided by the court, but in practice, when the prosecutor or the police investigator opposed bail, the detainees were usually not allowed the bail. Moreover, if property was to be used as security for the bail, this property had to be found in the province where the prisoner was held which caused big problems for the detainees.

Other problems mentioned in the petition included the fact that in some cases where there were many suspects, some of these suspects could become prosecution witness, if they gave money to the officials or if they were influential and thus would be let off free. Moreover, some poor suspects would have heavier charges filed than usual or were tortured, or tricked into confusion.

The secretary of the constitution commission stated that this case was small to be mentioned in the constitution. He said that the prisoners should petition to the government rather than the commission.

3) Reports from up Country

Report from the South

1. Noppitam

"Noppitam 23 km." the sign says at the crossroads in Amphur Thasala, Nakornsrihammarat Province. Noppitam is the biggest district in Amphur Thasala. A laterite road which passes through paddy fields leads to the village. Near the village there are rubber plantations. The trading centre for Noppitam is at Ban Rong Lek, where there is also the district police station and district school. In Noppitam, therefore, life centres around Ban Rong Lek.

There are ten villages in Noppitam. It is situated in an area with mountains and forests and, particularly in the fifth village, where relatives of the villagers live in Surattani, there is more contact with Surattani Province than with Nakornsrihammarat Province. There are many natural resources in the area, and the people are mainly farmers and miners.

There seems to be a government policy which never changes despite changes in government. This is to treat people unjustly, particularly those who live in remote areas, as we can see from such examples as Ban Na Sai, the Red Bucket etc. Government officials invariably blame the communists for such acts of repression and violence unless there is no way in which they can avoid accepting responsibility. Alternatively, government officials say that the events occurred in "a sensitive area" as if that was sufficient reason.

After the 6 October coup the Thanin government increased suppression campaigns against the communists, especially in the south, in Surathani and Nakornsrihammarat. It also increased cooperation with the Malaysian government in communist suppression near the border in operations such as Big Star Musna Zahayabena.

Noppitam is considered by the government to be in a sensitive area because it is surrounded by forests and mountains through which contact can be made with Surattani Province. Thai Soldiers were sent to Noppitam in March 1977 as part of the suppression operations. Immediately the people in the villages experienced difficulties caused by the soldiers. "They asked us to give them our hens and ducks for food" one villager said. Two groups of soldiers entered the villages, at first, the marines who were to suppress the communists, followed by a small number of parachute troops from Pha-Hirai, Lopburi, who were to train the villagers to become voluntary soldiers and village scouts. The marines moved into villages 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7 and near Ban Rong Lek they placed a 105 mm. howitzer which was used to support their operations.

People who lived higher up in the mountains, near Kao Lek, for example, were expelled from their homes and ordered to live at the foot of the mountain.

Before the soldiers arrived the people of Noppitam had lived peacefully, had never known the word "communist," and had never

talked about communists. But after the soldiers entered their villages they began to talk about the communists. As a result of statements made by other villagers, many villagers were arrested, and about ten disappeared. Everyone knew that these had been killed but their relatives were afraid to complain in case they would also be arrested.

The people who disappeared had last been seen, being taken to the soldiers barracks. "There will soon be a lot of ghosts in the barracks," one young villager said. Other villagers were taken to receive training for 15 days, or one or two months, in the area of the fifth precinct of the Fourth Army in Wachirairut barracks, Ban Cha-in, Nakorn-sarithmarat Province.

"Before we never had any trouble, and never had bandits. We didn't fear communists. We had never heard about the communists and had never seen a communist" said an old woman. After stopping to chew her betel nut, she continued, "We don't know where these soldiers come from because they don't speak our language (the southern dialect). Almost everyday they drink in the middle of the road. Sometimes they drink in the shop and don't pay, saying that they are serving the country, and therefore don't need to pay". The listeners were silent when the woman spoke but there was anger in every face. Then an old man said: "And there was Kamnan Duang Innarong, our village headman who was shot by the soldiers. He should not have been killed. He was a good man."

Kamnan Duang Innarong had been the village headman for two or three months after the resignation of the previous Kamnan before the soldiers had come. Kamnan Duang worked hard, washonest, and said what he thought. The villagers loved him. When the soldiers arrived he had taken on the responsibility of selling them in Noppitam. The day before he was murdered, a villager named Jek was arrested by marine Unit 201. Jek was beaten up and chained in the barracks because the marines suspected him. When Kamnan Duang heard about this he went to see the commander of Unit 201, Senior Lieutenant Somtob Kulsilarat. After Kamnan Duang had talked to him, Senior Lieutenant Somtob ordered the release of Jek and accused Sub-Lieutenant Sawong Thongdee and First Class Petty Officer Thongluan Prapakarn of assaulting Jek. Sub Lieutenant Sawong, who apparently had a personal conflict with Senior Lieutenant Somtob, was extremely angry when he was reprimanded. On 13 April, 1977 Sub Lieutenant Sawong ordered First Class Petty Officer Thongluan to kill Kamnan Duang. Thongluan did so, also killing Senior Lieutenant Somtob at the same time. (this was admitted in an open letter in Chaiaree's column in the Daily News of 21/10/77, written by First Class Petty Officer Thongluan in which he was appealing for justice). Sub Lieutenant Sapon Unaitham heard of the murders, immediately arrested Thongluan, and took him to the Noppitam police station. Sub Lieutenant Sawong then went to the police station and forced the police to release the soldiers with him to fire on the police station. Villagers say there were between two and three thousand bullet holes in the police station when they had finished firing. Sub Lieutenant Sawong and the soldiers then brought Senior Lieutenant Somtob's body back to the barracks and said that he had been killed by the communists.

Before the murder of Kamnan Duang, his brother Mau Innarong had gone to Ban Cha-in to begin two months military training. Mau said "The soldiers asked the villagers not to protest about the murders and said that they would give us money. We don't want money, but we want to reveal the truth. At first they had said they were drunk".

A woman who was listening said "Yes, they killed them and then excused it by saying they were drunk".

Noppitam is now quiet and apathetic. "Although the old soldiers have left, new ones have come to replace them. We are not sure what will happen to us in the future".

2. The story of Ban Wang Lung

Ban Wang Lung is the name of a village in sub-amphur Promkiri, Nakornsrihammarat. It is surrounded by mountains and adjacent to Amphur Thasala. It was first settled 60 - 70 years ago, and at present there are about 100 families in the village. Some people do not actually have their houses in the village, but live on their rubber plantations; so there are many people who come in and out of the village. Most people in Ban Wang Lung own rubber plantation, coffee gardens and betel nut gardens. People from other villages like to work as employees on these farms. The people in Ban Wang Lung lived happily and peacefully until 1971.

The first suppression activities happened in Ban Wang Lung in 1971 after the government knew that the communists in Chawang had gone to find food in Thasala which is close to the village.

In the first suppression campaign, the soldiers arrested Nang Daeng, the wife of Nai Choi who was suspected of being a communist hiding in the hills, but in fact he had just gone to look after his garden. Knowing that his wife was arrested, he went down to see the soldiers and told them the truth. Nang Daeng was released, but Nai Choi was arrested in her place and detained at the military camp at Nakornsrihammarat for more than a year. Nai Winai was also arrested and accused of supporting the communists by providing shelter for them. In the enquiry he told the soldiers that his house was near the hill, and the communists only passed his house, and he had never given them any shelter. Finally, the soldiers released him.

I, myself, was also called for investigation on the accusation that I sent food to the communists. I told the soldiers that I had a shop in the village, so when people came to buy things I had to sell; especially since I was the leader of a rubber plantation cooperative group and I had to look after the members. The soldiers released me and asked me to tell them whenever the communists came to buy things at my shop. But I told them that I couldn't tell them who was a communist because there were always a lot of people from other villages who came as employees in the village, so I didn't know who was who.

This suppression caused us economic hardship. We couldn't buy rice and salt in large quantities because the officials accused us that we wanted to send these things to the communists. It seemed that everything

in the village was related to the communists. It was very difficult for us because we lived far from the market and the village shop couldn't buy a large amount of essential things to sell to the villagers.

Turning now to the results of the 2nd suppression campaign; knowing that the communists from the mountains went down to be friendly with the villagers in order to ask them to buy things for them, the soldiers spent one night waiting to ambush them on the path leading to Ban Sai Phai, a small village connected to Ban Wang Lung. After a military plane strafed the hills, the infantry went to clear the area around Ban Wang Lung. They arrested many people in order to inquire about the communists, and tried to find the people whom were asked by the communists to buy things for them, but no one knew who those were; so they went away. This event prevented the people from working in their gardens because they were afraid to be shot as communists. They went back to work again after the soldiers had left the village.

Turning now to the 3rd and 4th suppression campaigns; hearing that I sold things to the communists, the soldier prepared to attack the communists who went down to the village to get things. They spent one night on the path to Ban Sai Phai, but nothing happened; so they went back. When they arrived at the police station of Ban Kon Ka, they called me for interrogation. I told them that I bought things for the members of our cooperative, not for the communists. As in previous occasions, the people dared not to work outside the village. After this, I was frequently called for investigation.

In the fifth suppression campaign, at the end of 1974 the Border Patrol Police, (BPP), established a unit in front of Ban Wang Lung School which was also in front of my house. They lived in the village for 5 days in order to clear the area of Ban Wang Lung. They always watched carefully the trading situation at my shop, but they met no communists and couldn't find any faults about my trade, even on one day. Troubles came to the people again; for example, when the BPP went to clear the area around any village and met the beautiful daughters or wives of the people, they would arrest their parents or husbands for interrogation at their camp, whilst other BPP troopers would rape these beautiful girls or women. After that, they would force them to tell no one. If anyone didn't obey them, they would kill them accusing them of being communists. Some BPP troopers damaged the people's property; for example when they wanted to eat a coconut, they would use their guns to shoot at a bunch of coconuts until the whole bunch fell down. This damaged a lot of coconuts. In addition, some of them used dynamite to catch fishes. This method made the banks of the river fall down and made a lot of fishes stop breeding. And as in former times, the people dared not accuse them because they were afraid to be shot as communists.

In the 6th suppression campaign; at the end of 1974 the soldiers and the BPP spent one day and a night hiding to attack the communists on the path to Ban Hin Lad. The sound of shooting was heard at about 6 o'clock. It was said that they killed a man and cut off his head to take away with them. I didn't know who that man was. The people went to look at the place, but there were no traces of the

event. There were no further sounds of shooting, and the soldiers and the BPP went out off the village the next day. The people couldn't go to work in their gardens again.

In the 7th suppression campaign; the BPP established a unit at Ban DonKa and everyday they would go to clear the area around Ban Wang Lung. This event took place at the end of 1974 and continued for about 3-4 months. This unit of the BPP caused all the people of Ban Wang Lung, of Ban Don Ka and other villager in area so much trouble that some of the families in Ban Wong Lung had to emigrate from the village and lived for some time in other villages. Some of the villagers escaped because they were afraid to be accused of being communists or else. they were afraid that their daughters and their wives would be raped. So, they had to escape before these things would happen.

At that time I was arrested while I was driving to Nakornsrihammarat in order to sell para-rubber produced by the members of my group. I was accused of bringing para-rubber produced by communists to sell in the city. However, I was released because the chief of police at Ban Don Ka police station knew about my trade. The BPP said that my group was formed illegally and accused me of using this group to encourage communism. I answered that I formed this group sincerely and I only wanted to develop the quality of life of the people in my village as I had seen done in the other villages. They then accused me of having strong ideas and a communist ideology. When I drove back with 2 sacks of rice, I was arrested again. The 2 sacks of rice were confiscated because the BPP accused me of wanting to send the rice to the communists. I tried to explain to them that the 2 sacks of rice were bought to divide amongst the members of my group, but I couldn't get the rice back. The chief of police of Ban Don Ka couldn't help me either. I went back to the village and returned to the BPP again with all of the members of my group. We tried to ask for our rice, but they wouldn't give it to us. So all of us had to buy rice from the market of Ban Don Ka at a very high price. And up to now the 2 sacks of rice have not been returned to us. I knew well that the BPP wanted to make the people break up my group.

In the 8th suppression campaign; at the end of 1976 the BPP and the police arrested all the people in the village to inquire about the accusation that the people of Ban Wang Lung had helped the communists in attacking the training camp for village defence volunteers (VDV) at Ban Song Prak school. Most of the people ran away from the police because of their fear. It made the police say that all villagers in Ban Wang Lung were communists. I was arrested in this event and was put in jail up until now.

Since I was arrested, my relatives have told me that the people in Ban Wang Lung have lived unhappily because the soldiers go to suppress them so often that they dare not work in their gardens. The people from other areas who wanted to be employees in the gardens in Ban Wang Lung were also afraid. They were afraid to be shot as communists. There were no people to tap the rubber trees, to pick coffee beans and betel leaves. The people have been in more troubles since the Oct. 6th coup because the soldiers went to drive all the villagers out and those persons who didn't leave the village were considered as communists. The soldiers did not consider themselves responsible for the people killed by

their bullets. After expelling the people out of the village, the soldiers would bombard the village without any interest whether the shells hit the people's house or not. After that, the soldiers with the BPP would go and clear the area. They would burn the houses and the rubber plantations near the hills in case the farmers were sheltering communists and in case the rubber plantations were used for making money for the communists. In addition, they confiscated of the people's properties such as electrical machines, hulling machines and sewing machines and told news reporters that they had captured these things from the communists during the suppression campaign in Ban Wang Lung. Some soldiers or BPP troopers brought the sewing machines (those which were not old) to give to their wives. Some shot down bunches of coconuts to give them to their wives to sell also.

This village has been closed since the end of October 1976. The people have had to live at the sala of the wat and in the Theatre at the market of Ben Don Ka. Some of them also went to live with their relatives in other villages. Some people both men, women and including elderly people were called to be trained as special protection units and guides. These people would be ordered to walk ahead of the soldiers in order to protect the soldiers from the booby traps set up by the communists, but fortunately no one has been hurt, yet. During each suppression campaign the soldiers had never gone into the areas really controlled by communists. On the contrary, they went into ordinary villages whilst giving out news that they had ambushed and captured communist camps.

Thank you for your interest in the story about Ban Wang Lung. I think that other villages in other provinces will be in the same condition as Ban Wang Lung, and that similar people to me who try to help the people and their villages are always prosecuted like me.

Puchong Kaewsuan

(Puchong is one of the 11 defendents in the Udom Pra Ka Krong Group. This case has been reported in detail in the fifth, sixth and seventh reports of 1977).

Report from the North-East

Nakorn Phanom

Situation of Thais of Vietnamese Origin at Ladbuakau Detention Centre

After we had reported in our last report about the ridiculous "bailing" system at Ladbuakaw, it seems that the system is still in practice and at least one prisoner whom we know is suffering because of it.

We reported in the last report that on the occasion of His Majesty the King's birthday names of 20 prisoners were included on a list of people to be released, amongst who were four October 6th prisoners, namely Mr. Dad Chan, Mr. Dai Chan, Mr. Suttipong and Mr. Preyong, and that these people were asked if they had bail money or not; and those who said that they had the bail money had to pay the bail, otherwise they would not be released. Amongst the October 6th group, Mr. Dad Chan and Mr. Dai Chan have already been released, as they answered that they had no bail money.

Mr. Suttipong and Mr. Pra-yong had to wait until somebody bailed them out, because they said they could raise bail.

In the past two months, Mr. Pra-yong has successfully managed to find the bail money and was released on February 4th, 1978. As for Mr. Sittipong, he is still in the prison because of the lack of the bail money. The latest news he got from his mother was that his mother had borrowed money to bail him out. Sittipong is now very sorry and worried and longs for his freedom so much.

Ubonrajthani

Report on the visit to Mr. Somboon and Mr. Vichai Banlusilp's family

Somboon and Vichai were arrested under endangering society charges and later, a new charge of communism was filed on them (see the "trials and legal process" part of this report)

Their house is at No. 58, Moo 8, Ban Kilek, Tambon Huareu, Central District, Ubonrajthani province. Somboon and Vichai have one other brother and sister. Their mother died two years ago.

Before being arrested, Somboon was a leader of the farmer group which had about 50-60 members. He also tried to stand for the election as an MP. under the socialist party, but was not elected.

After Somboon was arrested, there were rumours that Somboon was a communist and that the members of the farmer group were also communists. But Somboon's younger brother believed that the arrest of his brother resulted from a personal conflict between Somboon and the Tambon headman.

Many members of the farmer group have been called for investigation by the policeman. Now they are afraid to go to court to be the witnesses, for fear that their statements given to the court and to the policemen will be different, because during the police investigation they were threatened to say what the policeman wanted. Some of them said that they wanted to help the two brothers in the court. Therefore, we have encouraged them to speak the truth and also told them that they could tell the judge in the court that they were threatened during the police investigation.

4) THE PROBLEMS OF LABOUR

REPORT ON ASSASSINATION AND ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATIONS OF LABOUR LEADERS IN THAILAND

1. The Growing Awareness of Workers After The 14 October, 1973 Incident

The Thai workers became increasingly aware of their rights, and fought for them widely after their victory against the three military dictators Thanom Kittikhachorn, Prapass Charusathien and Narong Kittikhachorn in the Oct 14, 1973 great popular uprising.

The movement towards democracy created an opportunity for the workers to unite their forces. Workers had been oppressed for nearly two decades of dictatorship since the time of Sarit Thanarat in 1958. The low wages, the taking advantage of the workers' labour by the employers, the unsuitable working conditions and the increase in the cost of living caused by the economic crisis resulting from the increase of oil prices in November 1973 were the cause of large numbers of strikes in both state and private enterprises from 1973, in Bangkok, and other industrial provinces nearby such as Samut-Sakorn and Pratumthani. There were 501 strikes in 1973 more than the total number in the previous 17 years of dictatorship (only 219). Over the next 2 years, there were 357 strikes in 1974 and 241 in 1975.

In most of the strikes, the workers asked for more wages, loans to help them solve special problems, better working conditions and security of employment.

2. Before the October 6, 1976 Coup d'etat

The strikes that occurred like fireworks after the 1973 revolution caused the capitalists-merchants, businessman and soldiers who owned or had interests in factories to loose their income and economic power. They were afraid of democracy and afraid of the power of workers' organizations. Therefore, from 1973, the workers had to face many threats and bad treatment during their strikes, especially the textile workers who were the biggest group of organised private sections workers and were mostly young girls. For example, in May 1975, the Standard Garment girl workers in Bangkok were beaten up by special force police during their strike, in May 1976 the Lucky Tex workers at Phra-Pra-Daeng District Samut-Prakarn were not only insulted, but were also injured by plastic bombs thrown by a group of young gangsters, in March 1976, a group of students who helped the workers as law consultants and workers in Tambon Om-Yai, Sarn-Phran District, Nakorn-Prathan and in Tambon Om-Noi, Krathumban District, Samut-Sakorn were arrested and charged with being communists even though all they had done was to help workers become conscious of their rights under the labour law. They are still being tried, and have been detained now for more than 22 months.

The most violent method used to weaken labour unions was through killing the leaders e.g. the killing of Miss Somnuk Sangob, one of the workers' leaders in the Thai Iryo Textile Company in Prathuthani in April 1976.

3. After the October 6, 1976 Coup d'etat

The workers' rights were again oppressed after the October 6, 1976 Coup d'etat, which was followed by Martial law all over the country, and the prohibition of all political organisations Under Martial law, Decree 36 of the Labour Relation law 1975 was abrogated - i.e. the workers could not strike during Martial law. Moreover, workers and progressive people of all professions were arrested throughout the country - mostly under the charge of 'endangering society' (Using Decree 22 of the National Reformation Administration Council Clauses No. 5 and 6 of which stated that people could be detained indefinitely "who encouraged others to cause disorder in the country or who preferred other political systems to a constitutional democracy with the King as head"). As far as we know there were at least 42 workers leaders who were arrested under this decree including Arom Pongpangan - former vice president of the National Labour Council (who is now on trial charged with being a communist).

Besides, the employers continue to threaten the workers especially those who formerly were strike-leaders or took part in strikes by dismissing them or even killing them. There were a lot of workers who were dismissed according to the law, or who were forced to resign because of threats on their lives (e.g. the workers' leaders in the Thai Iryo Textile company, the workers' leaders in the Petchkasem Textile Factory). Although the Thanin government tried to create a tripartite body - the Labour Development Board - composed of 20 persons, five workers' representatives, five from the employers and 10 from the government, in order to 'solve' labour problems, even with this the employers would not

cooperate as they refused to select their representatives. They claimed that state enterprise representatives should not be included, according to the government's policy. As a concession to workers the government raised the minimum wage in the central region by 3 baht a day - i.e. to 28 baht*in Bangkok and 4 provinces nearby. However there were only 50 factories that acted according to this announcement.

The atmosphere under the Thanin government (Oct. 1976 - Oct. 1977) made life difficult for the labour unions in various ways such as insisting on the participation of local police in union conferences, thus 18 labour unions had closed themselves down and a further unions were closed by the labour department (almost half of the labour unions in the country closed or were closed during this period).

4. The present government

Although General Kriengsak Chamanaud, the present Prime Minister has tried hard to win the workers' hearts by founding the "Thai Workers Foundation", by passing an Act that which allows the state enterprise unions to fall under the same labour law private enterprises, and encourage workers' education. His real motives are to build for himself a power base amongst the workers more than actually trying to solve the main labour problems. For example workers still do not have the right to strike according to the law nor do they have the right to express political opinions. In addition he (the P.M.) has not paid any attention to the killing and threats made on of the workers such as Thawat Pihromphin - president of the Thai-American Textile Labour Union or Nikhom Tengyai vice secretary of the Kurusapha Business Organization Labour Union.

5. Assassination or Attempted Assassination of Labour Leaders During The Past 9 Months

a. Assassination of Mr. Tawat Pihromphin, head of Thai American Textile Labour Union

Personal Background: Tawat was born on May 5th, 1949. He was 27 years old when he was killed. He finished secondary school and used to be a soldier in the Vietnam war. He was married to Mrs. Payam Pihromphin, aged 24, and had two children, aged 2 years and 2 months respectively. (The two-month baby was born 4 months after his father's death.)

Work: Tawat had worked at Thai American Textile Factory for 4 years in the position of mechanic. His wages were 31.50 baht per day. The factory was located at Tambon Klongnung, Klongluang District, Pathumthani Province. (35 km. from Bangkok).

Activities: In March 1976 the workers of TAT. factory staged a strike to ask for more wages. The employer then hired the "Kratingdang" (a right-wing, activities anti-leftist group) and many soldiers with firearms including explosives and M. 16's to protect his factory and threaten the strikers. Many workers' representatives were also dismissed. This strategy caused unrest and fear amongst the strikers. Tawat, seeing that the situation was becoming worse, volunteered to play an active role and became a representative of the workers in the negotiations with the employers. After a two-week strike, the workers and the employer came to an agreement. The workers, having originally asked for 10 baht per day more wages, got 5 baht more.

After the strike, the workers founded a labour union and Tawat was chosen to head of the union. He became a leader of the workers in TAT. factory and also in 7 other textile factories under the same employer, Mr. Sukree Potirattanangkul, who was an influential man in government circles because his son-in-law was a Major in the Thai Army.

In August 1977, the workers made demands again in accordance with the Labour Law. They asked for cost of living allowances, welfare payments, including compensation for fatal accidents occurring in the factory, that a doctor works in the factory and a few other simple demands. It was during the negotiation of these demands that Tawat was murdered.

Assassination: There had been many attempts to get rid of Tawat. First, during the first strike, the head-guard named Cham had hired an assassin from another district to kill Tawat. Luckily, the assassin was his friend and therefore did not kill him but told him what was going on and also told him to be careful. Secondly, not long after the labour union was founded, another assassin was sent to kill him. But again, the assassin knew Tawat and did not kill him. Thirdly, on January 30th, 1977, two assassins tried to kill him but the bullets missed him. Tawat fought with the assassins and captured both of them. The two assassins confessed that Mr. Cham, the headguard, was the one who hired them to kill Tawat. Tawat let them free without telling the policemen about the incident.

Finally, on August 18th, 1977, while the negotiation of the above demands were still going on, Tawat was shot dead in front of his house by 2 assassins from Pathuri Province. On that day, Tawat finished his duties at the factory at 5.00 pm. and walked back home. The two assassins followed him. Tawat knew that he * 20 baht = 1 dollar..

was being followed but thought that there was nothing serious because it was daytime. On the way, he met four or five of his friends who followed him to his house. They were all sitting talking in front of the house when the 2 assassins came and asked "Who is Tawat?" Tawat answered. One of the assassins aimed his gun at Tawat's friends and the other one shot 4 bullets at Tawat's leg, hand, forehead and head. After that they ran into the factory through the side door and went out of the factory through the back door which opened to a wide rice field.

Three policemen in the factory, when informed about the murder, did not do anything. Also the policemen at the police station located 5 km. from Tawat's house did not come to the place at once but waited until it was dark.

Tawat did not die on the spot. He lived another 10 days and died on August 29th, 1977.

Remarks:

1. Before the 2 assassins shot Tawat, they were seen talking with the guard at the side gate for a long time. Usually, anyone who passed the gate had to have their identity card issued by the factory's checked. Without the card, one could not pass the gate. But the two assassins could pass the gate easily without being checked.

2. The policemen were slow at following the case and claimed that the motive was private personal conflicts. The 3 policemen who guarded the factory should have been able to arrest the 2 assassins who fled into the factory but did not. Up till now, the murderers have not yet been arrested.

3. According to the workers and relatives, Tawat was in fact not seriously injured. He was conscious and could talk with visitors. His friends, saying that it was not safe for Tawat to stay at Pumipol Hospital, the nearest hospital to which he was first sent, transferred him to Paulo Private Hospital. On August 28th, one day before he died, Tawat was much better; but he was sent to special room where nobody could visit, not even his father who had always taken care of him since he was shot. Also a nurse of Pumipol Hospital was sent to take care of him on that day.

4. All that happened convinced Tawat's family and friends that the reason he was assassinated resulted from the fact that Tawat was an active labour leader not only of the workers in the factory in which he worked but also of those in many other textile factories in the region.

5. Another worker in the same employer's factory had been killed in 1976. See Annex. b. Assassination of Mr. Chaliew Sang-amorn, secretary of Cholprathan Cement Labour Union

Personal Background: Chaliew was 42 years old when he was assassinated. He was married to Mrs. Penari Sang-amorn, aged 35, and has 3 daughters, aged 13, 9, and 8 respectively. All of his children are still at school. Chaliew finished primary school and was originally from Saraburi province.

Work: Chaliew had worked at Thai Cement Co. Ltd. in Saraburi province for 13 years from the age of 18, and then changed to work at Choepatan Cement Factory at Cha-am District, Petchburi Province. He had worked there for almost 8 years before he was shot dead.

Activities: Chaliew was an active organiser in the Cholprathan Cement Labour Union. The union had staged 2 strikes, demanding more wages and the change in the managers of the factory. Before the strike, the workers got only 1.75 - 3.00 baht per hour. The labour union demanded an increase in wages and also overtime pay for weekends and holiday. Later on they demanded that the employer hire them by the month, not by the hour, and also demanded some social welfare benefits and 10 days holiday per year.

Later on, there were big changes in the management of the company, including changes in the manager in Bangkok and the manager of the factory in Cha-am. The reason for these changes are still not clear though there were rumours of considerable corruption in top management. At the factory in Cha-am, the new manager changed the guards in factory.

Assassination: On January 2nd, 1978 at around 3 p.m., Chaliew was riding his motorcycle back to his home behind the factory. On the way whilst passing through a small wood, Chaliew was shot dead by unknown assassins about one kilometer from the entrance of the worker's residence.

c. The attempted assassination of Mr. Nikom Teng-vai, labour leader

Personal Background: Nikom is 30 years old, unmarried. His parents are farmers at Pakpanang District, Nakhonrathammarat Province. He has 6 brothers and sisters. He is now working at Kurusapa Press and also is studying at Prasarnmit University in Social Science.

Work: In 1966 he was a worker in a rubber factory in Trang Province for one year and then in 1967 became an employee in a malaria elimination programme at Nakhonrathammarat Province. In 1968 he came to Bangkok and became an employee in

Kurusapa Printing Press at Ladprao. (Kurusapa = Teachers Association, is a semi-autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Education. It is a profit making organisation. He has continued to work there until now. At present, he is a 2nd grade printer (unskilled labourer) and works eight hours a day.

Activities: Nikom joined 3 strikes at the Kurusapa Printing Press. The first strike was staged on November 23rd, 1973 to ask for a 20% increase in wages. After the strike, a Kurusapa Trade Organisation Employee Association was founded. The second strike was on August 8th, - 16th, 1975 to ask for a 300 baht cost of living allowance. After this strike, the employees association changed its name to Kurusapa Trade Organisation Labour Union (KUTOLU) and was registered in accordance with the Labour Law. This labour union has 1,500 members out of the 2,000 workers in the factory. The third strike, staged in March 1976, demanded a 150 baht cost of living allowance. The three strikes were successful inspite of all the efforts of the employer to harass the workers and break the strike.

Nikom was a committee member of the labour union and was responsible for academic concerns. He played a central role in the production of the labour union's monthly journal which included details of the misuses and malpractices of the employers. In May, 1976 he was elected as deputy-secretary of the labour union.

After the October 6th coup in 1976, Nikom and three other workers' houses were searched twice. The workers could not take any action at all until after the coup in October 1977. In November 1977 the labour union presented an official letter to the director of the Kurusapa and the Minister of Education asking to change the Kurusapa Trade Organisation into a state enterprise, and also for improvements in the administrative system in the organisation to improve the welfare of the workers.

The Attempted Assassination: On November 24th, 1977, after having finished his work at 11.00 p.m, Nikom took a woman worker to her house, which was about 200 metres down a lane opposite the printing plant. He stopped his motorcycle opposite her house and was then shot by an assassin. The 9 bullets missed him because he was bending down at the time trying to start his motorcycle. Nikom informed the police and his employers about the incident and asked for protection. The employers, however, said that Nikom made up the story to gain popularity among the workers.

Moreover, on December 28th, 1977, policemen from Hua-mark police station searched for him in the printing works saying that somebody had charged him of with stealing his motorcycle, which was a false charge. However Nikom hid himself from the police and nothing happened later on.

Remarks: Nikom was shot one day after the fourth anniversary of the founding of KUTOLU. The attempted assassination was designed to frighten the workers and reduce their pride and joy in their organisation. To shoot him while he was taking a woman back home made it easy for authorities to claim the attempt was caused by personal love conflicts. But most of the workers there knew that the real reason for the assassination attempt was the fact that Nikom was one of the most active labour leaders of KUTOLU.

It should also be noted that the employer has for several years been in conflict with the union. For example after Oct 6th one workers leader at the printing works Suwit Prayoonrasak was temporarily arrested under the decree 22 of the National Administration Reform Council. On his release he was refused his old job, eventhough he had never been charged with any offence. Suwit is now suing Kurusapa Trade Organisation, and Nikom and other workers are helping with the case.

The assassination of Mr Nara Ekaron, committee member of the Honda Motorcycle Producer Labour Union

Personal Background: Nara was 22 years old, unmarried. He was originally from Roi-ued Province. His parents are farmers.

Works: He had worked at the Honda Motorcycle Factory at Samrong-tai District, Samitprakarn Province for 2 years.

Activities: Nara worked actively in the labour as a union member. On November 20th, 1977, at the time of the executive committee election, he was elected a committee member and it was on this day that he was stabbed.

Assassination: On November 20th, 1977, after having finished with the conference, the labour union members had dinner together. At about 8 p.m, ten strangers led by a former worker of the factory, entered the room. Suddenly, there was some unrest and Nara was stabbed. He died at the hospital.

His 2 friends who took Nara to the hospital were arrested and charged of holding an asseple of more than 5 peoplé while the real murderer were not arrested.

The attempted assassination of Chitisaak Chuvannu-mani, a committee member of the Telephone Organization Labour Union

The Telephone Organization Labour Union of which Chitisaak was a committee member had protested and disclosed the corruption the Telephone Organization, had asked for more welfare and wages for the workers and also had joined with many other labour

union in the protest against the raising the rice price in January 1976. Chitissak said that he had been secretly followed since the October 6th coup. In September 1977 he was shot at Suthisarn flyover.

ANNEX:

The Assassination of Miss. Somnuk Sa-ngob, labour leader, in 1976

Personal Background: Somnuk was 22 years old when she was assassinated. She was originally from Patumtani Province.

Work: She worked at Thai Iryo Factory in Patumtani Province. The owner of the factory is Mr. Sukree Pothirattanangkul, who also owns the Thai American Textile Factory (see case of Tawat), and many textile factories in the region and in Samutprakarn. The workers of this factory are mostly (about 99%) women.

Activities: Somnuk was one of the leader of the workers in Thai Iryo Factory. She had led the workers to make demands to the employer twice and both were successful. The workers at this factory worked in co-operation with Thawat Pirompin's TAT. Labour Union as the two factories were owned by the same employer. Their demands were also similar. When Somnuk was assassinated, she was in the process of founding a labour union in her factory.

Assassination: On April 13th, 1976, on the occasion of Thai New Year's Day, after having successfully negotiating the second set of demands with the employers, Somnuk went to Kankaen Province with many workers including Aporn Potiwankul, another founder of the labour union, to celebrate the new year.

On the way back, they stopped at Muaglek Fall in Saraburi Province, After lunch, Somnuk went into a wood not far from the restaurant with a friend. While they were walking, two assassins (seen following the workers from the factory) called Somnuk's name. Somnuk turned back and knowing what was going to happen, ran away. The assassins ran after her and shot her in the back with .38 guns and ran away. But they soon came back to take the necklace from Somnuk's body so as to make the case seems like a robbery. Somnuk died thereafter.

Remarks: 1. Although Somnuk was shot during a pleasure trip and there were no strikes or demands at the time, it was believed that her death resulted from the conflicts between the workers and the employers. The reason for killing her at the time was to make the incident look like personal conflict or robbery.

2. The policemen have insisted that the case was caused by personal conflicts and have not yet arrested any murderer.

3. Many workers who had taken part in the founding of the labour union were dismissed from their jobs after Somnuk's death and some others had resigned by harrassment.

4. Arporn Potiwankul, a committee member of the Thai Iryo Textile Labour Union, who joined the trip to Konkaen, did not come back with the others. It was believed that if she had come back with the others, she might have also been assassinated. However, in January 1977, while Arporn and other four members of the union were sitting in a parked mini-bus outside of the factory, they were killed when two large trucks were driven into the bus. The trucks, according to two people who were employed at the time by the company, had been parked along the highway outside the company and crashed into the mini-bus after the workers had boarded. Eight other workers were injured. The trucks belonged to a private contractor but had been hired out by the Thai Melon Polyester Company. (According to the August 1976 Business in Thailand, one family has controlling interests in the Thai American Textile, Thai Iryo and Thai Melon Polyester companies).

The incident has been described as an accident. No charges have been made against the truck drivers.

The four members of the union killed are identified as Miss Farn Chamasarn, Miss Wanpen Winan, Miss Rijiva and Miss Wanpen Thiengsiri. Their families have been paid US. \$ 50 each by Thai Iryo.

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2. Strike of Local Government Teachers

Last January in Thailand, a country under martial law where strikes are forbidden, there was a challenge against the military regime through a protest of local government teachers all over the country, leading to a general teacher strike in the provinces.

The original motive was certainly economic oppression and promises broken since the Thanin period. The Thanin government had agreed to pay civil servants a cost of living allowance of 200 baht per month to help them cope with the increasing cost of living. This allowance had been paid since October 1977 to all government officials, except the local government teachers, because local government teachers are not considered as civil servants.

The problems concerning local teachers are deep rooted. In the past, the local primary education used to be under the Ministry of Education but it was moved to be under the Department of Local Administration in the Ministry of Interior in 1967, for financial and political reasons. As a matter of fact, there are hundreds of thousands of local government teachers all over the country and the budget for local primary education covers many thousands of millions of baht.

Local teachers in many provinces gathered; demanding the 200 baht allowance and also demanding that the government to promote the status of local teachers to be the same as ordinary civil servants and to move local education from the Ministry of Interior back to the Ministry of Education.

The first gathering was staged on Jan. 11th, 1978 at Srinakharinviroj University (Teachers university) in Songkla province in the south of Thailand. A short time after that, gatherings and strikes of teachers were staged all over the country, especially on Jan. 16th, which is the Thai "teacher day", in Fisanuloke, Buriram, Mahasarakam, Kalasin, Surin Roi-ed, Ubon, and Kon-khaer. Provinces..

Violent conflicts broke out on Jan. 16th in Kon-khaen province where 4,000 people gathered. The governor of the province ordered groups of police and soldiers to arrest the people, and 170 teachers were arrested by force and released on the next morning. After that the policemen and soldiers were ordered to break up the demonstration of 4,000 people by force, using water from fire-engines.. According to an eye-witness, one 4-5 month pregnant teacher fell 5-6 times in the ground because of the water, and had to be sent to hospital immediately.

A few days later, the government gave into the first demand and promised to pay 200 baht per month allowance to the local government teachers. As for the second demand, (the upgrading of their status) the government promised to take it under consideration.

5) Academic Freedom

1. Resignations at Khon Kaen University

While students in many universities have been appealing for the return of the political and academic freedom which had existed in universities before 6th October 1976, high level executives from Khon Kaen University, consisting of the rector and the deans from six families resigned from their posts, giving the reason that they could no longer tolerate the interventions of the chairman of University Council into their administration and activities at the university.

These seven executives included the rector Dr. Kamjorn Nanonpyee; Assistant Prof. Kemkhang Sitathanee, the dean of the Faculty of Agriculture; Deputy Prof. Chalong Kerdpitak of the Faculty of Engineering; Deputy Prof. Saiyud Niyomvipat of the Faculty of Nursing; Prof. Dr. Kavee Thangsubutr of the Faculty of Medical Science; Dr. Preecha Kambhirakorn of the Faculty of Education and Dr. Weerapong To-muang of the Faculty of Science. All of them tendered their resignation at the beginning of February (except for Dr. Weerapong, who resigned on February 19th, after attending a meeting with University Council members) In their resignation letters to the Chairman of the University Council the most important passage said, "all of us resign because of many factors relating to problems inside the university. It is necessary to receive cooperation from every side and from every level in solving those problems, especially from all directly involved in the university, but as everyone knows, the present acting rector is not able to do anything". And they also said, "we have the sincere aim of finding a solution that will enable the affairs of the university to be conducted freely by persons who have the legal power and the duty to do so". However, Dr. Chub Karnjanapakorn, the university council chairman, argued that he had treated Dr. Kamjorn (the rector) justly from the first day of his assignment at the university. "Dr. Kamjorn is a scientist and spends most of his time thinking, thus he gets behind in his work. He also cannot work in a team with others". Dr. Chub contended.

In fact, the conflicts inside Khon Kaen University have reoccurred several times, but no one has ever really tried to solve them sincerely and actively. The troubles at Khon Kaen University can be traced from 2 root causes. First, real power in the university is in the hands of the deans of each faculty, not with the rector, and thus because these deans control the real power, and have vested interests they become obstacles to the rector in the administration of the university. Secondly the university council, unlike the councils in other universities, has members who are from outside the university who are not aware of day to day problems of university administration. Because of the presence of outsiders on the council there is often a situation of misunderstanding about the various problems at the university, and such misunderstandings create conflicts almost every time that a major decision is needed. The rector, who should be the main key, cannot develop educational programmes and is sometimes forced to do things he does not agree with by some powerful groups. Thus all the people appointed to be rectors in recent times, have been in a very difficult situation, which is why there have been changes in the rector several times in recent years.

However, the main cause of the various troubles in this university stems from the act of the university. This act not only provides the deans with permanent positions in charge of the various faculties with no way to dismiss or replace them, but also allows outsiders on the university council who the deans can have as much influence in as the rector. For these reasons, the post of the dean at Khon Kaen University becomes a real source of power for the incumbents and they often use this power for their own advantage (such as gaining political influence). This situation of confliction interest groups is leading to disaster in the educational sphere. If the problems at Khonkaen University are to be solved then the university act must be rapidly revised so that deans do not hold their position permanently, outsiders are not on the university council, and the rector has more power. The mistrust of academics that this act involves, and the previous government's desire to devide the university administration, so that it could control the university, must be rapidly changed. As much as possible partis an politics must be kept out of the university, so that academic freedom can thrive, and good educational programmes be developed. If these problems are not rapidly solved, it will be the students, as always, who will as suffer.

The State University Bureau has appointed Dr. Wichit Srisa-arn to be the acting rector of Khon Kaen University. (three months ago he was appointed as acting rector of Thammasat). Dr. Wichit, the Deputy Under - secretary of the State University Bureau, said that he would only act as rector of Khon Kaen University for 2 months and he would try to solve the university problems as best as he could. Whether the government will be prepared to change the university act still however remains to be seen.

2. The State University Bureau's new regulations for student activities

Since the October 6th coup in 1976, all the people's freedoms which used to exist during 1973 - 1976 were destroyed. Throughout the first month after the coup, the NARC had made many proclamations, which resulted in the stifling of all the people's freedoms. Amongst these proclamations was Decree Number 42 of the NARC which abolished all students' and pupil's activities, both inside and outside the academic institutions, including the abolishment of student centers, student administrative organization, student unions, student councils, student parties, activity clubs and groups etc. Consequently, all the activities in schools and universities all over the country were stopped, except for some cultural activities and sports which were under strict control and did not gain much popularity.

After the Kriengsak's take over in Octgber 1977, the situation seemed to be less strict, when the State University ureau made a new regulation which allowed more student activities. However, in considering all the conditions attacked to the new regulations one can easily realize that in fact the lack of academic freedom still exists, but in another more deceiving form.

Student activities are allowed under the following conditions. First, they must help build up academic supremacy, must be apolitical and be inside the university. Secondly, they must support academic

skills, knowledge and experience and must be under the responsibility of a faculty or an academic department in which the subjects are taught. Thirdly, invitations of people from outside the university to lecture, join or debate etc. must be approved by the head of the institute first. Fourthly, every activity must have advisers (of course teachers) to look after them closely. Fifthly, the academic promotion of people outside academic institutions is the duty of the university or institute (which means teachers). The duty of the students is to study.

On January 3rd, 1978, the State University Bureau allowed the students to form student unions in the next academic year, after having got approval from their institute's administrators and also from the Minister of the State University Bureau. Later, on Jan. 22th, there was another announcement that the committee members of student unions must come from indirect elections, in which the students in each faculty chose their representatives, and the faculty representative would choose the union committee members and that the establishment of student parties and a student parliament were not allowed.

It is clear enough to everybody that the purpose of such announcements is to lessen the student's power and unity, so that they cannot be active in political and social movements.

On Jan. 23rd, the Minister of the State University Bureau insisted that the parties and parliament were political matters and they were not the concern of students, because the universities were not political stage..

3) The movement of students against the regulations concerning Student Unions

a. The movement of Thammasart University students

Soon after the regulations concerning student unions were announced, there were many movements against them in many academic institutes, the most striking movement of which was at Thammasart University.

At Thammasart the movement was launched during the first half of February. The students insisted that the committee members of the students union must come from a direct election and that the students should have the right to take part in the drafting of the student union regulations. Leaflets and posters appeared all over the campus until finally on February 14th, most of the posters stuck on walls were torn down by teachers. The university officials said that these posters had not been censored or allowed by the university. On Feb. 15th, Mr. Frapat Uoichai, the rector, forbid the students to use the auditorium to hold a debate called "Thammasart University Student Union".

On the next day of Feb. 16th, more than 300 students gathered in the campus, urging the university administration to reconsider the problems again and allow a direct election, and allow students to take part in the drafting of the Student Union regulations. It is remarkable that this gathering was the first student gathering after the October 6th, incident in a University.

On Feb. 17th, a vice rector in charge of student activities declared that the university would pass the students' requests on to the State University Bureau and that the university agreed to let the students take part in the drafting of the regulations. On that day, the students issued a questionnaire for a survey of the opinions of students on this case. The result which came out on February 21st, was that the majority of the students wanted a direct election.

b. The Petition of Kasetsart University students

On February 23th, 1978 students from 9 faculties at Kasetsart University, Bangkok, issued an open letter to Prime Minister Kriengsak Chamanand, urging for a more democratic atmosphere and greater academic freedom in the university. They made 4 demands, namely, first, they demanded a direct election of their representatives in the student administration organization; secondly, they demanded a direct election of their representatives in the student parliament; thirdly, they demanded freedom in student activities, and finally, they demanded greater academic freedom.

The letter has still not yet been answered.

4. Freedom of speech is still lacking in Universities

On January 1978, students of the Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University had planned to hold a debate under the title: "Thailand, where are we going?" in which four people were invited to take part, namely, Mr. Senee Chamarik, a university professor; Mr. Preecha Piempongsant, a government planner; Mr. Sawat Lukdot a labour leader; and Mr. Nicholas Bennett,

However, five hours before the debate began, two of the four men were not allowed to speak (Mr. Swat Lukdot and Mr. Nicholas Bennett) without any apparent reasons being given. This order came from the Student Activity Department of the university. Realizing the lack of academic freedom, the two other speakers, Mr. Sanae and Mr. Preecha refused also to join the debate in order to protest against this order.

The students who were organising the seminar tried to continue with the debate, by asking another man from a radical magazine "Tawan Mai", Mr. Freecha Samakkitam to join the debate but he also refused in protest. Consequently, the debate had to be completely cancelled, despite the fact that more than 500 students were crowding the auditorium to listen.

5) Other cases

1. Mr. Witchai Fichaidit before his arrest was a teacher at Ratburana School. He was arrested after the October 6th coup under Lese Majeste charge. The reason for the arrest resulted from a speech he gave in the classroom which touched the monarchy, and one of his pupils had recorded it on a tape-recorder.

He has already been brought to court and was sentenced of 2 years imprisonment. At present he is detained at Rajburi prison in Rajburi province.

2. Mr. Prasit Udomchanya was a lecturer at Thammasart University and was expelled from his work as a lecturer there because he was too radical. He was arrested in November 1976 and is now detained at the Special Prison of Bangkok.

3. Mr. Suapa Tanapinpong was expelled from his work as a teacher in Prince of Songkla University. The reason he was expelled was because he was suspected of being in Thammasart University on October 6th, 1976. At present, he is suing the university for having dismissed him without proper reasons.

STOP PRESS

Bangkok Post (7/3/78): According to the Corrections Department, the 8th group of endangering society, totally 252 people, were released on the 7th March 1978 - 7 out of 34 in Bangkok, leaving 27 still in detention.

36 out of 241 in the central region, leaving 205 still in detention.

26 out of 112 in the North-East, leaving 66 still in detention.

65 out of 215 in the North, leaving 150 still in detention.

78 out of 329 in the South, leaving 261 still in detention.

That left 699 still in detention, excluding 200-300 being held in police station.

These figures are extremely worrying, because they suggest that arrest (unreported) have been taken place at a very rapid rate in the last 2 months with at least 340 people for endangering society, the largest figure for many months.

PART THREE

ACTIVITIES OF CGRS AND OTHER HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP

1) Activities of CGRS.

1. Visiting, Helping Prisoners and their Families

CGRS. has continued to visit political detainees in Bangkok at least once a week at every prison. The detainees we visited regularly are:-

1. The October 6th prisoners at Bangkwang, Bangkok and Lardyau Prisons, Bangkok.
2. The teacher, Mr. Udom Fkakrong and his friends (total of eleven persons) at the Special Prison of Bangkok.
3. The labour leader, Suparp Pasa-ong and his friends. (total of seven persons) at Klong Prem Central Prison (Lard Yau).
4. The labourer, Mr. Frateep Frakhratoke, at the Special Prison of Bangkok (Klong Prem Light Jail). In February he was acquitted, but was immediately rearrested and moved to a prison in Montaburi Prison with new charge of gambling.
5. The farmer, Mr. Somboon and his worker brother Mr. Vichai Banlusilp at Bangkok Police School.
6. The labourer who has been arrested again and again, Mr. Nikom Pridakul at the Special Prison of Bangkok.
7. The labourer and member of the Socialist Party of Thailand Mr. Surin Suanpan, at the Special Prison of Bangkok
8. The Thai Guards, Mr. Joi Noo-yam and Mr. Vichai Chaemniyom, at the Special Prison of Bangkok.
9. The three prisoners from Surin province sentenced to death for communist activities, Mr. Tongchan Srinual and Mr. Sao Sao-kaew at Bangkwang and Mrs. Boonvurn Sri-udom and her baby daughter at Lardyau Women's Prison.
10. On a less regular basis we have visited political prisoners up-country particularly in the N.E. and South of the country.

We have provided moral support and encouragement to all the prisoners we visited. In addition we have provided all necessary assistance according to their demands and needs, including money, food, clothes, medicines, books, and commodities. For some prisoners like Mr. Tongchan Srinual, Mr. Sao Sao-kaew, Mrs. Boonvurn Sri-udom and her daughter (born in prison), we are the only group who visits them and our visits have always been most appreciated. At present, Boonvurn's husband, Mr. Tongchan who is detained in the other prison, has tuberculosis and her daughter is ill, consequently Boonvurn is in extremely worried. Although the three are appealing to the Supreme Court, they now feel hopeless, feeling sure that they will have their death sentence confirmed. All we can do is to visit them from time to time to cheer them up and arrange for legal assistance. We are also providing them some good books. As for the ill baby, we have tried to bring some instant milk for her, but it was not allowed in the prison. So we changed and sent it by post as it seems that postal parcels are less carefully checked, but at present we still do not know the outcome of this attempt.

Mr. Udom Fkakrong group and the two Thai Guards are also the prisoners who have very, very few visitors besides our group. We visit them regularly and try to help them as much as we can, with food, money and moral support. We have also visited the Udom Fkakrong group's families in the far south in Nakernsritthammarat province many times,

also helping them and giving them the news from their family members. In fact we provide some support for the families of most of the political prisoners we visit. For those who are not too poor we merely help them to visit their relatives. For those who are very poor we provide minimal support on a regular basis.

Visiting in the provinces

Besides visiting the prisoners in Bangkok, we have also visited the political prisoners in different provinces. We have, for example, visited Mr. Wirat Truen and other Vietnamese at Lad Bua Kaw Prison in Nakornrajsrima Province in the North-east. In the south, we have visited many endangering society and communist prisoners in many prisons and police stations in Surathani and Nakornrithammarat Provinces. Besides the prisoners, we have also visited the ex-political prisoners and the prisoners' families in many provinces, most of them were in the north-eastern and the southern part of Thailand, and assisted them regarding to their immediate needs.

In Nakornsrihammarat province, we have been trying to find a lawyer for Mr. Pralom Kaewsuan, the brother of Mr. Puchong Kaewsuan, a detainee in the Udom Pkkrong case. Banlom was recently arrested under the same (communist) charges and is going to be tried in the same case as his brother, and had no lawyer to protect himself. One of the CGRS. worker, Chaiwat Yau-wapongsiri promised to find a lawyer for him but unfortunately he was arrested at Ban-nasan District. (See Part One of this report) Banlom was very worried and contacted CGRS. We have reassured him that although Chaiwat has been arrested, it did not mean that the help promised to be given him would be cut off. We confirmed that we would find a lawyer for him quickly.

Pleasantly, our work and the help we have been providing have proved our sincerity to the prisoners and the prisoners' families. Now that we are increasingly trusted, more and more information are given to us by the prisoners and their families, like, for example, the story of Vanglung Village in "Report from the South" of this report.

2. Listening to trials

We keep monitoring and noting down the proceedings of the trials of the following people.

1. October 6th detainees (Bangkok 18 and Boonchart Sathienthammai)
2. Udom Pka-krong and his friends.
3. Supap Fasa-ong and his friends.
4. Irateep Prakkratoke and his friends (Thai Blanket Case)
5. Somboon and Vichai Banlusilp.
6. Nikom Fridakul
7. Ex-endangering society prisoners who are suing for damages.

As for some cases up-country, we cannot attend the trials regularly; however, we kept following the cases by attending the trials from time to time, asking about the progress from the people themselves or from their lawyers. Example of such cases are those of

1. Mr. Bamrung Charan-yanon
2. Mr. Nokhaew Sri kaew

3. Other Human Rights Activities of CGRS.

Labour: Two of CGRS, full-time workers have been studying the problems of labour and discussing possible solutions with different types of labour leaders. Meanwhile, they have been trying to promote education on human rights especially on the rights of the workers to unite and bargain with the owners of factories. They have also tried to uncover some of the many cases of murders of the workers/leaders which still continue, as well as trying to find ways to stop them.

Regarding the education of workers, CGRS is preparing a book about the struggle of the workers at Omnoi which led to the arrest of Supap Pasa-ong and 8 other labour leaders and workers. This book is designed, both in its content and format, for the workers, not for the students or any other groups of people, for we feel that it is rather difficult for the workers to educate themselves unless they have good books to read.

Non-Violent Training

In the past two months, one full-time worker from CGRS is co-ordinating with two young people from Ahimsa group in the preparation for the Non-Violent Training Programme which is planned to take place in May 1978. The objectives of the training are to promote non-violent action and to strengthen the non-violent movement throughout Thailand, and to supply to those who are already activists with details of the tactics and practise of non-violence.

Special training programmes for the volunteers who help CGRS, and for the full time workers of CGRS, have already been held.

Campaign for raising Bail money for 4 workers from the Om Noi Case

The campaign to raise bail money to bail out 4 workers from the Omnoi case was launched on January 2, 1978, through the distribution of leaflets about the background of 7 detainees, their lives, and the work which led to their arrest and the trial. At the same time another leaflet asking for donations for bail money was also distributed. Apart from the purpose of collecting bail money of at least 20,000 baht, we also had another major objective of creating more understanding about the problems of the workers, and especially an understanding about the Omnoi case. Also we wanted to encourage more people to get involved in human rights activities.

We can say that the campaign which ended on 28th February has achieved at least the two first objectives. Over 25,000 Baht was donated from people from all walks of lives. The Omnoi case which seemed to have been forgotten has come into the limelight again. At least two weekly journals have reported on the background and the trial proceedings of the Omnoi Case again in rather big articles. More and more people are attending the trial proceedings at the Criminal Court.

- The Activities designed to prevent trouble at the Oct. 6th hearings

In early January not long after the Oct. 6th hearings began, we realised, after having observed the situation at the hearings for some time, the fact that in a situation where a lot of the Oct 6th. detainees sympathizers (including mainly students and workers) were gathering in the compound of the Army Quartermasters Divisions, a tragedy could easily happen. Such tragedies had often been caused by right wing groups in this country, from the October 14th, 1973 massacre to the October 6th, 1976 massacre.

Having decided to take preventative action, we co-operated with the October 6th detainees' relatives' group and student groups and met to discuss of what we would do if such and such incidents took place. For example, what we would do if there were fighting, bomb throwing or shooting. After we reached common solutions to these problems, we printed some leaflets and distributed them to the people we knew. In the leaflets we outlined the type of incidents that might occur and described the action that everybody should follow so as to prevent or to lessen the seriousness of the incidents.

- Attacks on CGRS and the Chairman

During the past two months, CGRS. and the Chairman, Bishop Bunleun Mansap have been frequently attacked by right wing groups and in the papers. The most serious attack occurred in Tawan Siam Newspaper in early January. ...)

However, inspite of all the attacks and the arrest of two of CGRS's workers in the south of Thailand under communist charges, none of workers or the committee members of CGRS have been discouraged. On the contrary, the arrest of our two colleagues has created greater unity in CGRS, both amongst the committee members and the workers. Everyone's commitment has been doubled.

- 2) Activities of Other Human Right Groups

CGRS. has been encouraging the formation of other human rights groups with some success. Already two groups have been formed namely:-

1. The Human Rights Promotion Association

The Human Rights Promotion Association has officially applied for registration. At the present time the founders of the group are actively soliciting for members, and have been of considerable assistance in the campaigns and strategies mounted in our efforts to obtain the release of Chaiwat Yao-Wapongsiri, Sukhon Tanthakeyoon, and Boontham Chindawong. Apart from this the association has not yet mounted any formal activities as the founders are waiting for their application for registration to be approved.

2. The Human Rights Research Group

A human rights research group has been formed. This group is composed mainly of university lecturers from Chulalongkorn, Ramkhamhaeng and Thammasat universities, but also includes qualified people from government ministries, banks, private professions, etc., as well as a high level advisory group. The group is headed by Dr. Saneh Chamarik,

chairman of the "Textbook Development Project", under the Social Science Association of Thailand. The "Text-book Development Project" as a legal entity, has agreed that this group can fall under its aegis.

At present a detailed research proposal is being drawn up, which will shortly be presented to external funding agencies (preliminary, and favourable discussions on funding have already taken place). This research proposal has been divided into three main parts namely:-

- Background research Including an analysis of the Thai social and cultural systems and their relationship to human rights, a historical perspective of human rights, an analysis of the legal system and laws, and an analysis of the philosophy and beliefs of practicing lawyers and judges.

- Problem Oriented Research Research into law and political prisoners, trades unions, rural areas, the media, women, consumers, education, and minority groups all from the perspective of human rights.

- Synthesis Throughout the research short monographs will be published, on which it is hoped that other groups will take further action. Towards the end all the different parts of the project will be joined together in a synthesis report on the Human Rights situation in Thailand.

Seven different research teams (each to deal with different problems areas) have been formed involving more than 30 people, and work is well advanced on drafting a detailed project proposed. On the 25/2/78 there was a one day seminar of all involved in order to establish a common framework. The detailed research work should start in a month or two.

3. Visit of ICJ Observer (Mr. David Hallmark)

Mr. David Hallmark, a British lawyer, was sent by the International Commission of Jurists in Geneva (Switzerland) to observe the trial of the Oct 6th defendants, and to report to the ICJ on the progress being made in this trial. Whilst in Thailand Mr. Hallmark realised that the Oct 6th case was only the tip of the iceberg of human rights infringements in the country, and that there were a large number of other areas where the rule of law was not being applied, and where the UN Declaration of Human Rights was not being adhered to. He thus broadened his terms of reference to include investigations into endangering society prisoners, army detention and reeducation centres, torture and murder of people in detention, attitudes of the legal profession to basic human rights, the position of labour leaders, the arrest of the CGRS workers, and other aspects. Throughout his visit (which was extended by two weeks over the originally planned two weeks) CGRS worked closely with him and provided him with every possible assistance. During his mission he visited prisons, talked to prisoners, observed trials, met with high ranking government police and military officials, talked with Ministers and had discussions with leading members of the legal profession and diplomats.

He will be preparing a report for the ICJ, which is likely to be quite controversial, and thus we do not want to speak on his behalf. However, we would like to mention just a few of the points he will be raising in his report:-

- Military Detention and Reeducation Camps. The corrections department, the army, and the police denied the existence of any such camps. (CGRS has reported on the existence of many such camps)
- 6th Oct. trial. It seems that up to now, from a legal point of view, the prosecution has presented absolutely no evidence, and from his conversations does not seem to have much evidence.
- Endangering Society. No one has been held for more than six months, there is only one political endangering society prisoner still being held. (CGRS is in contact with many political prisoners some who have been detained more than a year)
- Supreme Court Judges. The president of the supreme court is proud of the legal systems in Thailand, feels that the whole of the military court system has nothing to do with him, and does not feel that there is anything wrong with the Thai legal system. In the conversation he agreed that 50 - 75 % of cases that came to the courts were acquitted, that there was nothing wrong with the system of holding hearings just once a week or once a month, that almost everyone arrested could afford bail, and that there was no need either to speed up the court process, or to check the prosecution evidence before embarking on a trial. He also said that all lawyers were good, and every one who came to trial could have a good lawyer.
- Corrections Departments. The Director General Thawee Chu sap said that unconvicted prisoners were not chained, could wear their own clothes, were allowed frequent visits from their relatives and lawyers, and did not have their mail censored. (See pictures of first Oct 6th hearing for an example of these regulations).
- Official View of Defence Lawyers. People who help criminals escape their just punishment.
- Etc etc.

Mr. Hallmark also took an active interest in the arrest of the CGRS workers, and met Deputy Police Director General, Chumpol Lohachala, the governor of Surathani, the Nai Amphur of Ban Na San, the Chief of Police of Surathani, the Investigation officer of Ban Na San, and the three arrested. Both he and the ICJ will be writing to high level government figures on this matter. He has stated in press interviews that "though the three arrested do not work for ICJ (as claimed in a BBC report), ICJ and CGRS have been working closely together as they share similar objectives. Thus ICJ will be taking a continuous interest in this case".

Altogether Mr. Hallmarks visit has proved to be extremely useful and encouraging for all those involved in struggling for greater human rights in Thailand.

PART FOUR

SUMMARY OF THE NEWS

1. The General Political Situation

In Thailand, whenever a new government comes to power, it passes through a honeymoon period, during which time the majority of the politically conscious population give it the benefit of the doubt, and wait and see if all the various policy statements become realities or not. All the same time, the power cliques and elite groups spend some time sitting quietly analysing the intentions of the new government, or trying to find its weak points where it can be attacked.

The government of General Kriengsak Chamanan (Prime Minister, Minister of the Interior, Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and Secretary General of the National Policy Council) has been no exception to this general pattern, except that the honeymoon seems to have lasted a shorter period than usual. This is because there seems to be a widespread feeling that there have been too many coups too often, and this is just another one. Only during the first two months of this government's existence were there few open or even hidden attacks. This "honeymoon" was short despite quite a brilliant public relations strategy pursued by the Prime Minister (P.M) in which he liberalised the press (whilst still holding sanctions in the background); appointed technocrats to his cabinet, and to a multitude of advisory committees to give the impression that experts could solve the problems of the country; and talked about national unity, made many liberal statements, and pursued a progressive foreign policy.

For these first two months the P.M did manage to create a very favourable image for his government both amongst liberal and conservative urban groups, and in the international communities.

However the first cracks began to appear in his domestic image when he refused to grant amnesty to the Oct 6th defendants, whilst granting amnesty to the March 26th coup plotters, but still by the end of 1977 his image was still very much intact.

Obviously however in terms of real power, a favourable national and international image is not too significant (except in so far as this obtains the support of the business elite, and foreign investors and aid donors). What is more significant is the support that he has or does not have amongst the armed forces, police, organised labour, village scouts, and other powerful institutions and groups.

Thus the period January - February 1978 can be characterised by two contradictory movements. On the one hand the P.M has been trying to build up a power base for himself amongst these groups, and on the other hand his opponents have been doing everything they can to counter his moves, and to reduce his power base.

The period under consideration has thus been one of the most confusing, and potentially unstable periods in recent Thai history. This instability is largely due to the fact that the Prime Minister has created a liberal image for himself, but relies on right wing forces to remain in power. Thus his position is founded on a contradiction.

The situation started becoming lively on January 12th when Matichon Newspaper reported that the Prime Minister was considering returning the confiscated properties of Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn, Field Marshal Prapass Charusathiar, Colonel Narong Kittikachorn, and their wives for "social justice". This was obviously an attempt to get the support of the Prapass-Yos faction of the army. (Gen Yos

Thephasdin, Deputy Commander in Chief of the Army), just as the amnesty of the March 26th coup plotters was an attempt to get the support of that faction. On January 24th Artit Magazine (rumoured to be an ISOC mouthpiece) attacked the proposed return of the properties. On that day General Yos went to see P.M Kriengsak about "some special business". On January 25th Prapas appeared in full dress uniform of a field marshal at the army-day military parade at the Royal Plaza. However, in order to maintain these good relationships it was necessary for Kriengsak to find a way to return the properties, and given the fact that Thanom had already appealed their confiscation right up to the supreme court without success, this was not easy. The newspaper reported that the government was considering presenting a bill to the National Legislative Assembly on the return of the properties, but the speaker, Air Chief Marshal Harin Hongsakul said "categorically that it would not be my duty to accept such a bill for consideration, as it would be tantamount to the legislative branch interfering with the judiciary branch". (25/2/78)

It thus seems that the Prime Minister will either have to use Article 27 of the constitution, in order to return the properties (about 200 million baht in all) which would create widespread opposition, or give up his attempt (Nation 26/2/78). There are indications that the Prime Minister is getting worried by the Prapas-Yos group because of his inability to return the properties, and thus he took General Yos Thephasdin along with him on his ASEAN trip (he was also perhaps worried by other leading figures such as General Prem Tinasulanonda - a prominent young turk and Police General Montchai Pankongchuen whom he took along on the trip too). (Bangkok Post 18/2/78) Prapas is obviously not very happy about the slowness in the return of his properties and announced on February 12th that he has "big plans ahead" which he would not specify.

During the past two months the newspapers have been full of stories about divisions in the armed forces, and moves that different factions have been making against P.M Kriengsak. For example on February 6th Dao Siam published a story in which it was stated that General Sern Nakorn (army commander in chief) and P.M Kriengsak did not agree with each other (publicly) that a "strong wind was blowing on the country", in other words that the country is facing many problems. For a long time there were stories that General Vitoon Yasawad would be reinstated (after Oct 6th coup he was sent as student counsellor to Japan, and he is said to be a part of the General Chalard faction of the army). The papers have also been full of stories about conflicts between Admiral Sangad Chalor-yoo and the P.M. These stories started immediately after the formation of the Kriengsak government, but did not come out into the open until the National Policy Council censured the government over its handling of the Teachers strike (20/1/78). Artit magazine (16/2/78) had as its cover story "Jaws are coming ashore", in which it was suggested that navy (with the assistance of some factions of the air force) were planning a coup. It seems that this story originated from a rush surprise visit by Admiral Sangad and Air Chief Marshal Kamol to Chiangmai, to see the P.M "to seek a compromise on some problems".

It thus seems that in terms of the Armed Forces the Prime Minister has yet been unable to win any sizeable faction behind him (the promise of significant amounts of US military aid might help him in this respect), but on the other hand he has succeeded in keeping those groups that do not support him from becoming united, and thus stopping them being able to move against him.

One tactic that has been used by his opponents to try to unite the forces opposing him (Kriengsak) has been to encourage "disorder", for if there is one thing that all right wing forces can

agree upon, it is that there should not be the "anarchy of the period Oct 1973 - Oct 1976". Signs of such attempts to discredit the P.M.'s liberal image began to appear on the January 12th when 200 provincial authority teachers protested at Songkhla for a 200 Baht cost of living allowance. On the same day 360 workers at the Public Warehouse Organisation went on strike. Despite a government promise to pay the teachers a cost of living allowance on January 16th more than 5,000 provincial authority teachers staged a mass demonstration at Khonkaen (the other end of the country) demanding that they become civil servants. This demonstration continued for three days, and 170 demonstrators were temporarily arrested. On January 18th there was a demonstration at Bangken Technical School, and the school was temporarily closed. On January 23rd several hundred students from Ayudhya Agricultural College staged a demonstration at the Ministry of Education (the first since Oct 6th 1976). During the annual Thammasat - Chulalongkorn University football match students organised a symbolic parade, with 18 "actors" in chains. All these events coming rapidly one after each other appeared to be designed to whittle away the support for Kriengsak from right wing groups.

After this first wave of disturbances, there was a noticeable change in the direction of the P.M.'s statements. For example on February 3rd he announced that there would be "no let up in the war against the Communist Party of Thailand" which was a distinct change from previous statements where he had emphasised national unity and referred as "the other side". His deputy Interior Minister General Prem, had even said in November last year that "Communists are patriots. If we can have a proper dialogue with them, we can save a lot of lives". On February 5th P.M. Kriengsak warned students against "using force instead of brains in calling for democracy", he also emphasised that "students should control themselves from being used by subversive elements".

For a while things quietened down, but now the situation seems again to be moving into a wave of disturbances. For example, a big nationwide demonstration of students and teachers at 28 Vocational Colleges was just prevented on time by the Minister of Education (17/2/78). Rumours had been spread by unknown persons that the status of these colleges was going to be reduced. On February 16th there was a rally of 300 students at Thammasat, protesting about restrictions on student activities. On February 21st an explosion wrecked the army quartermaster's arsenal in Bangkok. It was announced that Mass Transit Organisation Workers would go on strike from February 24-28 (the strike never occurred). And finally it was reported (Artit Magazine) that the Prime Minister was planning to reshuffle five of his cabinet ministers. Thus whilst Kriengsak struggles hard to create an appearance of stability, other forces are trying to create exactly the opposite appearance.

Long before the Oct 20th coup General Kriengsak was making overtures to labour leaders, particularly Paisal Thavatchainant (president of the Metropolitan Electricity Workers Union, and former president of the Labour Federation of Thailand) and Sunthorn Kaewmetr (former president of the Express Transport Organisation workers). Shortly after coming to power the P.M. formed a Labour Welfare Foundation, and made other steps to give labour unions a feeling of greater freedom. During the past two months his opponents have had some success in reducing his support in labour circles. The first blow was Sunthorn's failure to obtain reelection as president of his union. This was followed by the dismissal of the president and the vice president of the State Railways of Thailand Labour Union (Amat Kamtethong, and Wat Lukdode) from their positions for involvement in the Oct 6th

amnesty campaign. This almost certainly took place without the P.M.'s prior knowledge. Shortly after (7/2/78) a proposal made by Paisal to establish a Union Confederation (with 20 member unions) was turned down by the Labour Department, as one of the objective of this confederation was "to promote democracy" thus "interfering in politics". Towards the end of February a campaign was mounted to discredit Paisal, particularly by Mass Transport Organisation workers' leaders. These M.T.O workers had burnt an effigy of Paisal, and laid a funeral wreath for him, accusing him of "protecting corrupt M.T.O officials". Paisal had to rush back from Malaysia to deal with these allegations, with the help of Sunthorn. These attempts to discredit and defeat Paisal and Sunthorn (both National Legislative Assembly members) can be seen as a way of preventing the Prime Minister from building up a power base amongst labour groups.

The newspapers in general have been quite supportative of Prime Minister Kriengsak, though there have been various attempts by both left of centre, and ultraright newspapers to blow-up various stories that might prove embarrassing to Kriengsak. Without directly attacking the P.M., Siam Ruth, Matichon, Paritat, Artit on the left, and Dao Siam and Thawan Siam on the right have played up stories that the P.M. would have preferred were kept quiet. In addition a new magazine "Thawan Mai" started at the end of January, with a very left wing image. (It is rumoured that this magazine is financed by Prapass, and is designed to be closed down, thus helping make Kriengsak loose his popularity with the newspapers). The biggest story on the media front was a secret army intelligence report, accusing seven journalists (at least one of whom was dead) of corrupt practices. This report was leaked to the press, and certainly had the effect of discrediting General Serm in the eyes of many journalists.

Throughout the past two months the papers have been full of stories about the constitution drafting committee and whether there will be elections or not. Various "trial balloons" have been let fly on this question. For example on 20/1/78 the P.M. talked to the foreign correspondents club, and said that "many well wishers had come to see him to try to persuade him, and his government to stay in power for more than one year". This statement produced an immediate and generally negative reaction in the press, and thus on 26/1/78 Kriengsak made a strong statement reaffirming that there would be elections as planned. On 7/2/78 Songsuk Pakkasem, member of the old national assembly (quite close to Thanin) proposed that there should be a referendum to decide whether general elections should be held or not. Admiral Sangad Chalor-yos, met with Songsuk and said that he would consider the proposal with interest. Again, there was a generally negative reaction in the press, and again there were reaffirmations by Kriengsak that there would be elections. (apart from anything else a high level of U.S. support is probably dependent on the plan for elections going ahead). The general effect of those "trial balloons" is that people do not completely trust that Kriengsak really wants elections.

Probably the area where Kriengsak has had the greatest success is on the stage of foreign relations. For the Thai people in general this seems to be a form of Theatre, not directly affecting their lives in anyway, but for the P.M.'s international image, and his ability to get foreign aid and investments (and thus the support of multinational and business elites), it is extremely important. It is certainly not accidental that there is a steady flow of high level US government

officials (Derian, Oakly, Wolff, Holbrook, and even Vice President Mondale in April) to Thailand, as well as frequent visits of warships to Pattaya. The normalisation of Thailand's relationships with its communist neighbours (Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam) has however not taken place without considerable opposition inside Thailand, and has not produced the desired reduction in support for communist guerrillas. Various forces inside Thailand continue to try to provoke border incidents between Thailand and Cambodia, and to a lesser extent between Thailand and Laos. Local officials in Ubol have been supporting the Free Khemer (Nation 2/3/78), arms for the Free Khemer have been stored at the Buddhist Centre belonging to Phra Kitiwato, the monk, who at the time of the Oct 6th incident said that it was not a crime to kill a communist (Artit Magazine 16/2/78). There have also been reports of Navy involvement in the border incidents in Trat province. Whatever the truth of these reports, one thing is quite clear, and that is clashes on the Thai Cambodian border have continued almost unchanged, despite the great improvements in diplomatic relations between the two countries. Some of the biggest incidents ever occurred from 11/2 - 15/2/78 at Fat Um in Ubol province, where several hundred villagers were kidnapped and taken over the Cambodian border. Prime Minister Kriengsak himself is aware that various people are trying to undermine his foreign policies, and discredit him, and claimed (Nation 29/1/78) that a "third force may be trying to instigate misunderstanding between Thailand and its neighbours.... We must consider each individual case carefully. We just cannot take it for granted that everything has been the work of the Cambodian Government".

Unfortunately for the Prime Minister, the normalisation of relations between Thailand and its neighbours does not seem to reduce the support they are providing Thai communist insurgents. For example on 3/2/78 Hanoi Radio made a broadcast praising Thai insurgents and their successes in "putting out of action 60 government troops in the first 12 days of January in four provinces" (Bangkok Post 4/2/78). Similarly it appears that Cambodia is still helping train Thai insurgents (Bangkok Post 26/2/78, Nation 2/3/78 etc).

General Kriengsak's visit to the ASEAN countries from 18/2 to 28/2/78 produced few unexpected results, and was similar to the visits made by the previous P.M., Thanin Kraivixien. As far as internal politics are concerned, there was only one important conclusion, and that was to start the joint Thai/Malaysia communist suppression campaigns on the border again. Within Thai Military circles there had been open conflict as to whether there should be joint suppression campaigns (basically because more liberal elements in the army see the problem as a Malaysian problem, and feel that the suppression campaigns alienate peasants on the Thai side of the border). The major conflicts on this issue have been between General Yutisak Klongtrastok, (a "young turk" and against the joint suppression drives) and General Charoen Pongpanit (see for example Bangkok Post 16/2/78). The only other significant things that happened during the ASEAN visit of the P.M. was firstly that Kriengsak was taken sick in Malaysia, and was not treated by his own doctor but by a Malaysian doctor, leading to rumours that perhaps his neck cancer was reoccurring (Nation 27/2/78); secondly a leading figure in the Chart Thai party Maj. Gen. Siri Siriyothin rushed down to Malaysia to offer some urgent advice to the PM. (Nation 26/2/78); and finally General Prem Tinsulanund gave an interview with reporters in which he said the "bad rumours from Bangkok should not be taken too seriously. Staging a coup requires a lot of time in planning and preparation. Serious consideration must be given to the public support

to see whether it is still backing the ruling government".

It seems that Prime Minister Kriengsak, faced with virtually insoluble internal problems, is, in a similar way to ex-president Nixon, concentrating his efforts on foreign policy. In the next few months he plans to visit both the USSR and China. Whether this concentration on foreign policy will save him anymore than it did for Richard Nixon remains to be seen.

Ex Prime Minister Thanin Kaivixien has not been sitting idly since his overthrow, and has continued to maintain his close relationships with the Palace, being appointed as a Privy Counsellor last December. It seems that certain people are worried by the gradually rising influence of Thanin and Samak (ex-Interior Minister) and are thus trying to reactivate interest in the Yala Royal Pavillion bombing incident (Nation 5/2/78) in order to try to discredit Thanin and Samak even further. Despite these attempts Thanin continues to climb (probably because of support he has in the palace), and has recently been appointed to the National Juridical Council (Bangkok Post 18/2/78). The source and extent of his present power are still big unknowns, but already many people are looking back to his administration as a period of stability, and are arguing for a return of more repressive measures to restore stability.

In conclusion it can be said that the past two months have been a period during which the Prime Minister's power and influence have been reduced in many significant areas (the armed forces, the mass media, the labour unions, right wing groups etc.) The situation has become extremely unstable with plots and counter plots, and rumours of coups from every possible group abounding. Up until now Kriengsak has been able to keep his opponents divided, but whether he will continue to be able to manage to do this remains to be seen. Already he is finding it necessary to shed his liberal image to remain in power, and he might have to go further in that direction, to preempt opposition from the right in the near future.

One thing unfortunately however is clear, and that is that Kriengsak has not succeeded in turning his policy of creating national unity into a reality. Violent clashes between communist and government forces, seem if anything to be increasing, and have even spread to the central plains, and the western provinces. Few students who went to the jungle have returned, and some of those who have attempted such a return have been ambushed and killed. Basically there is a feeling amongst local military and government officials that governments go and come but we stay, and thus Kriengsak's hoped for improvement in rural conditions has made little impact. This perhaps is the major problem facing Thailand - even if the intentions of a government are good, it is difficult if not impossible to implement these intentions, because the central government does not even control central military, police, and other officials let alone local government officials. Usually even the intentions cannot be good because of the need to obtain the support of often corrupt and self seeking power groups in order to stay in power.

Thus the country remains divided, the government manages to hang on by the skin of its teeth. Thais continue to kill Thais, and people who sincerely try to produce National unity and reconciliation in a spiritual way are arrested, harassed, and slandered.

2) Labour

Jan. 5, 1978 - Bangkok Post:

Employers elected 5 employers representatives to the 20 man Tripartite Labour Advisory Board.

Jan. 5, 1978 - Daily News:

The civil court was still considering the new labour court law, which will be headed by special labour judges. The labour judges in this court have to know and specialize in labour, general economics and the condition of the employees. Another two judges will be appointed to consider matters effecting both the employers and the employees.

According to the labour law there will be a central labour court, which will be responsible for Bangkok, Pratumthani, Samut-Prakarn and Samut-Sakorn. Regional labour courts will be set up to cover the rest of the country. This law will be completed very rapidly. The civil court is now considering labour cases.

Jan 10, 1978 - Bangkok Post:

Labour organisation will be allowed to conduct meetings as well as educational and training programmes with complete freedom from the middle of this month (January), Labour Department Director-General Vichit Saengthong said. The reason for this relaxation of restrictions is that labour organisations are now operating within the scope of the law and the relationship between employers and workers has improved, Mr. Vichit said further.

Jan 11, 1978 - Bangkok Post: Labour Department Director-General Vichit Saengthong called a meeting at the Labour Department on January 9th to find out if union members were responsible for the distribution of leaflets asking the government to release defendants in the Oct 6th trial. He warned the labour unions not to engage in political activity and said that he had the power to dismiss any executive members involving himself in affairs outside the scope of labour relations.

Jan 13, 1978 - Daily News: About 500 employees of the Warehouse Organisation staged a strike on Jan. 12 asking the management to meet a five point demand. These points included an increase of living allowance by 300 baht, distribution of commodities to employees at a minimum equivalent to 200 baht each for those employees with salary not exceeding 4,085 baht, bus services for employees or a compensation of 100 baht per employee, a 10,000 baht compensation in case of an employee's death and a 3,000 baht compensation for death of an employee's family member, and loans for employees at up to 10 times the salary instead of the present six times.

The employees of the Warehouse Organisation were dissatisfied with the management's offer to increase employee's cost of living allowance by 150 baht only, but decided to return to work rather than risk breaking the law.

Jan 17, Matichon, Siam Rath: On Jan 16, Mr. Amard Nujpraphai, an employee's representative of the National Committee of the Labour Development Council, presented a letter from the employees of the Phromphan Wood Industry Company in Ayudhya to Labour Director - General, Mr. Vichit Saengthong stating that they had been changed from monthly employees to daily ones which did not comply with the labour law. The company also threatened them when they raised this matter with the provincial labour officials, but the officials

told the employers to solve the problems by selecting new employers' representatives.

On that day Mr. Annard also took the case of the workers of the two dredging companies, namely Aw Kan Tin and Tung Kha Harbour Mining Company, in Phuket, to Mr. Damri Noimani, deputy Minister of Interior, stating that about 500 workers would be laid off because the employers were going to change the employment conditions. Their trick was to change the companies' name to Bernard Company which would enable them not to employ the workers they did not like. The labour union in these two companies - The 12th December Labour Union - was afraid that its members would not be employed by the companies again because they were called as "strong heads" (and caused the employers much trouble)

Later, on Jan 19, Mr. Annard took Mr. Surapol Sithikorn and Mr. Charong Khommonkoltharakul, the president and deputy president of the labour union to meet Mr. Damri Noimani. Mr. Damri said that he would help the labour union's representatives to continue to work as he was previously the president of the Marine Mining Organisation, which would hold 30% of the shares in the two companies.

Jan 18, 1978 - Bangkok Post: Labour and employers' unions could hold assemblies and meetings within the limits of the Labour Relations Law of 1975, according to an order issued by the Under-Secretary of State of Interior Winyu Angkaranarak.

However, labour and police officials, acting as observers have been authorised to stop any meeting that discusses politics the order added.

The order followed the labour union leaders' petition to the Interior Ministry seeking permission to hold meeting

Jan 19, 1978 - Matichon: Paisarn Thawatchainand, National Legislative Assembly member and the president of the Metropolitan Electricity Authority Labour Union, said that the presence of policemen and Labour Department officials in labour meetings and seminars and the fact that the labour unions were not allowed to have more freedom, made him feel uneasy because he wondered to what extent the term "politics" might be interpreted.

Sunthorn Kaewmetr, another National Legislative Assembly member, even said on Jan 23 that the matter was an insult to the country's workers. He said further that the government had relaxed the law on labour meetings and seminars on the condition that the officials concerned be notified of the place, time agenda of the meeting and that should be enough

Jan 21, 1978 - Bangkok Post: On Jan 20, a group of members of the Mass Transit Organisation Labour Union met the Prime Minister at Government House and presented him with documents on alleged irregularities in the MTO.

Jan 22, 1978 - The Nation : Twenty labour unions from the private sector and state enterprises have sought the Labour Dept's permission to form an "Employees Council"

Sunthorn Kaewmetr who is currently an executive member of the Express Transport Labour Union said the day before, that 15 labour unions had already submitted their documents to jointly register under the name "Employees Council" which the remaining five unions will follow suit.

The registration of the "Employees Council" will be in accordance with the NARC Announcement No. 46 dated Oct 21, 1976 which allows at least 15 labour unions or federations to unite under a

council in order to provide knowledge or education to its members.

Jan 25 - Bangkok Post: Prime Minister Kriengsak Chamanand made a speech in opening the regional workshop on Labour Management Relations in Public Enterprises, and said that the government's immediate labour policy is to promote understanding and harmony among employers and employees in both private and public enterprises; the government also aimed at improving the living standards of working people through effective enforcement of the Labour Protection Law.

"The government's aim is to upgrade the workers' education and technical skills and to maximise the contribution of the entire work force namely the wage earners, the self-employed, and the labourers, towards the country's development."

About the government's role in labour relations development, the Prime Minister stressed "It is also the duty of the government to maintain justice in matters relating to employer relations."

Bangkok Post: The Labour Research Bureau of the Labour Department said that in 1977 the number of the injured workers increased by 8.3%, while the number of the dead increased by 29.5%. The number of the maimed was, however, reduced by 4.5%.

The report added that most of the companies which did not observe labour laws were small ones, many of which had only about 20 workers.

Jan 25, - Thai Rath: Seward Lukdode, president of the State Railways of Thailand Workers' Union and his deputy president Mr. Armard Khamthetthong were dismissed from their union posts by Mr. Vichit Saengthong, director-general of the Labour Department for "getting involve in politics by distributing the letters (seeking amnesty for the "Bangkok 18")"

Jan 29 - The Nation : Seward Lukdode and Armard Khamthetthong the two railway union leader said they would not appeal the order of their removal by Mr. Vichit Saengthong. They considered it meaningless and would run for re-election in March. Mr. Sampao Somlith was appointed as acting president of the union at present.

Jan 30 - Bangkok Post: The two railway union leaders went to meet Prime Minister Kriengsak Chamanand to "seek justice". Prime Minister told them that he realised that the letter seeking amnesty for the 18 detainees was done "in good faith and with the best of intentions and did not intend to damage the country's reputation". The Prime Minister told them that he would try his best to resolve any future conflicts.

Feb 1 - The Nation : The Thai Textile Company (TTC) in Dan Muang laid off 60 workers most of them women, as it continues to contemplate closing shop owing to heavy financial losses.

The workers, who have been paid 3 months' pay as compensation, plan to request the government for help in finding them new jobs. Mr. Virapol Adireksarn, TTC majority shareholder said, the remaining work force of about 1,500 at the factory is still too many and it is getting harder to maintain all of them on the regular payroll.

- Bangkok Post : The research Bureau of the Labour Department disclosed that after a thorough inspection of business establishment it was learned that some of them were not complying with the Labour Law correctly.

Although disputes between employers and employees over overtime pay on national holidays and normal holidays and wages still occur they have been reduced to a certain extent compared to last year, the Bureau said.

More than half of these establishments who are not following the Labour Law correctly in Bangkok Metropolis have less than 20 workers each,

- Bangkok Post : A group of 30 people led by Mr. Somphong Kemolsart turned up at the Labour Department yesterday morning to give their moral support to Labour Director General Vichit Saengthong for his decision to dismiss two labour leaders from the State Railway of Thailand's Workers Union.

- Nisit Naksuksa : Phaisarn Thavatchainant, President of the Metropolitan Electricity Authority Labour Union, who was invited to give a speech on "the labourers' problems in the labour union leaders' eyes" by the Academic Club, Chulalongkorn University on Friday 27 January said that "the employers harrassed the workers who asked for better welfare in several ways such as reducing their salary, firing them, forcing them to work in the sun, and making "Black Lists" which they would distribute to the employers' organization. Some workers had to go back to work in their home town and some, who couldn't stand the situation, went into the jungle.

Phaisarn also talked about the relations between employers and employees under the Thanin government and said that, "It was very horrible. 3 to 4 labour leaders died doubtfully e.g. the Thai American Textile labour union's leaders, 3 labour leaders of textile factory at Rangsit, Prathumthani, including a girl labour leader. It was like other matters on which the police saw what had happened but couldn't do anything".

About the dividing the labour force, Phaisarn said that even this government was trying to divide labour unions by encouraging them to form their own groups and prevent them from uniting this way had been used since the Thanin government and now it is still used.

- Bangkok Post : Mr. Somsuan Sookkhao (21), a worker of Chor Wattana radiator repair factory at Klong Toey, was found to be suffering seriously from lead poisoning. Dr. Thawat Chittinussart, Deputy Director of Kluay Namthai Hospital said that he was concerned about these workers as lead poisoning could pose a serious danger to their lives.

Somsuan was a smelter at the factory and paid 30 baht a day during the past nine months.

Feb. 5 - Daily Time : After finishing their work in the evening of Feb. 3, about 200 workers of the Summit Refinery Company at Bang-Jak, Bangkok, proposed to the company to improve wages, the administration and welfare and other services. But there was no agreement and the management told the workers to listen to their reply on the following day (Feb. 4). In the morning of Feb. 4 many posters were found inside refinery such as the posters protest the reduction in their cost of living allowance from 7% to 4% of their salary, the reduction in bonuses. Mr. Aree Thawiphok, former oil and chemical products labour federation leader, said that the company had cheated the government other ways such as by writing false crude oil price from the Summit company in Saudi Arabia and by producing less gas, so that they had no profit and thus could justify reduce the workers' living allowance and bonuses.

Feb. 8 - The Nation : Amnard Nujpraphai, one of the labour leaders who spearheaded the move of 20 labour unions from both private and state enterprises to register an "Employee Council" said on Feb. 7 that the Labour Department had turned down the request for the establishment of the council reasoning that the objectives of the "Employees Council" involved politics and the internal affair of other labour unions. One of the objectives in the council's responsibility and rights, according to the application form was to promote the country's administration under

democratic system. This, the Labour Department argued that the council's sole responsibility should be to give education on labour issues to workers. Another point which the Labour Department argued against was that the council had no right to act on behalf of other labour unions which are not registered with the council.

At last the struggle of the Employees Council to be registered was accepted by the Labour Department on Friday (Feb. 17) after changing some "Technical points" in the objectives to prevent the council from being involved in politics.

The council will be officially called the Labour Federation of Thailand, the first legal workers' body in Thailand.

Feb. 10 - Bangkok Post : Labour leaders led by Metropolitan Electricity Authority Workers' Union President, Phaisarn Thawatchainand, proposed a six-point plan to Prime Minister Kriangsak Chamanand on Feb. 9.

The six-point plan were as following:

1. The government should provide career training and set up co-operatives for farmers and workers.
2. Accelerate the establishment of a National Labour Development Board.
3. Permit labour union members to organise seminars and travel within the country or to other countries for labour observation.
4. Clarify the rights and duties of the National Labour Advisory Development Board.
5. Revise articles in the labour laws, which are unfair to workers.
6. Accelerate the registration of a National Labour Council.

The Prime Minister, according to Phaisarn, promised to accelerate the establishment of a National Labour Advisory Development Board within a week, however the P.M. would have to study the proposal regarding career training and the setting up of co-operatives for farmers and workers.

Feb. 16 - Thai Rath : Pratumwan District Police and the Labour Department Officers raided a factory producing nails, using 7 boys illegally (not more than 15 years old who worked as slaves without salaries from 7 am. to 11 pm.) The boys told the police that any boys who didn't do a good job would be punished severely.

Feb. 18 - Ban Muang : Phaisarn Thawatchainand said that 26 labour leaders would travel to Malaysia and Singapore on Feb. 19 to see labour unions, union-run factories and other industrial plants.

Feb. 20 - Bangkok Post : Under Secretary of State for the Ministry of Justice Siri Attipho said recently that the ministry was in favour of setting up a labour court in line with the government policy, and will complete the necessary legislation some time in March.

The labour court is to be separate from the Civil Court under the Ministry of Justice, similar to the Central Juvenile Court, Under Secretary Siri said, and there would be no court of appeals, though defendants could appeal to the Supreme Court.

Feb. 22 - Bangkok Post : Lampang - About 150 government officials and employees of 12 radio stations and a T.V. station under the supervision of the Public of Relation Department gathered in front of TV Channel 8 Monday morning to demand that the government reconsider the decision to transfer television stations to the Mass Media Organization of Thailand (MMOT).

The protestors submitted demand to Deputy Director - General of Public Relations Department and acting Chief of Public Relations Centre for Zone 2, Mr. Vichit Hamkosol, claiming that the MMOT is run by a group of businessmen and politicians and if the MMOT could control all the TV Stations throughout the country, it would be used for their own interests.

Moreover, the officials who worked for TV channel 8 said that they did not want to change their status from government officials to private employees. They also threatened to call a strike at the 12 radio stations if the government maintained its decision.

Feb. 21 - Bangkok Post : A group of 50 workers from the Mass Transport Organization delivered a black wreath to Phaisarn Thawatchainand accusing him of protecting corrupt officials.

The workers, led by MTO Workers' Union President Samak Thonglek, laid the wreath in front of Mr. Phaisarn's MEA office at Wat Liab and demanded his removal as state enterprise workers' leader.

Feb. 22 - Bangkok Post : The MEA Workers' Union, on Feb. 21, had decided to recall its President Phaisarn Thawatchainand from Malaysia to clarify his position in the wake of a massive protest by a bus workers' union.

Feb. 23 - Bangkok Post : The Mass Transport Organisation Workers' Union denied responsibility for laying on black wreath for President of the MEA Phaisarn Thawatchainand.

Acting President of the MTO Workers' Union, Mr. Vichien Karndee, however, said that the recent laying of black wreath and the turning of Mr. Phaisarn's selfigy had been done by a group of MTO workers who were not members of his union.

Mr. Vichien said that there were three separate unions for MTO workers with his union the biggest are with over 3,000 members while the other two have only a few hundred members each.

He blamed members of the other two unions for the actions and said they were being used by former bus operators and politicians to build up tension to force the government to return bus operation in city to private bus operators.

Feb. 24 - Bangkok Post : Deputy Interior Minister Damri Noimanee warned the workers of the Mass Transport Organisation not to stage a strike or else face severe action from the government.

Feb. 26 - Daily News : Sanan Wongsuthi, acting secretary of the Labour Organization's Council, Bunsom Ratanagumpol member of MTO Labours Union and 2 other MTO labour union representatives said that Vichien Karadee was not the MTO labour union representatives; he told lies and Bunsom would tell the police to arrest Vichien's case for libel.

Feb. 24 - Matichon : Sanya Yuphongchaw, secretary of the Bropress Transportation Organization Labour Union. On Feb. 23 claimed that there was corruption in the MTO. Since Mr. Thomthavee Hathayodom became Director on Jan 3, 1976; the organization had lost about 500000-600000 baht each month. Niran Ngamdee, the President of ETO Labour Union wondered why the Director had not been removed from his position. Secretary of the Anti Corruption Committee told Mathichon that he had several files and documents both in the country and outside the country and the committee would try to investigate this case as quickly as possible.

Feb. 28 - Matichon : 23 workers died and another 23 seriously injured in an accident caused by the explosion of the boiler in the "Wanchai" Wood Factory at the foot of the Rama VI bridge, Bangkok.

3) The South

High authorities for example: the army commander, Gen. Sern Na Nakorn, Deputy Prime Minister, Gen. Boonchai Bamroongphone (Athit, 14.2.78), or Gen. Amorn Sirikaya, the Navy Commander, often gave interviews to journalists after visiting the South saying that, either there was no problem about the situation there, so that the situation was not worrisome.

The Mining business at "Kao Soon" in Cha-wang District, Nakorn-SriThammarat Province has made "Kao Soon" to become a "savage area" again. The police are under the power of the "Mafia" who control almost all the economy there. The villagers who work on the Kao Soon, digging minerals, have been forced to sell the minerals to this "Mafia" Robbers and gangsters abound. The government authorities do worry about this problem but can do little. (Maticon - 27 -1 - 78)

There have been 3 cases where the local police have mistreated the people. Each case happened in NakornSriThammarat. The public prosecutor filed a murder charge against former chief inspector of Nakorn Sri Thammarat's muang District Pol. Maj. Sakrapi Paimuang and his three subordinates in the provincial court. They were charged with murder, pre-meditated murder and conspiring to kill a former employee of Marongchai Transport Company 1st November. (Bangkok Post 7 - 1 - 78) In the second case: Police Pvt. Ekkachai Samutsenito of Huasai police station in NakornSriThammarat was arrested on the charge of murdering Mr. Kruangsak Leevoraphan, who was the proprietor of Nakorn Transport Company, and was inspecting a building construction when he was shot to death in front of the public by a group of four gunmen. He was condemned to life imprisonment. (Bangkok Post 2.2.78) The third case was reported in Bangkok Post, 12.2.78. 4 policemen were arrested for allegedly killing 2 villagers in Pakphanang District last July in a temple fair. Sources said that the father of the victim had lodged a complaint at the Crime Suppression Division accusing the 4 policemen of killing his son.

These 3 cases can be seen as an indication that the government is trying to keep to their policy. One can see the policy of the government clearly: Politics leads suppression. Gen. Prem, the Deputy Minister of Interior, together with the Under Secretary of State of the Ministry of Interior and the Director general of the local Administration Department opened a conference with southern district officers in Songkla on Jan. 27. (Maticon- 27.1.78) in order to give them the governmental policy, demanding that they take steps to create unity.

Meanwhile, Thailand and Malaysia have agreed to launch another massive drive against guerrillas of the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) in the Thai-Malaysian border areas. (Nation - 16.1.78). It was reported in the Bangkok Post - 24.1.78 that a Malaysian soldier was killed when a booby trap exploded during joint operations by Thai and Malaysian forces against communist guerrillas in Songkla Province.

Another big news was that "Chit Chongchit" an important leader of the guerrillas in the areas of Suratthani and NakornsriThammarat died after being shot and sent to a hospital in Patthalung Province. (Sieng Fuang Chon, 14.1.78) Later news denied that the deadman was not Chit Chongchit. Bangkok Post (20.1.78) reported that an adopted daughter of this most wanted communist insurgent leader, Chit Chongchit, surrendered to authorities in Ratchaburi at the beginning of January.

According to the Navy Commander, Gen. Amorn Sirikaya, a number of the students who joined the communists had surrendered to government authorities, and they were sent to the Fourth Army HQ's. But Athit, in its February 14 issue said that the psychological warfare operation plan "Come Back home" calling the students who joined the communists to surrender though claimed to be successful, had yet to present a student who had come out of the jungle and surrendered.

Anyway, the Fourth Army commander said that he worried about the suppression of the communist insurgents in the South, especially in Pathalung, Satun and Trang, as this was not 100% successful. (Siam Rath 9.2.73) What should be improved, he said, was that people should understand politically the government's objectives for doing things.

One item of news could indicate that if the government wants to suppress the communist insurgents more effectively, it should not aim only at the ordinary people, but also at its own officials. Bangkok World of January 28, 1978 reported that a police officer attacked to Wiang Sa police station in Surathani Province was arrested and charged with supplying intelligence information and arms and ammunition to communist insurgents. This officer later admitted that he had been dealing with the insurgents for the past 10 years. He has been transferred to the Fourth Army Region Command for questioning.

4) The South (FULO)

The Pattani United Liberation Organization (FULO) is continuously attempting various acts of sabotage. On Jan 2nd, very early in the morning a defective time bomb was found under a second-class sleeper seat in the Sungai Golod - Bangkok Express by a cleaner at Hua Hong Railway Station.

A stack of anti-government leaflets, signed 'Black December' was found in an airline travelling bag containing the bomb. These leaflets accused the Thai Government of being 'imperialistic'. The anti-government leaflets demanded that the Thai government stop teaching Thai language in 5 southern provinces, recognise Islamic religious teachers and preachers as government officials, employ only muslim civil servants in Pattani, recruit Muslim graduates to fill official positions in the southern province, etc.

According to a Police Quartermaster explosives expert, the bomb was timed to explode at 1 a.m. when the train reached Chumphon Province. However, some think that due to a mechanical failure, the bomb was not detonated. Anyway, it is initially not known why the bomb failed to go off.

On Jan 17, another similar incident occurred. This time the bomb exploded. The home-made bomb, suspected to be planted by Muslim separatists, exploded on the Narathiwat - Thonburi rapid train. When it reached Thepa District, Songkla Province. Eleven people were slightly wounded. (Bangkok Post, 20.1.78; Daily News, 18.1.78)

The Nation of Jan 27, 1978, reported that in Yala, three soldiers were seriously injured following an attempt to defuse a landmine reportedly planted by the self-styled Pattani United Liberation Organization (FULO) in this Southern Province.

The three were part of a group on operations in Tambon Bajoh of Bannang Star District under the "Kunchorn 21" campaign which began on Jan 9. This group comprised of some 400 military and police personnel and were taking action against southern guerrillas.

Authorities believe that the landmine was planted by the FULO led by Jehama Veyugao and Arma Banglang.

5) The North

The general situation in the North is not much different from that in the N.E. except that the fighting are between the soldiers or the border patrol police and guerrillas, not with the 'Red Khmer' as in Isan. The fighting, or it's better to say attacks mostly came from the

guerrillas' opposition to road construction, and mostly happened in Pitsanulok Province. Mercenaries are indispensable in road construction. Escaped criminals, social outcasts and former CIA hired guns who guard road construction sites in the jungled hills fight off bandits and guerrillas attacks for 36 baht a day. (Bangkok Post, 18.1.78)

Chart Trakarn District is a district in Pitsanulok where there were skirmishes and attacks from the guerrillas most frequently. The guerrillas usually intend to attack the Border Patrol Police and the village defense volunteer who were inspecting the jungled area. Sometimes the guerrillas attacked Border Patrol Police outposts, but have also attacked helicopters that try to drop reinforcements and supplies at besieged outposts.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Interior opened a training course for "village defense volunteers", the first group started on Jan. 9th in Chiangmai Province with 250 participants from Muang District, Sankamphaeng, Sarapee, Sanpatong, Chom Thong, Mae Rim and Fang. (Thai Rat, 13.1.78)

Nonmatter how the government tried to train people to help resist the guerrillas' attacks, it doesn't help much. The guerrillas still operate in an increasingly wide area. The Nations of Jan. 27, reported that Payao now ranks as the 38th infiltrated province among communist infiltrated areas. There has been indications of preparation for communist activities in the northern province of Payao, a government announcement said.

6) The North East

During the 2 months of January and February, the general fighting situation between the guerrillas and the government authorities and officers still exist, though has trended to decrease. It might be because of the policy of the governmental leaders and high authorities in this area which is: "Politics leads suppression". Besides, there are many projects (several of them goal) to support this tactic, for example, moving people out of the infiltrated areas and providing them with land for farming, training village volunteer doctors, training village defence volunteers, etc.

On January 7th and 8th many newspaper reported that a communist leader was captured or surrendered. This young man, 24 years old, identified as Sampao Suwanmoke (comrade Prathum), from Nong-Kai province, worked for the insurgents in his home town for about 6 months before being selected to undergo military training in Shanghai for 3 years. He claimed to have come first in his class and received a sabre as a prize. After that he was sent for further training at Jimarimo camp outside Vientiane for 18 months. Then he returned to Thailand last December, and was appointed a leader of a killer hunter unit. Bangkok Post reported that Sampao was captured when he ordered his colleagues not to shoot six defence volunteers as two of them were his relatives. The Nation said that Sampao started contacting his relatives in the district on Jan 2 (shortly after coming to work in Thailand) and asked them to help arrange for his surrender.

In Ubol Ratchathani, hundreds of families in Phone Thong Sub-District and Senangka-Nikhom, Sub-district of Amnaj Chauon District were evacuated to Amnaj Chauon District. The villagers said that they were in dilemma: the guerrillas threatened them for food, then the government forces and police went to suppress them, without considering carefully who were innocent. Therefore, being afraid of being killed in such cases, the villagers in these 2 sub-district preferred to move out to live in the centre of the district. The Governor of Ubol, knowing about this problem and the difficulties of the people, promised to help them. (Daily Times, 24.1.78)

Apart from the surrender of this young lieutenant, there were also some student who came out of the jungle to give themselves up to the

government. Nevertheless the guerrillas area of operation is still expanding. The most serious rising new area of operations was at Uthai-Thani where the first fighting has just occurred. (Dao Siam, 27.2.78; Ban Muang, 27.2.78)

Like in the East, there were many cases in the NE. involving the Red Khmer. There always has been attacks and fighting in the provinces along the border: (Buriram, Ubolratchathani, Udornthani), between Thai and Red Khmer forces. The most serious incident was reported in the newspapers of February 12, 1978. A combined Red Khmer and Thai terrorist band attacked Pae-Oom village in Nam Yuen District, and took away about 260-300 villagers as hostages after looting the village. In addition to villagers, the intruders also rounded up 50 buffaloes and cattle and forced the hostages and animals up to Pantom Donglek Mountain which represents the border line between Thailand and Cambodia. Details about the attack were not available, but Police Lieutenant Colonel Meechai Nukilkit, Border Patrol Police Superintendent said he believed the raiders wanted to kidnap the Svey villagers (a local ethnic group of Laotian and Khmer descendents) and to secure food supplies (Bangkok Post 13.2.78)

7) The East

From the beginning of January to the end of February, there were frequent clashes between the Red Khmer and Thai Border Patrol Police. In addition there were often attacks (according to the newspaper in Thailand) by the Red Khmers on Thai villagers in many provinces near the border.

The Nation reported on Jan. 9, that Cambodian soldiers intruded into the border at Chantaburi more than 10 times from October to December last year. Chantaburi Governor Prakit Uttamoj said that so far there had been no violent clashes between the terrorists and the authorities in the province except for a skirmish last month (Dec. 1977), resulting in the death of one terrorist. Authorities however found no communist documents on his body.

2 days later, the Red Khmer attacked a border patrol police camp and burnt 3 houses, 1 medical care building and the command building down. On Jan 13 (Siang Puang Chon 15.1.78 and Dao Siam 1.5.78), about 200 'Red Khmers' from 'Siam Organization' led by a woman attacked the Border Patrol Police base camp in Surin Province with 20 border patrol police inside. The next day, another group attacked Ta-Mieng village in the same province, burnt 3 houses and the school; 6 pigs and 3 buffaloes died in the fire.

Newspapers reported on 23/1/78 (Dao Siam, Daily Times, Daily News, Siang Puang Chon, Bangkok Post) that the Red Khmer and Thai Communist guerrillas attacked a bus carrying villagers home from a religious function in Klaeng District of Neighbouring Rayong Province. with grenader and automatic rifles in Pong Nam Ron District of Chanthaburee Province which is about 3 kilometers from the border. They later fought troopers who arrived on the scene for about 30 minutes before retreating across the border into Cambodia. Seven people were killed, including two young boys, four women and a man.

The ambush was the most serious incident on the border since Dec. last year when Cambodian troops attacked a village and police station in Aranyaprathet killing 15 people. The Government declared Chanthaburi and Rayong provinces communist-infested areas before the end of last month. The declaration was made just after Prime Minister Kriengsak

Chamanand visited the area shortly before the New Year (Bangkok Post 23.1.78)

Sieng Puang Chon of 25.1.78 reported the attack of the Red Khmer on Non Mak Mun Village, Aranya Prathet province. 80 village volunteers managed to save the village. Another group of Red Khmers attacked the Border Patrol Police base camp.

It is remarkable that this incident occurred on the same day that the Thai government announced the reestablishment of relationship between Cambodia and Thailand.

In February, from the middle of the month until the end, fighting continued between 'Red Khmer' and the Border Patrol Police on Thai border. And, sometimes, it was reported that the Red Khmer attacked villagers. The most serious event occurred on February 13 and was reported in the newspapers on the next day. According to the news, the Red Khmers attacked the people who were travelling in small-buses on the Trat-Klong Yai road which is considered to be "Road of Death". People in Klong Yai District were moved out to a safer area, mainly into the city of Trat, and into Klong Yai. Only 20% of people remained. Most of them are policemen and civil servants and other people who could not immigrate.

The newspapers reported and commented on this news for many days. Some demanded the Government take strong action on this case (Sieng Puang Chon 19.2.78, editorial) Some pointed out that there was something behind this kind of incident (the attacks of the Red Khmer) The Deputy Governor of Trat Province said that the Khmer who attacked Thai people were "the Khmer who had lost their power" (meaning the Khmer Sarai or Free Khmer) - (Thai Rat, 15.2.78) A Journalist of Thai Rat interviewed Maj. Gen. Serm Yakasem, Deputy commander of the Border Patrol Police, and asked whether it was true that the free Khmer who live in hiding near the Thai border co-operate with the Khmers who escaped from refugee camp in disturbing the Red Khmer in Cambodia, then fled back to Thailand, with the Red Khmer in pursuit. The red Khmers then attack these free Khmers and other Thais in Thai land. The Deputy commander refused to comment.

Moreover, there is still no precise evidence of who attacked the border patrol police camps, or the villages. It could be Red Khmers, guerrillas, or Free Khmer. Usually the newspaper, just say that 'Red Khmer' or 'guerrillas' or sometimes 'Red Khmer cooperating with guerrillas' attacked such and such place. The matter is however much more complex than this, particularly with the recent discovery of an arms cache destined for the free Khmer, in a Buddhist University controlled by a right wing monk.