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PM Comments on 1988 Budget

42000053 Kuala Lumpur *BUSINESS TIMES* in
English 19 Oct 87 p 1

[Text] Bernama—The 1988 Budget to be tabled in Parliament this Friday will not be a “spectacular” one, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said on Saturday.

“I don’t think the Budget will be very spectacular because we have done most of the things we wanted to do in terms of improving the economy,” he added.

Speaking to Malaysian newsmen on the eve of his departure for home after being here a week for the Commonwealth summit meeting, he said the Budget had only a limited role to play as an instrument for improving the economy.

He said if the Budget were to help the economy, the Government would have to pay a price and one way was to forego taxes so as to help the private sector.

But if the Government did this, its revenue would be reduced, leaving it in a dilemma, he said.

“However, if we don’t forego taxes, there might not be any growth in our country, but if we do, our revenue will diminish to the extent that we won’t have the money for development or even for paying salaries.”

The Prime Minister reiterated that the key to lift the Malaysian economy out of its low growth path lies in the people becoming more productive.

“If the people are productive, the Government can still raise sufficient revenue even with smaller taxes,” he argued, saying the revenue could then be expanded towards the country’s development besides attending to the demand for wage increases.

The Prime Minister hinted the 1988 Budget would also see the continuation of structural adjustments to the national economy.

He dismissed speculations of an impending minor Cabinet reshuffle, saying: “I know of no such thing but I know people create a lot of rumours at home to destabilise the country.”

On Malaysia’s ties with Britain, he said bilateral relations were “as good as can be”, especially after his official visit to Britain a few months ago.

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**Prem Aide Comments on PRC, USSR, U.S.;
Outlook**

42070022c Bangkok MATICHON SUT SAPDA in Thai
26 Jul 87 p 18

["Views" column by Maj Gen Surayut Chulanon, an aide to the prime minister]

[Excerpt] Matchon Note: On 9 July, Thammasat University held a seminar on the occasion of the 60th birthday of Professor Sane Chamrik. Those attending discussed the topic "Thai Society in the Next Decade." Maj Gen Surayut Chulanon was invited to participate in the debate. The following are the views of an aide to the prime minister from the standpoint of a scholarly officer.

Let's look at things from the standpoint of my profession. Several people have already spoken about the socioeconomic situation. I will talk about things from the standpoint of security. As far as security is concerned, the situation looks quite bright for the next decade. I think that the threat of war in Thailand and in this region is very small. The Soviet Union has adjusted its foreign policy and is now giving more attention to economic development. China started making changes some time ago, and this has caused the Soviet Union to reconsider its ideas on this.

In the wake of the Cultural Revolution, China's economy was in dire straits. There was no way that the Chinese military could defeat the Soviet Union except by drawing other countries into the fight. China did not have the money to produce its own technology. It had to launch the "Four Modernizations," reduce the size of its military, and develop its technology.

China feels that it will almost be up with the Soviet Union by the year 2000. It may be 10-15 years behind on the economic and technological fronts. Both these countries have switched policies. Instead of focusing on military development, they are now focusing on economic development and promoting technology. The United States does not have any problems. It is a major creditor. It's like an economic giant who can't be toppled. It is trying to build new technology to replace things. It wants to sell technology to developing countries.

As for the Indochina problem, during the next 10 years, I don't think that Vietnam will be able to do very much with respect to this problem. Vietnam's economy is very bad. It is in great debt.

In view of the fact that the threat of war has receded, the Thai military feels that it should reduce its size and cut its budget. Instead, we should use rather progressive technology. We need a modern warning system and a system of reserve forces that can provide support in an emergency. The army, which is monitoring the threats from abroad, is trying to make improvements. This will take time.

During the coming decade, we will switch to a volunteer army. Several countries have already done this. One of the results is that these militaries are filled with people who have little education. The highly educated people have all left. The U.S. Army, for example, is mostly black. Few white people join the military. There are both advantages and disadvantages to making these changes. We must conduct studies to see what the outcomes are likely to be.

As for Mr Sulak's statement that the military will play a major role in solving the problems, I think that just the opposite is true. When the military reduces its structure, it will make a greater effort to adjust itself to the civilian social system. There is just one thing and that is the duty and responsibility of Thai males. If we should have to fight the enemy, will they be ready?

If we can establish this system, during the next decade, soldiers, who used to live in a separate society, will reduce their image as people who are separate from the rest of society and be a part of ordinary society, civilian society. They will be reserve forces. They will be more like ordinary people.

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**Social Action Party Politician on Stability,
Constitution, Monarchy**

42070015b Bangkok SU ANAKHOT in Thai
5-11 Aug 87 pp 20-24

[Interview with Dr Kasem Sirisamphan; date and place not specified]

[Excerpts] [Question] As an MP, what is your impression of today's political situation?

[Answer] In the present situation.... The political situation is very serious. It has been this way ever since the election last year. Things are serious for the government and the parties in the government. The Democrat Party, the largest party, still has internal problems, and these problems have affected the government, the stability of the government. There is now greater political uncertainty. Second, ever since the election, the people's faith in the political institutions, including the administration, the House of Representatives, and the political parties, has declined. This has shaken the democratic system. The stability of the government has been shaken by the internal problems within the government parties. There is also the matter of the people's faith in the political institutions, including the administration, the House, and the political parties. These are the problems that need to be considered. We have to figure out what is going to happen.

[Question] As a member of the Social Action Party [SAP], which is a government party, and in view of the fact that you feel that the government is doing several things that are inappropriate, have you discussed these issues within the party?

[Answer] The Social Action Party.... In the wake of the 1986 election, the SAP lost a large number of seats in parliament. Today, it is only the third largest party. Thus, we are now in a period of making adjustments. The SAP was like a place of refuge during the time that MR [royal title] Khukrit was prime minister. He was a place of refuge and provided strong support. Now he is tired. He is old and in poor health. And so he resigned as party leader. This had a definite impact on the SAP, which had taken refuge in MR Khukrit for so long, that is, ever since the party was established. And there was a split when the royal decree was issued. As a result, parliament was dissolved. In the election, the party won only 51 seats, which is a fair showing. Those of us in the SAP are making a great effort. We are trying to find ourselves. This may take some time. We are making a great effort to build unity. We are trying to talk to each other. There are differences of opinion, which is normal in politics. But we are trying to compromise in order to foster unity. And we are beginning to feel that.... The SAP elected a new executive committee last December. The party may not yet have manifested any changes. This party does things slowly. But we have begun to build as a result of our broad political base, although I don't want to use the word "masses." We have been active now for the past 6-7 months. Thus, I think that we must be patient.

[Question] Then there will not be a split.

[Answer] That's right. There will not be a split within the SAP. We have our differences of opinion. We hold meetings and discuss things. We are trying to find a middle way. We are looking for the best way out given the present political situation. Politics today is very dirty. It's terrible.

[Question] Looking at the trend of politics today, do you think that parliament will be dissolved and that there will be a new election ahead of schedule?

[Answer] As for whether parliament will or will not be dissolved, there are several factors that must be considered. Today, there are splits within the largest party, the Democrat Party. If these splits can be patched up.... Because the cabinet is going to be reshuffled. There have been reports about the activities of Mr Wira and Chief of Staff Sanan. If the government manages to settle things and the Democrat Party reaches an agreement, there shouldn't be any problems. But if they can't reach an agreement, parliament will have to be dissolved. I view this as normal. It should be up to the people to decide. But this is the problem.

I think that elections actually began in 1986. The 1986 election was the first election based on the constitution. The 1983 election was held using the temporary provisions, which did not require people to belong to a party. I don't have to say anything about the 1979 election. The temporary provisions were still in effect in 1983. But by 1986, the constitution had been revised. There were three-people, multiple constituencies, and candidates had to belong to a party. Measures based on the constitution are no longer needed. Thus, in the wake of the 1986 election, we can point out many flaws in the election system based on this constitution. One example is requiring the number of candidates fielded by a party to be equal to half the number of seats in parliament. This turned into a farce. Parties hired people to run for office. In Bangkok, for example, large numbers were hired. In my constituency, the seat was contested by three parties, which fielded nine candidates. But altogether there were 30 candidates. But they did not actually campaign. Only the nine candidates from the three parties actually campaigned. How can such a system solve the problem of huge campaign expenditures? Huge amounts were spent during the campaign. This election gave rise to the deformities in today's parliamentary system. Thus, dissolving parliament won't help. The constitution needs to be revised.

But today, when people talk about revising the constitution, they talk about separating administrative power from legislative power. I don't agree with this. I would like to see the constitution changed in such a way that will permit elections to be held based on the nature of politics. Because the things that I have said are based on the nature of politics. The present constitution has a glaring weakness. It wants the political parties to grow too rapidly. But that is impossible. It's unnatural. We have to accept this. We must think very carefully about what changes need to be made and then make the changes. We must change the election laws. We must correct the shortcomings and do away with the support methods of interior, which focuses on numbers in elections. Let's focus on quality instead. We must try harder to make the elections more honest and fair. There must be joint power. If the government or government officials are serious about these things, if money is not used illegally, if we force people to obey the election laws, if we educate the people, warn each other, and show an appreciation for each other, and if we focus on quality in the elections, I think that we can solve the problems. If we do these things, the elections will improve. In the past, we have just dissolved parliament.

But what about this parliament? I don't think that it will complete its 4-year term. I am being honest. It won't complete the term. We are now 1 year into the term. It lucky to have made it this far.

[Question] Like Maj Gen Chamlong...

[Answer] He is the antithesis of Gen Prem. He likes to confront problems head on. If a police official hits and kills a child while driving, he takes responsibility. He

personally visits the child's parents and asks their forgiveness. He pays them compensation. He does not try to avoid responsibility but confronts things. He acts very differently from and is the antithesis of Gen Prem. Thus, the popularity of Maj Gen Chamlong has increased greatly. It has risen so much because people can compare him to Gen Prem. I think that these two men respect each other. I do not mean anything by this. I am just telling you how the people feel.

[Question] Do the people like someone like Maj Gen Chamlong?

[Answer] Yes. He was elected. He does not try to evade his responsibilities. He is not afraid to speak out and take action. He acts in accord with his motto, that is, "sincere and resolute." That is his nature. He is willing to stand up and accept the consequences. He is straightforward. Thus, he is very different from Gen Prem.

[Question] Thus, the criticisms leveled at Gen Prem cannot be construed to be personal attacks on Gen Prem but rather attacks on the system represented by Gen Prem, or the symbol of the bureaucracy.

[Answer] Let's not use the word "attack." That is too strong a word. It's a matter of taking the offensive. But I think that there is a conflict. This is normal. It is a sign of progress on the part of the country. Gen Prem has not done anything wrong. But he has governed the country for many years now. As MR Khukrit used to say, ever since King Trailok put civilians in charge of interior affairs and soldiers in charge of military affairs, interior and defense have controlled the country. Now, we have had democracy for 7 consecutive years. A dispute has arisen, and there is a struggle. The people have expressed a desire for a change in accord with the principles of the parliamentary system. Something must be done. This is normal. Don't think that.... I don't want to look at the matter of Gen Prem from the standpoint of the individual. It's not a dispute over interests. Rather, it's a dispute about the system, about what the system should be like. There is always a struggle between the old and the new.

[Question] Then this is an important transition....

[Answer] I didn't say it was a transition. What I want to say is that the time of the people has come.

[Question] In the end, the people must decide, is that right?

[Answer] Yes. The people must decide. We can't overlook the wishes of the people.

[Question] The bureaucracy may have the power to force....

[Answer] That's not correct. For a time. I think that government officials, including both soldiers and civilians, must take stock of themselves and adjust their role.

They must continue to make adjustments until.... They can take more time. They must adjust their roles so that they can get along with.... Today, things are proceeding. I believe in gradual progress. I am opposed to sudden change. But it's not good to stagnate like this. We must adjust things gradually. The bureaucracy must gradually be systematized, and the politicians must be given greater power. But at the same time, the politicians and political parties must make adjustments, too. They must have strong backbones and have a firm standpoint. If they do, things will be fine. This is what I hope. This is the type of person I am. I don't want any serious breaks. But if each side remains stubborn like this, I think that this bodes ill for the country in the long term, not today or tomorrow, but in the long term.

[Question] This means that the conflict must be resolved in the near future. Let's turn to the matter of revising the constitution as suggested by certain factions, that is, by the Prem faction. Mr Prasong, the secretary general, has spoken out in favor of revising the constitution. He seems to support separating legislative power from administrative power. What is your view on this?

[Answer] We must consider how we are going to separate these powers. This is not yet clear. Will these powers be separated in accord with the 1968 constitution implemented during the time of Field Marshal Thanom? That is, prohibiting the MPs from serving as ministers and allowing the prime minister to be appointed. Put simply, the prime minister would come from pure power. That is how it is phrased today. And what was the result. The United Democracy Party, the government party, ran amok, and Field Marshal Thanom finally ran out of patience and staged a coup against his own government. This finally led to the violent events of 14 October 1973. Things collapsed. We can't do things this way. That is, we can't take action only to see things collapse. Now, there is another "smart set." They want an elected and independent prime minister, with the prime minister responsible for forming a cabinet. This elected prime minister will control administrative power. If we have such a system, we will have to build a completely new apparatus. If there is an apparatus to balance the power of the elected prime minister, the prime minister will have the highest power. What will this power be like? He will be over both military and civilian officials. They will all be under his control. Thus, he will have great power. The three branches of service will all be under his control, as will regular officials in the ministries, bureaus, and departments. He will be able to do whatever he wants. This will be like electing a dictator unless we have something else. We must create a counterbalance. There must be something to balance the power of the prime minister. Thus, we need something similar to the American system. That is, parliament has the power to balance the power of the elected prime minister. Because if we have an elected prime minister, he will not be a weak figure. He will have been elected by the people. Thus, if we elect a parliament, parliament must have.... In my view, we must have an elected Senate. How can we

have an appointed Senate and an elected prime minister? The Senate must be elected, too. Once we have an elected Senate, we will be ready. We have to try and balance his power. We have to do two things. First, we have to implement a system similar to that of the United States. That means that people appointed to senior government positions will have to be confirmed by an elected Senate. That includes the under secretaries of the ministries, the directors-general, the heads of the military services, those of special grade or higher, ambassadors, divisional commanders, and deputy directors-general. All of these people must be confirmed by an elected Senate. Is this what we want? Can we do this? If we don't, that's fine.

Second, once we have separated powers, the administrative power will not have the power to propose laws. All it will be able to do is send a message, which parliament may or may not act on. The same will be true of the budget. All the administration will be able to do is send a message telling parliament how much the administration would like to spend this year. It will then be up to parliament to set the budget.

We now come to the problem.... If people are elected by popular vote, some are asking if this will affect the system of democracy with the king at the head. The king is the head of the country. But the prime minister will be the head of the administration. This elected official will not be a weak person. He will be very strong. He will have a mandate from the people of the country. Thus, to put it simply, can there be two tigers in one cave? If we do things this way, this would definitely affect the system of democracy with the king at the head. Do we want that? Personally, I am opposed to this. Thailand has a monarchy. The king is the country's tutelary spirit. The monarchy is the foundation of the country. Thus, how can we do anything that might affect this institution? I don't understand. I am opposed to this. I don't think that this would work. That is the truth.

It's as if the bureaucracy.... Let me return to the first problem. As for the bureaucracy, he would like to say...I am playing democracy. I have fielded my men as candidates. But if we don't think like that, there must be a balance. Who can allow the system to be like that? People who talk like this come from the bureaucracy. They are people who are in the bureaucracy. They think that the bureaucracy comes from the people. Therefore, I can do what I want. I am.... I can hold administrative power. My people ran for election. Everything serves his purpose. If this is what we want, we must discuss things in much greater depth. There must be limits. There must be a balance of power. For example, there must be an elected Senate. And the appointment of senior officials must be approved by an elected Senate. Is this what we want? I don't think that this is what the bureaucracy wants.

Is there any country with a monarchy that elects its prime minister directly? If this has an effect, the country, the fundamental structure, the monarchy.... The king is

the foundation of the country. If this affects the monarchy, what will happen? The country will collapse. Those who thought of this will have to bear the responsibility.

[Question] Would you comment on today's economic problems?

[Answer] I am very worried about the economy today. The government views the economy from a marco standpoint. Our monetary situation has improved and the growth rate is about 5 percent a year. Everything is fine in ASEAN. But I have a feeling.... From talking with villagers and seeing how their live, I am very worried. We talk about things from a macro point of view instead of a micro point of view. That is, no attention has been given to the lives of the villagers. We focus on the figures on the economic growth rate, the trade balance, and the international balance of payments. Even though it can be said that today's economy is good, it's only good in that sense. It's good only for a small group of people. But the majority of the people still have problems. Thus, while the stock market is booming, villagers are suffering. The livelihood of the people.... My constituency is in the middle of the capital. Most of my constituents are small merchants. The small merchants are dying. But exports are flourishing. Exports of ready-made clothing, precious stones and so on are strong. The industrial sector is strong. But the small merchants are dying. Another problem that the government is not making any real effort to solve is unemployment among young people. This problem is becoming very serious. This will lead to.... This is a major social problem. And the government hasn't done anything to solve this problem.

The only solution is for the government to try and create jobs that will enable the people to pull themselves up. Credit must be given to small businesses so that they can hire young people. But this is not being done. I think that people are becoming angry about this. This concerns the new hope that I talked about. They want someone new in whom they can believe. They are bored. They feel that they have been abandoned. The middle and lower classes have been abandoned. Things are fine for only a tiny minority who have economic opportunities. These are large businesses and financial institutions that are supported by the government. Things might be better for them. But this is destroying the people's faith in this government. I don't see any new solutions for solving this problem. A year has passed, but we are still walking down the same old road. This is very disturbing.

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Chamlong Simuang Interviewed on Possible Political Moves

*42070021b Bangkok LAK THAI in Thai
20 Aug 87 pp 26-28*

[Interview with Maj Gen Chamlong Simuang, governor of Bangkok Metropolitan; date and place not specified]

[Text] [Question] What is your view on establishing a political party?

[Answer] Before I would participate in establishing a political party or joining an existing party, I would have to be convinced of the "necessity" of this. I would also have to determine how "prepared" I am for such a move. Today, people have told me that this and that group are making preparations to form a political party and that they will ask me to participate. There is nothing wrong with making preparations to form a party. This is in accord with the law. If they form a party that will work to benefit the people, their efforts should be supported.

But suppose that today.... That is, in politics, you have to consider the time factor. You can't say today and always have it turn out that way. To say otherwise is a lie. I am very careful about this. Thus, suppose that today, you and your group make preparations. You ask me to sign my name and say that you will submit it to the Ministry of Interior. This will save a lot of steps, and I won't have to find members. You will find them for me. If it has to be today, I won't agree, because I don't think it is necessary yet. If a party is established today, I can't solve the problems. In that case, I can do more good by remaining governor.

[Question] You mentioned "necessity" and "readiness." Would you expand on that, and could you be more concrete?

[Answer] It's difficult to be more definite. Why? Because I am talking about myself. A moment ago, I said that before I will consider joining a political party or establishing my own party, I must consider these two things. I have to consider myself, not someone else. Someone else can go ahead and establish a party if they feel it is necessary. That's up to them. I won't criticize them, and I will support them if they are prepared. If they establish a party, I will support them.

But this concerns me. I have to consider the matter myself. It's difficult to say just what the standard is for "necessity." Take running for governor as an example. I felt that was necessary. Because at that time, before the gubernatorial election, there had been several by-elections. Each time, huge sums of money were spent. Huge sums! Large sums were spent just on posters. I felt that it was necessary to turn people's values around. Otherwise, people who did not have much money or who had money but who did not want to waste it or spend it on something that would destroy democracy would not have a chance to become MP.

Thus, I felt that I had to run for office. I felt that I might be able to help restore proper values. Shortly after the gubernatorial campaign, on which I spent very little money, there was another by-election. The posters were smaller and plainer. I thought that running was necessary. And there were other reasons, too. I thought that if we were really prepared to make sacrifices, we could solve the problems of Bangkok Metropolitan without having to spend huge sums of money. It was necessary to run in order to destroy the idea that people run for

governor only in order to pile up profits. Because Bangkok is a source of profits. It has a large budget and is involved in a wide variety of activities.

Thus, I felt this was necessary. I considered myself to be someone who would make sacrifices. I knew that if I won, I could save much money for Bangkok. The results can be seen today. In the 18 months that I have been in office, we have saved more than 200 million baht on contractor construction costs. We have done the same amount of work for less money when compared with other periods.

[Question] As for your being prepared, in what situation would you involve yourself in national politics?

[Answer] Actually, concerning readiness, I have come to feel that readiness is secondary to necessity. If it is really necessary, regardless of whether or not I am ready, I will have to get involved. Thus, I no longer pay too much attention to readiness. I give much more weight to necessity.

[Question] If the Ruam Phalang [United Force] group establishes a political party....

[Answer] They have not shown any sign of establishing a party. The group has not held a meeting to discuss establishing a political party. When I talked about establishing a party and said that some people or groups with good intentions may be thinking about forming a party, I was not referring to the Ruam Phalang Group. Because to date, they have shown no sign of forming a political party.

[Question] If you do decide to establish a political party, what type of party will it be?

[Answer] That's a good question. It's a question to ponder. If I agreed to establish a party or join some political party, the party would have to do certain things. If it just made promises or couldn't do these things, I would not join. That is, the party would not spend a lot of money on the campaign. It could not buy votes. It could not spend a fortune on the election. Some people are rich and don't need anything from the political party. They could join our party and campaign easily. But we know that such people use a different method. That is, they act as benefactors. And in that case, we could not allow them to remain in the party, even if it meant losing.

If we did things like that, we might become a big party with tens of seats in parliament. But that would be useless. We couldn't solve the problems. We would just be following the old path, that is, making a large investment in order to profit. The people's plight would just grow worse. We would end up fighting with each other. That's what would happen if we used that method.

Thus, the party would have to have the characteristics I described. I am not going to change myself. Some say that politics requires making compromises, that you have to do that to win votes. But I will not do that. If that is the case, I won't run. I won't participate in establishing a party. Others can do so if they want. This is the restriction that I have set. People have urged me to "go ahead and run." But this is the restriction that I have set for myself. I want to know how many votes I can win given this restriction. If we don't set such restrictions, we can't solve the problems.

[Question] If you do establish a party, what will the party's line be?

[Answer] Just this. Those who engage in politics must be willing to make sacrifices. We must stress "making sacrifices" rather than "taking." We can take a little. That is, a person can accept the monthly salary that is paid if he needs it. But people can't engage in politics in order to profit personally or to benefit their relatives and friends. That is unacceptable.

[Question] What will the party's policies be for solving the country's problems?

[Answer] This is something that has to be thought about before reports are published about the establishment of the party. We have to think about what we would do to solve the country's problems. If I said something.... It's not that I don't have any policies. But if I discuss them, other groups would start saying that I definitely intend to form a political party. The story would get twisted.

[Question] What do you think about today's political parties?

[Answer] I don't want to say anything. That would be tantamount to criticizing them. And they would criticize me in return. They would say, "Are you definitely going to establish a party? Make sure it's better than the old ones." I wouldn't be able to respond. The only response I could give would be to establish a party and then say, "You see, I have established a party. This is what we have done." The old political parties have failed because of this. We have looked for ways to change this. I could make criticisms. But there is this loophole. That is, I haven't yet established a party. And so how can I criticize others? I can criticize then, but I haven't made any constructive suggestions or set an example for them. It's easy to criticize. It's like never leaving your house. You can say that Bangkok Metropolitan is in terrible shape and that nothing is being done to solve this and that problem. But it's much more difficult to set an example and make proposals.

[Question] If you do establish a political party, it will be different from those that exist today, is that right?

[Answer] You can't say that it will be completely different. But as for our main principles, you can see that, as I have said, those who join the party must be willing to make sacrifices. This is almost too high an ideal. But I think that this is possible. Let me give you an example. As the governor of Bangkok Metropolitan, even though I can't get everyone to behave and carry out their tasks like me, I have shown people that I took this position in order to make sacrifices. I can attest to this.

Because of this, the political party must be like this. It will be able to solve the problems. If people join in order to fight for positions and profits and step on each other, we won't be able to solve any of the problems. I am not exaggerating. I have tried this at one level. But we have not yet established a political party. Thus, I can't talk about things at that level.

[Question] How do you feel about the fact that some people have high expectations for you and hope that you will become prime minister?

[Answer] People are free to think what they want. But I have always said that being prime minister is not an easy matter. It is not an easy job. I have seen the prime minister at work. Whoever thinks that being prime minister is an easy job should think again. It's not.

But at the same time, if we make a firm pledge never to take this or that position and it then becomes necessary to take the position, we have put ourselves in a difficult position. It shows that we were not telling the truth. Many people have misunderstood the reason for my not speaking out on this. But what could I say. If you were asked this question, how would you answer? Would you say that you will be prime minister? I can't say whether I will be prime minister.

That is not my hope. I have not set that goal for myself. I have not taken steps to secure that position. But how can people expect me to say that I won't be this or that? How can I say that? This displeases those who ask me about this, because they want me to give them a definite answer one way or the other. But I am not trying to conceal anything. I will tell you, I will tell *Lak Thai* frankly that if I had only myself to think about, I would not accept any position at this time. I have been wanting to live like an ordinary person for a long time now.

It's not easy. Giving up a position is difficult. It's not easy. But I am ready. Thus, if something happened tomorrow and I had to give up my position as governor and there was no reason for me to take some other position, personally, I would be very happy.

[Question] But today, people are starting to feel that we lack a political leader, particularly one who is both capable and moral. What is your view on this?

[Answer] There may be some truth to that. The same situation has occurred over and over again and destroyed the leadership of certain people. We don't want this to happen. This is very strange. Thus, some people may feel that we lack a leader. But I feel that we have people who are capable of becoming leaders. But they are not in the public eye. They haven't shown people their talents and so the people don't know about them. How can these people become well known and show their talents? There are probably many such people, because Thailand has a large population.

Take me, for example. By accident, people know about me. People have known about me ever since I was the secretary general of the prime minister and even before that. And now I hold this position because the people elected me. And so I don't want to leave. I have made proposals and asked for cooperation, and people have helped me. People feel that I have scored achievements. But there are many others who have not had this opportunity.

[Question] Many people would like to see you become prime minister because they think you are a good person.

[Answer] In the present situation, how can I talk about that. It's just not possible at the moment. Suppose that you say that you would like me to be a minister or something else. You don't have the power to put me in that position. I can't volunteer. How could this be done? By establishing a political party. But if I establish a political party, will it win a majority of the seats, thereby enabling me to serve in this or that position? How sure are you in view of the fact that money still has great influence on elections.

And as I said a moment ago, I have my own position, and if things are otherwise, it would be better for me to stay out of things. As for whether such a party can be established, it's not possible at the present time. I am being frank. I am not being modest. I can take action. Today, people are talking about dissolving parliament. I could rush out and ask various people to help me establish a large party without giving thought to anything except winning a majority of the seats and obtaining this or that position.

I might succeed. But as I said, I wouldn't be able to solve any of the problems. I would simply be following the same old path, which doesn't lead anywhere. I won't do that. And so today, when people talk about whether this is possible, the answer is no.

But I have great confidence. I focus on making sacrifices. I am confident, because I have practiced disciplining my mind. Some people might not know that on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the military academy, I fasted for 48 hours. All I had during those 48 hours was water. I wanted to eat. I wanted at least one

meal a day, which is what I am accustomed to. But I did not eat for 48 hours. That was a way of disciplining my mind. I was training myself to make sacrifices.

Thus, I am very confident about this. But as for establishing a large party that can win a majority of the seats, I can't guarantee anything.

[Question] What are the chances of your establishing such a party, that is, a party that will not spend large sums of money?

[Answer] There is a chance that I will establish a party. But will people vote for us? That's the question. Suppose that we form a party and win 30 seats, which is a large number of seats for a new party. But what could we do in parliament? We would just wither away there. We couldn't do anything. Suppose that they held meetings and still couldn't form a government. Suppose that they had to bring this party into the government. Of the 30 MPs, one or two might be appointed minister. What could one or two ministers do?

We wouldn't be able to do very much and so what would be the use of this? This is the problem. Being a party leader might increase my prestige. I might become a minister. But could I solve any of the problems? No. And if I couldn't solve the problems, why should I get involved?

[Question] Then what you mean is that if you establish a political party, it must be capable of winning enough seats to enable you to form a government so that you can solve the problems.

[Answer] It must be one of the biggest parties or the biggest party so that it can play a major role in solving the problems. If we establish a party and just sit in parliament, that is of no value at all. And it will destroy the intentions of those who want to establish a good political party. They will say to themselves, "is that all we can hope to achieve after making such a great effort?" And how much will they be able to do?

[Question] Today, many people are saying that they are tired of Gen Prem and want him to step down as prime minister. As someone who has been close to the prime minister, do you think that it is time for Gen Prem to leave politics?

[Answer] It would be inappropriate for me to comment on that. Regardless of what I say, it will be wrong. If I praise him for this or that, people will say that I am playing the toady. And if I criticize him, they will say that I want to topple him and take his position. And so I can't say anything. But it must be admitted that everyone has his good and bad points. It also depends on the situation, that is, should a person stay or leave given the existing situation? That's up to each person to decide.

Political Prisoner Held on Communist Charges Profiled

42070016 Bangkok KHAO PHISSET in Thai
10-16 Sep 87 pp 37-39

[Article by Thanthat Chan-urai: "Cries from Lat Yao When Niphaphan Phattanaphaibun Was Sent To Prison for the Second Time with Her Infant Child"]

[Excerpt] When *Khao Phiset* walked past the prisoners sitting in a long row for the second time, we heard one of the prisoners call to us. The chair placed in front of her for visitors was empty. Her drab prisoner's uniform and the bars between us did not dampen the bright face or sparkling eyes of Niphaphan Phattanaphaibun, or Suni Chairot, who was arrested on 22 April 1987 on charges of engaging in communist activities and whose case is still under investigation.

"Originally, I was at the temporary jail at the Metropolitan Police Academy in Bang Khen. But then I was held on charges stemming from the the Om Noi case, which the court had dismissed in 1979. And so I was sent to the women's penitentiary," said Niphaphan briefly amidst the clamor of dozens of prisoners trying to talk to their relatives.

A Flower That Has Bloomed and Days Past

At the end of April 1987, while everyone was focusing on the no-confidence motion submitted by opposition MPs, something more interesting happened and that was the arrest of suspects thought to be senior members of the Communist Party of Thailand [CPT]. They were arrested while returning from a party meeting at Bang Saen. This was followed by the arrest of another group of people on charges of engaging in communist activities. This second wave of arrests took place in Bangkok on the morning of 22 April 1987. A total of 16 people were arrested. Two of these were women. One of the women was Mrs Niphaphan Phattanaphaibun, or Suni Chairot, the wife of Mr Sombat Chairot, who was arrested, too

Niphaphan was arrested together with her husband and 2-month-old son, Ball. This baby, who is completely innocent, had to accompany his mother to the temporary jail at the Bangk Khen Police Academy and then to the women's penitentiary at Lat Yao, because he was allergic to powdered milk. As every pediatrician knows, one of the first signs that an infant is allergic to powdered milk is vomiting whenever milk is given. As a result, the infant does not get the nutrients that his body needs. This can affect his growth and mental development. An infant that is allergic to powdered milk must be fed soy milk or some special type of milk. But the best way to feed an infant is to breast-feed him regardless of whether or not he shows signs of being allergic to milk. For this reason, Niphaphan had to take her son with her.

"She was a good student and received her degree in economics from Thammasat before she turned 20. She graduated the same year as her older sister," said Kimsuan Saengchan about her youngest child.

Niphaphan has one older brother and one older sister. She is especially close to her sister, Sukanya, because they were in the same class at school. It was not until they entered grades 11 and 12 that they attended different schools. This was because Sukanya entered Triem Udom School and then entered the Faculty of Science at Kasetsart University while Niphaphan continued to attend Khamaophiratararam School in Nonthaburi and then entered the Faculty of Economics at Thammasat University. However, both received their bachelor's degrees in 1974 and went to work for newspapers. They both did social work to help poor people. Until they graduated, they both did similar things. And like other students and intellectuals, both fled to the jungle in the wake of the events of 6 October 1976. They returned to the city after the CPT began to grow weak and the government implemented Order 66/23.

But one thing that is different is that Sukanya reported in to state officials. In the eyes of officials, she is "free from suspicion." She is a technician with the Petroleum Authority of Thailand. Niphaphan, on the other hand, did not report herself to officials and earned her living as a small merchant upcountry with her husband.

"I came back in 1981 and worked as a small merchant in Udon Thani. Later on, we moved to Maha Sarakham, because that is where my husband is from. We moved to Bangkok at the end of 1986. My sister wanted me to live near her, because I was about ready to deliver my baby. I did not report in to officials because I thought that the movement had collapsed. I did not see any reason to report in. I just wanted to live quietly," said Niphaphan.

Her mother, Kimsuan, said that "she is stubborn. She always has to have her own way. When she returned from the jungle, I and her sister told her to report in to officials and that everything would be all right. A friend who is a soldier with the ISOC [Internal Security Operations Command] told her that he would take her to report in. But she refused, saying that everything would be all right. But now, this has happened."

Sukanya, who is very close to her younger sister, said that "she did not want anyone watching or following her. Besides this, she did not feel that she had 'gone astray.' Being called a 'person who has gone astray' is like having a label attached to you. It is not a good feeling. Because we did not go astray. We did what we did out of patriotism. Everyone has the best interests of the country at heart. It's just that the methods might be different. When we realized that our methods were not good and that they were not achieving results, we changed. It's not a matter of going astray."

"I divorced their father in 1969. Sukanya and Niphaphan were in Grade 12. I did sewing to raise my three children and send them to school. I did this by myself. But fortunately, even though they came from a broken home, they were always good children. All of them were very good students. Their older brother was not an activist. But the two girls were both active in things. It began their freshman year at the university. Their brother warned them to slow down. They were not interested in the same things as others their age. I saw their friends, the people with whom they did things together. Niphaphan did not like boys who were interested only in having fun. She did not dress up or wear makeup," said her mother.

"Not liking to wear makeup" led Niphaphan to reject working in a bank. "She tried to get a job with the Department of Labor, because she thought that that would give her a chance to help the workers. But she did not get the job. Several thousand people applied for just a few positions. She placed sixth on the examination. She was very disappointed. She took a job with a political newspaper. The editor was Mr Ratsami Phaoluangthong. She also worked for the newspaper of the Student Center. And she continued to engage in various activities. She went to help the Om Noi workers, which led to her first arrest."

A Fellow Prisoner, Suphat Phat-ong

Niphaphan was arrested along with Suphat Phat-ong, an advisor to the Clothing Industry Labor Union, and seven others on the morning of 30 March 1976 in Om Yai Subdistrict, Sam Phran District, Nakhon Pathom Province. They were arrested on charges of engaging in communist activities, inciting others to engage in communist activities, spreading the communist ideology, stirring up trouble among the people, and being in possession of war weapons.

MR [royal title] Khukrit Pramot, the then prime minister, mentioned the arrests the next day. He said that the police had informed him that these people had been trying to incite people and stir up unrest in the country, which is a violation of the National Security Law and the Anticommunist Act.

That same day, in a newspaper interview, Mr Banthit Chantangom, the executive director of the Textile Industry Union, Samut Sakhon, said that the four students who were arrested were all innocent. He said that the union had asked them to come serve as advisors to help the laborers in their struggle against exploitation by financiers.

Dr Puai Ungphakon, the then rector of Thammasat University, said that the charges filed by the police, particularly the charge of committing violations against the internal and external security of the state, were too general.

Three years later, on 15 August 1979, the court finally dismissed the charges against the defendants because of lack of sufficient evidence.

Seven of the nine suspects were completely free as a result of the court's decision. But in the case of Niphaphan and Sanguansi, another student, the court merely "postponed the case temporarily" because the two suspects, who had posted bail on 14 May 1976, failed to appear in court for the decision.

From Jail to Jungle

After her arrest that time, Niphaphan was detained at the Bang Khen Police Academy jail. Later on, she was sent to the women's prison in Lat Yao. She was mistreated by other prisoners there and so was allowed to post bail, as was Sanguansi. Shortly after that, the events of 6 October took place, and Niphaphan decided to flee into the jungle.

"After 6 October, both of my daughters disappeared. They did not say anything to me about this or even say good-bye. But I knew where they had gone. About a year later, I received a letter from them. It took at least 6 months for a letter to arrive. Sometimes, letters were lost, and so I did not know what was happening. I tried to think that my daughters were on a trip upcountry and that they were not too far away. I didn't want to think about the possibility that I might never see them again. Thinking like that would have broken my heart. And I was not well. But then, suddenly, they were home. Sukanya arrived first and then Niphaphan."

After "returning home," Niphaphan settled down in Udon Thani and then moved to Maha Sarakham. She and her husband worked as small merchants. They moved to Bangkok at the end of 1986. She was about due to deliver her first baby and so she wanted to be near her relatives. She and her husband were arrested on the morning of 22 April, the same day that the opposition parties in the House of Representatives planned to open a no-confidence debate on the government. For the second time in her life, she was arrested on charges of engaging in communist activities.

Old Case, New Case

During the first month after being arrested, Niphaphan was held at the Bang Khen Police Academy jail just like the other political prisoners and the other suspects arrested in this case, including her husband, Sombat Chairot.

During the period of interrogation by investigation officials, who some people have said were rather harsh in their methods, the Om Noi communist case was cited in exchange for cooperation on the part of Niphaphan. That was the case in which the court had dismissed the

charges against seven of the defendants because of the lack of evidence. But Niphaphan and Sanguansi had disappeared and so the court only "temporarily postponed the case" against them.

Finally, Niphaphan was charged in the Om Noi case, and the investigation officials, that is, the Special Branch Police, had to turn her over to the special prosecutor for political cases. That was on 18 June. And that same day, the court ordered her transferred from the temporary jail in Bang Khen to the women's prison in Lat Yao.

The coordination between Special Branch Police Division 6, the Department of Public Prosecutions, and the court is quite admirable. The letters sent by these three units concerning the suspect were all sent the same day, that is, 18 June 1987.

During our brief meeting, Niphaphan told *Khao Phiset* that "I now have two cases pending against me, that is, the Om Noi communist case of 1976, in which the court dismissed the charges against the other seven people, and the 22 April case. I don't know what is going to happen. But I was sent here because of the Om Noi case. On 11 September I have to go to court for the questioning of witnesses in the Om Noi case."

Niphaphan is a defendant in the Om Noi case. The prosecutor may decide not to bring the case to court if he feels that the evidence against the defendant is the same as that against the other defendants in this case, which was dismissed by the court in August 1979. And he may decide not to go ahead with the case if the evidence shows that she did not do anything wrong. But if the evidence indicates that she may have committed a crime, the prosecutor will probably bring the case to trial.

As for the 22 April case, Niphaphan is still just a suspect. The police are still investigating this case. They can ask the court to jail the suspects for up to 480 days. There is still no clear indication of what action officials will take in the case of these 16 suspects.

11943

Article Blames ASEAN for 'Cocktail Party' Impasse

42070012b Bangkok *SU ANAKHOT* in *Thai*
26 Aug-1 Sep 87 p 21

[Excerpts] The proposal to hold a "cocktail party" to have the Cambodian resistance groups hold unofficial talks with the Heng Samrin group has ended in failure. This is because each side has rejected the proposals of the other.

The most recent attempt ended in failure once again. ASEAN still wants Vietnam, as the country that invaded Cambodia, to participate in the talks with the four

Cambodian factions. But Vietnam feels that the Cambodian people must solve the Cambodian problem themselves and that they must play a role in the attempt to end the disputes in this region.

It can be seen that even though ASEAN and Vietnam have recently made an attempt to break the deadlock, both continue to hold firmly to their own positions. Air Chief Marshal Sitthi received support from China and the CGDK with respect to the points agreed on by ASEAN. But this did not achieve anything, because Vietnam quickly rejected the proposal and said that ASEAN was trying to revise the agreement reached by Indonesia and Vietnam.

Actually, unofficial talks should be held as soon as possible so that those involved in the Cambodian problem can talk to each other without having to speak through ASEAN and Vietnam. Prince Sihanouk wanted to meet with Hun Sen, the prime minister of the PRK. But even though they had set a definite time to meet, Prince Sihanouk suddenly cancelled the meeting without explanation.

ASEAN supports the CGDK and considers Prince Sihanouk to be an important Cambodian leader who can resist Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia. But ASEAN finds Prince Sihanouk difficult to fathom. What he says today might be different from what he says tomorrow. This has left ASEAN and other countries that support him nonplussed.

Next month's UN meeting will be a very important meeting. It will show how much support the CGDK has and whether the CGDK's seat in the United Nations will be affected.

Thailand has played a great role in the effort to solve the Cambodian problem. During these past 9 years, Thailand has held firmly to its position, because it is confident that it will eventually win. But it has failed to notice the changes that have taken place in the CGDK and in Cambodia, which is growing stronger and stronger even though it is under the control of Vietnam.

We must ask ourselves, Does Thailand really want to solve the Cambodian problem? Unless this question is answered, the efforts by ASEAN and other countries, including Vietnam, will fail every time. Because the approval of the frontline country, Thailand, is vital if the Cambodian problem is to be solved.

11943

Columnist: Democracy Dead After Northeast By-Election

42070013d Bangkok *SIAM RAT* in *Thai* 15 Sep 87 p 3

[Analysis column by Sucha Chunlaphet: "The Disgraceful Election and the Death of Democracy"]

[Excerpts] As expected, the by-elections in Yasothorn Province and in Zone 2 in Surin Province ended with an overwhelming victory for the government parties.

These victories are being used to claim that the "sale" of these two MPs was correct and had the approval of the people. This is disgraceful, because it's a matter of playing the toady and resisting true feelings. People throughout the country believe that these people won these by-elections because the government faction bought votes and used state power to help the pro-government candidates. No matter what the government does to try to cover this up, the people will not believe that these were fair elections. Only the government faction will pretend otherwise.

As for the results of these by-elections, by itself, the fact that two more pro-government candidates were elected to the House will not change the political situation in any way. But considering this as a whole, this represents a very disturbing political change. It began when two MPs sold themselves and withdrew their names from the motion to hold a no-confidence debate on the government. Following that, they were expelled from the parties to which they belonged. And then the government parties fielded these two MPs as candidates in the by-elections. And even Gen Prem participated in the campaign, claiming that he was on an inspection trip.

Looking at everything that has happened, it can be seen that Gen Prem and the government faction have used the democratic system to serve their own interests. The various rules that Gen Prem has cited so often have been modified to help him keep his position for many more years.

The rule of purchasing votes, the rule of using government officials to campaign, and the rule of betrayal on the part of politicians have become the rules of Thailand's democratic system today.

The democratic system has survived and has the support of the people because of the rule of neutrality, of not siding with either side, and, most importantly, giving each faction an equal chance. The government in a democracy has definite rules for coming into and leaving office.

If those who come to power refuse to leave and change the rules of democracy to help keep themselves in power, they are not giving others a fair chance to gain political power. Once democracy has been modified to the point where the head of the government cannot be changed, there is only one choice left and that is to drive him out using force. And when that happens, democracy always dies with the leader.

11943

Police Warn Editor Over Story on Ties With Khmer Resistance
42070018a Bangkok *KHAO PHISSET* in Thai
10-16 Sep 87 p 5

[Article: "From the Special Branch Police to *Khao Phiset*, a Second Warning Over the Chong Bok Matter"]

[Text] Notice

Office of the Press Officer for Bangkok Metropolitan 3 September 1987

At 1430 hours on 3 September 1987, Mr Samran Rotphet, the managing editor of *Khao Phiset*, met with Police Maj Gen Kasem Saengmit, the commander of the Special Branch Division and the press officer for Bangkok Metropolitan, Police Col Sanan Wimuktanon, the superintendent of Precinct 3, Special Branch Police, Police Lt Col Somchai Attanawanit, the inspector at Section 5, Precinct 3, Special Branch Division, and Police Cpt Bunchop Ketuthet, the deputy inspector at Section 5, Precinct 3. Mr Samran said that he had come to talk to the press officer on behalf of the editor, who was busy and unable to come himself.

Police Maj Gen Kasem Saengmit told Mr Samran that the 12-18 August 1987 issue of *Khao Phiset* had published photographs of the Chong Bok area. And beneath some of the photographs were captions stating that the photographs showed Khmer Serei forces and Thai thahan phran irregulars carrying on joint military operations. That was not true. In point of fact, Khmer Serei forces and Thai thahan phran irregulars have never conducted joint operations. Publishing such material could affect the efforts to solve the Cambodian problem and tarnish Thailand's image in the eyes of other countries. The Thai government does not have a policy of providing military support to any faction in Cambodia. *Khao Phiset* printed a falsehood, and it violated paragraphs 2 (6) and 4 of Administrative Reform Council Order 42 issued on 21 October 1976. And this might have disturbed public tranquility based on Article 36 of the 1941 Press Act.

Mr Samran admitted that *Khao Phiset* had in fact published such pictures and captions.

Thus, based on his powers in accord with Paragraph 7 of Administrative Reform Council Order 42 and Article 36 (1) of the Press Law, Police Maj Gen Kasem Saengmit, the commander of the Special Branch Division and the press officer for Bangkok Metropolitan, warned *Khao Phiset* to be more careful and not let anything like this happen again. If it does this again, action will be taken in accord with the law. Mr Samran promised that nothing like this would happen again and said that he would inform the editor.

11943

Police Corruption Seen Worsening, Job Buying Goes On

42070012c Bangkok *SIAM RAT SAPDA WICHAN* in Thai
6-12 Sep 87 p 2

[Editorial: "Buying of Police Positions"]

[Excerpts] Every year during the time of the annual police reshuffle, the newspapers are full of stories about corruption and job buying in police circles. Even though

demands were made last year and the Police Department established a committee to investigate senior police officers at the level of regional police commander, the matter was allowed to fade away or there was not enough evidence to take action.

Actually, position buying by police officials has been a chronic problem for many years. No government has ever been able to solve this problem or put a stop to this. Instead, this has become a routine matter, and the amounts paid for positions have increased.

Police Maj Gen Bunchu Wangkanon, the commander of the Suppression Division, talked with reporters about the promotion of police officers in the Suppression Division. There have been reports that corruption in this division is rife. He admitted that many police officers have offered to pay several million baht for positions such as superintendent and deputy superintendent in the Suppression Division. This is a very dirty method. He said that he will definitely not allow this to continue in the Suppression Division.

The positions for which police officials are willing to pay huge sums of money include provincial police superintendent and chief inspector at a metropolitan or provincial police station. Because the number of such positions is limited, its only natural that many people try to pull strings or pay huge sums of money to get one of these positions.

Why are so many police officers willing to pay such huge sums of money for these positions? The answer is that these positions can make the person rich. These positions can earn the person much more money than can other positions. It's said that the salaries of some metropolitan inspectors are higher than that of the prime minister. Every month, the owners of places of entertainment, brothels, and casinos pay bribes to them and to the Suppression Division.

When police officials have to pay such huge sums to buy a position, it means that they have to make an effort to make extra money and use the power of their position to profit personally. It is said that in order to keep their positions or keep from being transferred, inspectors and superintendents must pay part of their income to superior officers such as commanders and commissioners.

11943

Significance of Chirayu Royal Aide Job Viewed

42070017a Bangkok KHAO PHISSET in Thai
5-11 Aug 87 pp 18, 19

[Article: "Keep an Eye on Chirayu Isarangkun: Does the Director of the Bureau of the Crown Property Have a Still Bigger Position Waiting for Him?"]

[Text] "I will probably have to give up my political role. And I am thinking about resigning from the Senate," said Mr Chirayu Isarangkun Na Ayuthaya, the former

minister attached to the Office of the Minister, to *Khao Phiset* after turning over his position to Mr Arun Phannaphong, the new minister, on 28 July.

Mr Chirayu resigned his position as minister attached to the Office of the Prime Minister on 27 July in order to take a bigger position, that is, the position of director of the Bureau of the Crown Property and deputy secretary general of the Bureau of the Royal Household. His resignation was very sudden and unexpected. Prior to this, there had been rumors that this position (director of the Bureau of the Crown Property) would go to Police Gen Narong Mahanon, the director-general of the Police Department, or Dr Chaowa Na Silawan, a privy councillor. Mr Phunphoem Krairuk, who has held this position for 17 years, is retiring at age 65. It is customary for officials at the bureau to retire at this age even though this is not required by law.

Even though there has been little news about the appointment of Mr Chirayu, a news source said that Mr Chirayu was sounded out on this about 3 weeks before he decided to resign and take this new position.

"When I was approached on this matter, I made the decision immediately. I didn't have to think about it. This is a great honor. My family and I are thrilled," said Mr Chirayu to *Khao Phiset*.

The news source said that not only was Mr Chirayu approached directly, but Gen Prem Tinsulanon, the prime minister, was contacted, too. When Gen Prem learned that this was the king's wish, he willingly acceded.

The people appointed to the Bureau of the Crown Property are not screened or chosen by a committee. The king makes the decision himself. The fact that Mr Chirayu has the confidence of the king shows that he and his family have always conducted themselves in an honest and loyal manner.

A news report stated that recently, whenever the government had business with the palace, it delegated the work to Mr Chirayu.

The Bureau of the Crown Property is responsible for a large amount of property. "Honesty" is a very important quality. The person who holds this position must also be a very capable person in view of the fact that he must supervise approximately 500 officials and 200 employees. As a result of holding this position, Mr Phunphoem Krairuk became one of biggest taxpayers in the country. He was paid an allowance for attending various conferences, and he held a variety of positions in companies in which there were investments. Concerning this, Mr Chirayu stated only that "when I made the decision, I did not have time to think about this. My only thought was that this is a great honor and that I will have to work very hard."

A news report informed *Khao Phiset* that the Bureau of the Crown Property earns revenues from investments in more than 40 activities. It earns the bulk of its income from the Siam Cement Company and the Thai Commerce Bank.

It is thought that one of the first problems that Mr Chirayu will have to tackle after taking this position is the matter of renting land to people. A great effort must be made not to cause problems for the people. But actually, many officials involved in these activities have been involved in corruption. They have embezzled funds. There have been attempts to solve this problem, but those involved in these corrupt activities have used the villagers who have rented land for many years as a tool to make appeals and submit petitions to the king.

Now that the king has placed his trust in Mr Chirayu, the criticisms that have been leveled against him will undoubtedly fade away. One such matter involved the urgent motion submitted to parliament by opposition parties charging that he was involved in the embezzlement of 82 million baht disbursed by the Central Bureau for white granulated sugar. That was during the period when he was responsible for matters concerning sugar cane and sugar. Now, his image as an honest and loyal official is very bright.

A high-level news source told *Khao Phiset* that in inner circles, it is well known that Mr Chirayu is a key economic figure who has the interest and trust of the king. Even though Mr Chirayu has offered to serve in this position for many years, it is very uncertain how long he will actually serve in this position.

A few days ago, a high-level news source observed that it is entirely possible that Mr Chirayu may someday have a chance to become minister of finance, who, by position, serves as the chairman of the board of the Bureau of the Crown Property, or the deputy prime minister for economic affairs. He even has a shot at becoming prime minister.

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Royal Family, Villagers, Police in Dispute Over Land

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[Article: "The Cha-am Dispute, Bureau of the Crown Property-Villagers; 20,000 Rai and the Problem of People Being Fellow Countrymen"]

[Excerpts] The dispute over approximately 22,000 rai of land in Cha-am District, Phetchaburi Province, began in 1983. The Bureau of the Crown Property found historical evidence showing that this was restricted property belonging to the crown. Thus, it took legal action to withdraw the land deeds and land ownership rights of the more than 1,400 families who were living on this

land. The villagers here immediately opposed this. They felt that the historical evidence cited by the Bureau of the Crown Property did not clearly prove that this land was crown property. In addition, Border Patrol Police [BPP] officials from the Phra Ramhok Camp have taken action in their capacity as guardians of the area, and this has upset the villagers. Thus, the dispute has grown worse, continuing for more than 4 years now.

People Have Lived Here for Generations

The 22,000 rai of land under dispute are in Cham-am District in Phetchaburi Province. Five villages are located in this area: Huai Sai Nua, Huai Sai Tai, Nong Khang, Nong Sai, and Sam Phraya. The villagers here earn their living by growing pineapple. More than 90 percent of the 1,400 families living in this area grow pineapple. They sell the pineapple to the five canned and frozen pineapple production plants. And merchants from other provinces come and contact them. As a result, this is now one of the largest pineapple markets. Pineapple earns the villagers a good income and so the standard of living of the villagers here is quite good.

Talaem Phraisi, who at 85 is the oldest person in Ban Huai Sai Tai, said that people have been living here and working this land for almost 100 years now. The villagers living here today trace their genealogy back to three main families, the Phraisi, Yaithuam, and Sukho families. Their grandparents paid their respects to King Rama 6 when he toured the area. The king built the Marukthaiwan Retreat in this area in 1924. (Today, it is the headquarters of the BPP Precinct, Phra Ramhok Camp.) Most of the people here have inherited their land from their forefathers.

Royal Decree Committee Has Construed Documents To Mean That This Is Crown Property

The historical documents that the Bureau of the Crown Property claims show that this is crown property are royal commands issued by King Rama 6 in 1923 and 1924 and documents written by the king during that period. The Royal Command issued on 9 June 1923 changed the name of Bang Kra Subdistrict in Phetchaburi Province to Marukthaiwan Subdistrict. The second Royal Command was issued on 17 May 1924. The Royal Decree Committee has interpreted these historical documents on three separate occasions, that is, in 1973, 1980, and 1981.

The total area now under dispute is 22,627.5 rai and 83 wa [1 wa equals 2 meters].

It is unclear whether the Royal Command of 1924 makes this restricted land. All it does is prohibit the killing of animals in the stipulated zone. If the intent was to make this a restricted area, the Royal Command should have forbidden people from occupying and staking claims to the land as was done in the 1926 Royal Decree on

Maintaining the Western Coastal Area. This decree prohibited people from occupying this land. But this prohibition had a time limit, that is, the prohibition was from 1927 to 1933, and things were carried out in 2-year stages. And after 1933, no other royal decree was issued to extend the time period. Thus, the prohibition on occupying this land was considered to have ended. The people understood the intentions of King Rama 6. They knew that it was not his intention to cause trouble for his subjects. He just wanted to establish order in order to foster growth based on the municipal system during the initial period.

In 1937, King Anan Mahidol [King Rama 8] issued a royal command transferring the activities of the Council to Maintain Western Coastal Sites to the municipality. As a result, part of the Marukthaiwan Retreat was now in the Cham-am municipal zone. This is why it is thought that King Rama 6 did not intend to restrict this land as crown property.

Dr Chirayu Isarangkun Na Ayuthaya, the director of the Bureau of the Crown Property, told *Khao Phiset* that the Royal Decree Committee has issued three rulings, and the Bureau of the Crown Property must act on the basis of these rulings. It will issue a land deed registering this land in the name of the Bureau of the Crown Property in accord with the law. The deeds issued after the announcement of the 1924 Royal Command were issued illegally. If anyone wants to sue, they should sue the Department of Lands.

Has the Problem Grown Worse Because of the BPP or the Influential People in the Villages?

From talking with villagers, *Khao Phiset* has learned that being involved in a lawsuit against the Bureau of the Crown Property has created much uneasiness. And now BPP officials from the Phra Ramhok Camp have gotten involved. Initially, they came here in their capacity as the people responsible for the Huai Sai Study and Development Center, which is a royal project. Later on, the Bureau of the Crown Property entrusted them with the task of guarding the crown property and clearing this area. The villagers here say that the BPP officials have created much trouble for them.

As for the BPP, Police Col Thiradet Rotphothong, the superintendent of Precinct 1 and the director of the Huai Sai Study and Development Center Project, told *Khao Phiset* that the BPP is carrying out its duties to the best of its ability. This has affected the interests of a number of financiers in the village. These people have stirred up the villagers and urged them to oppose and block the activities of the BPP.

Police Col Thiradet also told *Khao Phiset* that the BPP became involved in this matter as one of the units involved in this project. When it was learned that the land in this zone is restricted crown property, the BPP was entrusted with the task of guarding this land and

trying to make the people understand. Police Col Thiradet added that this project got underway in 1983. This is a land reform project. The objective is to develop the environment, particularly the forests, conserve the natural resources, and establish an efficient land use system. The project's 16,000 rai will be divided into a forest area, an irrigation, economic crops, and model agricultural center area, and a model village area. This will be done step by step, and an effort will be made to gain the confidence of the villagers.

"This will undoubtedly lead to disputes with the influential groups and local financiers, because their interests will be affected. They have spread propaganda, twisted the facts, and urged the villagers to oppose this program," said Police Col Thiradet. He added that there are about 14 financiers here, each of whom owns about 100 rai. Some of these people are canvassers for politicians, and some have a monopoly on the purchase of pineapple. Some are hoodlums who employ gunmen. They have threatened the people to make them do what they want. And there are some misguided villagers.

"That's a lie. We don't serve anyone. When something causes problems for me, I oppose it. The people referred to by the BPP are all members of the temple committee. They do purchase pineapple, but they don't squeeze prices. But mostly, we sell to the plants. Everyone has a truck," said Mrs Phin, who lives in Nong Khang, to *Khao Phiset*.

Concerning the land issue, almost all of the villagers said that no one owns as much land as the BPP official said. Some people own 50 rai at most. Families that inherited a large amount of land have divided it among their children. As for this, the BPP feels that these people transferred the ownership rights when they learned that this project would be implemented here. They did this in order to conceal the fact that they own a large amount of land.

As for the BPP official's statement that the villagers oppose this royal project, many villagers told *Khao Phiset* that they have never thought about opposing this. They said that they love the king. They have pictures of the king in their homes, and they pay respect to the king every day. But what they do oppose are the activities of BPP officials, who have threatened them and destroyed their property, claiming that the villagers are trespassing on crown property. The BPP has marked off prohibited areas and posted BPP officials to guard the land. They have built bunkers and put weapons in place. They have used tractors to dig up the farmers' pineapple fields. They have burned the fields, used poisons to kill the pineapple plants, and then replanted the fields in cassia trees and tamarind plants. They ordered four villagers whose houses were located within the project area to move their houses within 15 days. They threatened these villagers by constantly driving around their houses for about 2 weeks. The villagers claim that no one talked with the owners of the land beforehand. They did not

even pay them any compensation for moving their houses. The BPP said that it did not have any money for this and that the villagers were at fault for having trespassed on crown property.

"With the situation like this, the villagers can't make a living. Because they can't enter the area. The villagers haven't been able to work this land for 3 years. They are becoming poorer and poorer," said Mr Chin, who lives in Huai Sai Tai, to *Khao Phiset*.

"The villagers are prepared to donate 1,500 rai to the king's project. They have not asked to be paid any compensation for this land. Villagers no longer work that land. But today, the villagers have been prohibited from working the entire 20,000 rai. People have managed to survive by secretly working plots. Because each villager has several plots scattered about the area. There are plots of land that aren't guarded. If the villagers didn't do this, they couldn't survive," said Mr Sano Maitrisophon.

The villagers feel that the BPP is at fault, because officials have not yet issued a land deed to the Bureau of the Crown Property. The villagers still have the right to work the land. The villagers feel that the BPP is oppressing and harassing them by destroying their crops and seizing their land so that they can't work the land.

When *Khao Phiset* asked the BPP about this, Police Col Thiradet Rotphothong explained that some of those statements are true and some are false. Because the BPP is responsible for protecting and clearing the area, it has to do these things. The villagers have trespassed on crown property. The BPP has aerial photographs showing how many rai of pineapple plants there were before the project was implemented. Later on, the villagers planted pineapple shoots in empty plots in order to request compensation if they lost their ownership rights. That shows their dishonest intentions.

"Some of this is like a play," said Police Col Thiradet. But when *Khao Phiset* asked him to explain this, we received a very ambiguous response.

As for compensation, the project and the Bureau of the Crown Property will pay compensation to those holding land deeds dated before 1924. But there are two cases in which they cannot pay at this time. That is, they will not pay if the person has asked for too great a sum and the case is still being negotiated. In the case of people who hold deeds issued after 1924 and people who do not have a deed, no compensation will be paid, because they will be considered to have trespassed on crown property. Concerning this, Dr Chirayu added that the purpose of the project is to bring prosperity to the area. There will be an infrastructure that will benefit the people. If those who have been paid compensation are allowed to live in the project area that has an infrastructure, that would not

be fair to officials. "We feel that there should be joint investment by villagers and government officials, because it will be the villagers who benefit," said Dr Chirayu.

Khao Phiset asked Mr Thongbai Thongpao about this matter. We asked him whether it was right for the BPP to tell the villagers that they would not be compensated for the loss of their ownership rights. Mr Thongbai said that the "fact that the BPP has threatened to seize their land without paying compensation for the land and crops is against the law. It is against the constitution, and it is a violation of their human rights. In a free and democratic country, people's land cannot be confiscated without paying them fair compensation. If this is actually done, this may be a violation of Article 3 of the Anti-Communist Act.

Huai Sai Development Project, the Villagers Want To Wait and See First

"They come to my house every day. They want me to join the project. I tell them that I want to wait and see first. If this is a good project, I will participate," said Mr Yang, who is one of the four people whom the BPP ordered to move.

"The BPP asked me to sign up for the project. I refused to sign, because I was afraid of committing myself to something. But I said that if this is a good project, I will be glad to participate," said Mrs Phin, who lives in Ban Nong Khang.

Several villagers with whom *Khao Phiset* talked mentioned the Huai Sai Development Project, which is in the disputed area. Police Col Thiradet said that each family that participates in this project will receive 13 rai of farmland and two head of cattle to practice raising livestock. When they have calves, they must give the calves to the project. Water and electricity will be provided. Villagers will be trained to grow economic crops on a rotational basis in order to maintain soil fertility. Such crops include young corn, bamboo shoots, legumes, and various herbs. If they want to grow pineapple, they can allocate plots for this. But the villagers will be encouraged to grow other crops besides pineapple, because the herbicides that are used ruin the soil. The program has been underway for 3 years now. The villagers say that the shift to other types of crops has not achieved good results. This is because these crops are not as well suited to the climatic conditions here as is pineapple. Tending these crops is difficult, and they require much capital. For example, in growing bamboo shoots, the weeds have to be removed by hand. As a result, the yields obtained are not worth the effort expended and there is not enough to eat. Besides this, there are no definite markets. On the other hand, there are many markets for pineapple.

In his capacity as project director, Police Col Thiradet Rotphothong told *Khao Phiset* that its true that these crops have not produced good yields. But this is the test-growing period. People have to give them a little time. He insisted that the project will benefit the villagers in the long term. As for the reports that people who joined the project are not earning enough to live on and that some have fled, he said that these stories are totally false.

Around last April, Mr Samak Sunthonwet, the chairman of the House Administrative Affairs Subcommittee, and Pilot Officer Chalut Worachat, a member of this subcommittee, went to find out the facts and held a joint meeting with villagers and BPP officials in order to find a way to end the dispute. Pilot Officer Chalut told *Khao Phiset* that the villagers were unsure whether these crops would actually produce high yields as called for in the plan or even yields equal to today's pineapple yields. One compromise solution was to have the BPP implement a pilot project on just 1,000 rai. If the results were good, the project could continue. But if the results were poor, the project would be abandoned. The BPP agreed and signed a contract. But the villagers did not agree, because they felt that the subcommittee was siding with the BPP. The matter has died down, because the villagers have not contacted the subcommittee any more.

One man who was involved in this told *Khao Phiset* that that was when the villagers were very angry with the BPP for ruining their fields and destroying their property. Thus, they did not feel like compromising. The villagers frequently said that the BPP says one thing but does another. And so when the subcommittee proposed a compromise solution, they rejected it.

Mr Thongbai Thongpao, the lawyer representing the villagers, told *Khao Phiset* that the villagers doubt whether this is really a royal project. Because the things done by the BPP have caused problems for the villagers, which is just the opposite of what the king wants to do. The king is very interested in the well-being and happiness of the people. As a result of growing pineapples, the villagers here have a good standard of living, and they are not in debt.

Furthermore, the villagers once tried to submit a petition to the king, but they were prevented from doing so. They feel that if the officials had had pure intentions, they would not have prevented them from submitting a petition. And efforts have been made to conceal this matter from the mass media. This is very strange. There is no reason not to inform the mass media unless there is something behind this. However, Police Col Thiradet told *Khao Phiset* that he wants to deal with this problem quietly.

Because the Huai Sai Development Project is a royal project, there have been wild stories to the effect that by opposing this project, the villagers are committing lese majesty. The villagers feel that the BPP is persecuting and harassing them. Thus, they are really opposing the BPP.

Mr Sano Maitrisophon told *Khao Phiset* that the villagers have considered implementing a Huai Sai Development Project in accord with the king's idea without involving the BPP.

"The BPP has pointed its finger at us and treated us like communists even though we have fought because they are harassing us. They have destroyed our property and seized our land and property even though no deed has been issued yet. They have done everything they can to hurt us. They even tried to bribe me. They asked me how much I wanted not to associate with the other villagers. I refused the bribe. I told them that I would rather be poor than wealthy if that meant that I could remain living among friends. They said that I was stubborn. Another time, when I participated in a demonstration in front of the Government House, they sent a senior person named Mina to talk with me and have me take the villagers back home. He said that if I would do this, they would remove the stakes in my fields and pay me compensation. I refused to leave. They talk like this on these occasions. But why don't they say anything at home?" said Mr Sano Maitrisophon to *Khao Phiset*.

Villagers Had To File Suit Against the Bureau of the Crown Property

As for the struggle to prevent the Bureau of the Crown Property from being issued a land deed, officials have already posted an announcement stating that a land deed will be issued to the Bureau of the Crown Property. Whoever wants to protest this may do so. Thus, the villagers submitted an appeal to the Phetchaburi provincial land office. The provincial land office told the villagers that they must reach an agreement with the Bureau of the Crown Property within 15 days. If no agreement has been reached in that time, a land deed must be issued to the Bureau of the Crown Property. Villagers came to Bangkok in July but were unable to reach an agreement with the Bureau of the Crown Property.

"The Zone 7 inspector talked with us and told us that a land deed had to be issued because this is crown property. The king's word is law. He said that if he did not take action, he would be in trouble. He might even have to go to jail," said Mr Sano.

In negotiating with the Bureau of the Crown Property that day, the villagers had a chance to talk with Dr Chirayu for 30 minutes. That was just a week after Dr Chirayu had been appointed to this position.

"He said that everyone must obey the law. If this is what the law says, then this is what must be done. He said that the villagers were free to protest and file a lawsuit. We said that he was a senior official and should be able to come up with a solution. It would be better if we didn't have to go to court. He told us to go ahead and file suit and said that we could talk later if there was anything to discuss. He said that we have to fight this using proper

means. I said that the villagers were like beggars begging from the wealthy. I said that this was not right. He said, 'What can I do? I just took this position,'" said Mr Sano about the negotiations with Dr Chirayu.

When the villagers failed to reach an agreement with the Bureau of the Crown Property, with bureau officials telling the villagers to file suit, the Phetchaburi provincial land office ordered the villagers to file a lawsuit against the Bureau of the Crown Property within 60 days. Otherwise, it would issue a land deed to the bureau. Thus, the villagers had to file suit. Otherwise, officials would construe this to mean that there was no opposition to this, and the villagers would lose the land that they had inherited from their ancestors.

A person familiar with this matter told *Khao Phiset* that based on what has taken place, a compromise seems unlikely. The Bureau of the Crown Property wants the courts to settle the dispute, and it is very likely that the bureau will win because of the three rulings by the Royal Decree Committee, which is a highly qualified body in legal circles. It has ruled that this land belongs to the crown. The courts decision will give the Bureau of the Crown Property the legal right to make use of this land. The villagers will not be able to oppose this any more, because that would infringe on the powers of the court. In the end, the villagers will lose no matter what they do. That is, if they don't file suit, they will lose the land. And if they file suit, there is no way that they can win the suit.

20,000 Rai, the Problem of Being Fellow Countrymen

From having traveled to the area under dispute, *Khao Phiset* learned that the 60-day time limit is almost up. The villagers are discussing things with the legal team from the office of Mr Thongbai Thongbao in order to prepare evidence for filing suit. Mr Sano Maitrisophon said that in the past, many villagers came. But recently, the number has declined, because the BPP has told them that if they don't file suit, the land will be returned to them. As a result, many villagers are hesitating. Some villagers, that is, those who do not live within Cha-am Municipality, have split away. But those who live within this zone will probably maintain strong solidarity.

Dr Chirayu Isarangkun Na Ayuthaya told *Khao Phiset* that he is sympathetic toward and understands the feelings of the villagers who have lived there for so long. But the Bureau of the Crown Property must abide by the law. He said that he would like the villagers to understand the bureau's intentions. He said that "even though we have to act in accord with the law, we are ready to develop things for them. We want to trouble them as little as possible. As for those who are not ready to enter the project, we would be glad to rent land to them at a price below the market price. And as far as this right to rent is concerned, there isn't any problem as far as taking a mortgage is concerned.

The villagers are well aware of the fact that the court may rule against them. They have tried to submit petitions to the king and queen but have never succeeded in doing so. They claim that the petitions have been blocked by the BPP and government officials. However, villagers told *Khao Phiset* that they finally succeeded in submitting a petition to the queen on 4 September when she returned to Bangkok.

"We are relying on her. We don't know who else to turn to."

This matter has still not come to a conclusion. The various parties concerned are still struggling, and each believes that it is right. This will continue to be a problem until a solution that satisfies all parties, that is, the Bureau of the Crown Property, the BPP, and the villagers, is found.

Statement by Mr Thongbai Thongpao

The Royal Decree Committee's interpretation of the Royal Command issued by King Rama 6 is just the opinion of this committee. It is not a definitive opinion or a law. The court does not have to abide by this. In the past, it has been mistaken, and the courts have disagreed with its opinions. In my view, the Royal Decree Committee has the right to make this interpretation. The question is, Is this in accord with the law and with what is just? The court must make the decision based on the actual wording and the intent of the Royal Command. Because King Rama 6 forbid only the hunting of animals in the stipulated zone. Does this mean that he was announcing that this land belonged to the crown? And actually, there is evidence that deeds were issued even for land within the Marukthaiwan Retreat and near the power plant. Deeds were issued to people both before and after this Royal Command was issued. During his reign, the deeds that had been issued were never made void.

As for this royal project, I have questioned the people. The people have never opposed a project actually sponsored by the King, because they know that the king has the interests of the people at heart. He wants them to be happy and prosperous. He wants them to own their own land. The people have donated land for royal projects. But now, the people are confused, because they aren't sure whether this is really a royal project. This is because those who claim that they are acting in accord with the royal project have trespassed on the land that the people have planted in crops. In some places, they have burned the villagers' crops and plowed up their fields. The people have been working this land for many years. Thus, the people do not think that this is a royal project. Instead, they think that these people are just using this as an excuse. The people believe the king when he said that he will rule justly for the benefit and happiness of the masses. They do not believe the claims made by these people, because these people have not acted in accord with the statements made by the king.

The villagers would like to submit a petition to the king. But these people have blocked them from doing this. Even the queen, who has been away, is concerned. They would like to submit a petition, but they have been prevented from doing so. The people are suffering, and they want to submit a petition. If the government officials are honest, they should not block the people. Blocking the people like this is tantamount to concealing the truth from the king, and that is wrong.

There are rumors that the villagers will stage a protest demonstration, that they are being supported by financiers, and that they will file a suit with the United Nations stating that their human rights have been violated. I think that these rumors are groundless and that they are tarnishing the image of the farmers. Because whatever we do will be done within the framework of the law. We will hold firmly to the law. I have asked lawyers in the office to go obtain the facts. We want to help the farmers as much as we can based on what is fair and on the law. We will also rely on the prestige of the king to protect them.

The villagers have been forced to take this matter to court even though they don't want to do this. If the matter is reconsidered and the people are treated fairly without their having to take the matter to court, that would be an act of great kindness. Going to court will cause much trouble for both the people and the court, because many people are involved. Thus, my great hope is that the people will be treated fairly and that the matter can be resolved satisfactorily.

Dr Chirayu Isarangkun Na Ayuthaya, the Director of the Bureau of the Crown Property

Even though people have expressed opposition, I don't harbor any resentment. But I hope that we can avoid a lawsuit. Based on the three rulings issued by the Royal Decree Committee, it is clear that we should be issued a deed. Our sincere wish is to see the people benefit. As for those who hold rights and who do not see the benefit of participating in this project, we will allow them to continue working the same plots of land. The only thing is that by law, crown property cannot be given away. We will allow them to rent the land at a price that is below the market price. They can put up a mortgage as before. It's just that they can't sell the land. And in the future, if they feel that the project is a success, they can join the project.

Police Col Thiradet Rotphothong, the superintendent of Precinct 1 and the director of the Huai Sai Study and Development Center Project, a Royal Project

The Huai Sai Study and Development Center Project, which is a royal project, was launched in 1983. The king felt that this area lacked water and that people were destroying the forests here. Thus, he thought about using 15,580 rai as a model study and development center. A reservoir has been built, irrigation canals have been dug,

tests have been done on planting economic crops on a rotational basis in order to preserve soil fertility, live-stock have been raised on a trial basis, model villages have been built, and the forest has been tended well. The king has stressed doing things step by step. We have to gain the confidence of the villagers. BPP officials from the Phra Ramhok Camp are serving as project coordinators. There are 13 government units participating in this project.

Shortly after this project was implemented, we discovered that approximately 22,000 rai of land in this area was crown property. We informed the Bureau of the Crown Property so that it could have a deed issued. The Bureau entrusted the BPP with the task of conducting a survey and clearing the area. We asked the villagers who farmed these 22,000 rai to reduce the area under cultivation in order to make things more fair. Because approximately 14 families owned large tracts of land. These are the ones who urged the villagers to oppose the project and the bureau's claim to the land by claiming that they have lived here for generations. Project officials went and explained things and about 10 percent of the villagers, most of whom were Thai Moslems, cooperated with the officials. About 35 percent of the villagers actively opposed the project. The others said that they would go along with what the majority decided.

Some of the leaders in the struggle against the project have served as canvassers for politicians. Some of these people are very influential people in view of the large amount of land that they own. And they have a monopoly on the purchase of pineapple. They have asked politicians for help. The movement against this project is well organized.

As for revoking the villagers' rights to this land, in cases in which they have deeds that were issued before 1923, we will pay them compensation. But we will not pay compensation if their deeds were issued after that date, because they will be considered to have trespassed on crown property. There are many people who know that this is crown property. Those who own much land and who trade in land are well aware of this. In a few cases, we have not been able to reach an agreement on paying compensation, because they are demanding too much money. And some cases are still being negotiated. As for the BPP harassing the villagers, our duty is to protect crown property. If someone trespasses, we have to take action based on the law. There have been times when we have been provoked. And sometimes this is just an act.

Mr Somchai Phlaikaeo, a Villager

On 16 December 1985, the BPP used tractors to plow up about 1 rai of my land. Altogether, I owned about 11 rai. They then built bunkers using sandbags just like on a battlefield to keep me from harvesting the pineapple in the field. They allowed only the owners of the fields to enter the area. Hired workers could not go into the fields. They issued passes. But how could I do the harvesting all

by myself? And after I had a pass made, they told me that they might or might not let me enter. They threatened me with M-16 rifles. Later on, they would not let me enter the area. More than 20 tons of pineapple rotted in the field. They then burned the pineapple and plowed it under. They used tractors to drive over and crush the pineapple shoots that I had cut and put in piles. I went to notify the police, but they refused to accept the report. I then went and informed the superintendent of Phetchaburi. He conducted an investigation, but the matter then faded away. It's been 3 years now, but I haven't gotten anything. Piya Angkinan, an MP, told me to go work outside this zone. But when I did this, the police arrested me again and charged me with trespassing on crown property even though this land belonged to me. I had been working that land for 15 years. They moved me seven times. When I was sent to the prosecutor, they moved me another eight times. They did that seven more times before the case finally went to court. I had to pay for a lawyer, about 2,000 baht each time. Today, I have nothing left. I can't support my family. I have to tend cattle for others and rely on my mother for support.

They sent me a notice ordering me to move my house within 15 days. There are four of us who have been ordered to move our houses. My house was built in 1978. I have not moved my house, and they haven't done anything. But they come around and try to harass me. As for plowing the land, they never talked to me about that. They just went ahead and did it. And they have said that I will not receive any compensation. They said that I am trespassing on crown property. I borrowed money. How can I pay my debt? They have dug a canal through the 11 rai of land that they seized from me. The Irrigation Department has paid others 7,000 baht per rai in compensation. But I haven't received anything, because the BPP seized my land.

I am very angry. I work for my living, but I have been persecuted in a variety of ways. I have nothing left. I will let the law decide the issue, because I am not a bandit. If there is no other option, I may go into the jungle. I am an honest person, but others are harassing me. Those who are responsible for upholding the law are forcing people to become bandits. The police are not sympathetic. Mr Chuan was arrested and charged with destroying cashew nut trees planted by the BPP even though there was not one tree. Mr Chuan fled into the jungle about 2 months ago. The police have issued a warrant for his arrest. I went and talked with an MP. He said that he can't help me. I don't know whom to turn to for help.

11943

Police General Questions Royal Family Flight Skills

*42070013a Bangkok NAO NA in Thai
19 Sep 87 pp 1, 16*

[Article: "Commander of the Police Aviation Division Denies Having Committed Lese Majesty, Insists He Was Praising Skills"]

[Text] Police Lt Col Chakhin Chantharasonthi, a grade-two pilot with the Police Aviation Division, sent a report to investigation officials at the Khannayao police station and asked them to take action against Police Maj Gen Sathit Kaeophluk, the commander of the Police Aviation Division. He charged him with committing lese majesty against the Crown Prince at a meeting of officials from the Police Aviation Division. As Naeo Na has reported, this happened on 19 August 1987, and the charge was filed on 14 September.

On the morning of 18 September, Police Maj Gen Sathit Kaeophluk told Naeo Na that before this happened, he had ordered Police Lt Col Chakhin to pilot the aircraft. He ordered Police Lt Col Chakhin's section chief to serve as the copilot. He did this because he felt that Police Lt Col Chakhin was the superior pilot. But Police Lt Col Chakhin refused, saying that he couldn't give orders to his section chief. In his capacity as the commander of the Police Aviation Division, he told him that rank was not as important as skill and that this would not hurt anything, because he was thinking mainly about safety.

In view of what had happened, he was afraid that this might lead to a misunderstanding and become a major issue. Thus, he called a meeting of pilots and officials subordinate to the Police Aviation Division on 19 August. Approximately 40 people attended the meeting. He explained things and did not say anything about the flying skills of the Crown Prince. All he did was mention the skills of the Crown Prince and remind those assembled of some of the remarks made by the Crown Prince. His statements were made in praise. The other pilots understood. If he had said anything slanderous that day, the other pilots would have protested, too.

Police Maj Gen Sathit said that the charge was not made until a month later. He thinks that Police Lt Col Chakhin is trying to get revenge. Lt Col Chakhin was absent from duty for 30 days. He sent people to Songkhla to bring him back and established a committee to investigate the matter. Police Lt Col Chakhin's future looks very bleak. He may even be dismissed from government service. This may be why he filed this charge. And there may be people who urged Police Lt Col Chakhin to destroy him and the Police Aviation Division. Because today, the division is doing an outstanding job. It is very well known and has the support of the people.

A reporter reported from the Police Department that on 18 September, Police Maj Gen Sathit went and explained the matter to his superiors at the Police Department.

Police Lt Gen Sanao Withitworakan, the commission of the Metropolitan Police, said that he has received a report from Police Lt Col Phairat Somphuti, the chief inspector at the Khannayao police station, and that he

has ordered Police Maj Gen Prayun Komankun Na Nakhon, the deputy commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, to oversee the investigation in this case.

11943

Special Warfare Expert General Wimon Profiled
42070022a Bangkok DAILY NEWS in Thai
17 Aug 87 p 5

[Daily News Square column by Nanthana: "Lt Gen Wimon Wongwanit, the Commander of the Special Warfare Command and a Member of CRMA Class 5"]

[Text] Lt Gen Wimon Wongwanit was born on 1 March 1934 in Hua Toei Subdistrict, Phunphin District, Surat Thani Province. He attended primary school in Chai Ya District. He attended secondary school at the Phuttha Nikhom School in Chai Ya District, Surat Thani Province, graduating first in his class. Because he loved the military, in 1951 he entered the Military Preparatory School and then Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy [CRMA]. He earned a reputation as an excellent student and athlete, playing on several school teams. He was especially good at rugby, shooting, and track-and-field events.

In 1958 he was appointed to his first position as the leader of a small-arms platoon with the 2d Infantry Battalion, 1st King's Guard Mahat Lek Infantry Regiment. In 1961 he was made the leader of a special forces team with the Pa Wai Paratroop Battalion at Lopburi. In 1962 he took additional training and served as an operations officer with Regimental Combat Team 6 in Ubon Ratchathani Province. Later on, he was appointed chief of staff of this combat team.

He was then transferred back to the Pa Wai paratroopers. While serving as the commander of a special forces battalion, he conducted operations along the northern border and along the Thai-Lao border. He was then made an operations officer at the Special Warfare Center in Lopburi. In 1974 he was transferred to Ubon Ratchathani, where he served as the deputy chief of staff of the 6th Military Circle. At that time, he was a colonel.

In 1977 he attended the Army Command and General Staff College in England. He returned 18 months later and was made an instructor at the Army Command and General Staff College. A short time later, he was appointed commander of Regimental Combat Team 6, which is now the 6th Infantry Regiment, Sanphasit Prasong Camp, Ubon Ratchathani Province. In 1980 he was appointed deputy commander of the 6th Infantry Division. In October 1982, he was promoted to major general and appointed commander of the 1st Special Forces Division in Lopburi. In October 1985, he was appointed commander of the 1st King's Guard Infantry Division, and in 1986 he was promoted to lieutenant general and made commander of the Special Warfare Command.

Military training: After graduating from CRMA, in 1958 he took the Infantry School's platoon leader course. In 1960 he took the attack course as a member of Class 3. In 1962 he took the paratrooper and special forces course. That same year, he also took the Infantry School's course for company commanders. In 1964 he took the course for battalion commanders. In 1966 he took the army command and general staff course.

Foreign education: In 1971 he took the psyops and civil affairs course taught by the U.S. Army. In 1977 he attended the Army Command and General Staff College in England.

Combat background: He proved himself to be an excellent soldier and real leader while performing his duties on northern battlefields such as Hin Rong Kla, Huai Tin Tang, and Ban Nam Kum. He parachuted into operations areas together with his unit. As for combat in the lower northeast, in fighting both the communist terrorists and foreign forces in the area of responsibility of the Suranari Force and in Ubon Ratchathani Province, he showed great bravery and a willingness to make sacrifices. He continually carried on psyops and civil affairs activities. Finally, more than 800 communist terrorists came and surrendered. The communist terrorists operating in Zone 11 were completely defeated in 1980.

He is married to Maj Mali Sapyanon (maiden name), who is a dental surgeon. They have one son, Kamonnat, who is in secondary school, and one daughter, Wimonnut, who is in primary school.

He teaches his subordinates to hold to principles that will enable them to achieve success. That is, they must have discipline, which includes acting in an orderly manner and in accord with regulations. They must have a sense of responsibility toward their work and understand their rights and duties. They must take pride in their work. They must have a sense of solidarity and be willing to make sacrifices. They must know how to work together as a team and take joint responsibility.

Lt Gen Wimon will not retire until 30 September 1995. It shouldn't be too much longer before he is promoted to full general.

11943

Polls on Economic Problems, Solutions Published
42070022b Bangkok DAILY NEWS in Thai
22 Sep 87 pp 1, 2

[Excerpt] At 1100 hours on 21 September, Mr Thirayut Bunmi, the director of the Social and Political Studies Section, Institute of Social Research, Chulalongkorn University, and Dr Worawit Charoenloet, an advisor to the Social and Political Studies Section, announced the results of an opinion poll on the present economic situation. In August, the government announced that the

country's economic policies have generally been successful. The Institute for Social Research studied the economic situation by asking people about their daily lives. A total of 2,990 people were randomly sampled nationwide in both urban and rural areas. The respondents were classified by occupation: farmers, 53.4 percent; laborers, 10.8 percent; general employees, 7.3 percent; self-employed, 9.2 percent; businessmen, 8.5 percent; government officials, 10.8 percent.

Mr Thirayut said that it was found that 23.7 percent of the respondents were interested in economic news. They got their information mostly from television. They felt that the Thai economy is still bad. In particular, those with low incomes felt that the economy is terrible. However, those with high incomes felt that the economy is improving. This means that not much of the income is going to the poor people. Even though the economy is growing as announced by the government, most of the benefits are going to the wealthy.

It was also found that most people in Bangkok Metropolitan do not earn enough to cover their expenses. As a result, they cannot relax. But respondents in the rural areas felt that unemployment and the lack of work factors are still the most important problems. Besides this, 13.7 percent of the respondents were still worried about the safety of their persons and property. This problem needs urgent attention. If they need money for medical treatment, they turn first to relatives and friends. After that, they pawn goods. Some said that they "sell themselves."

However, 40.3 percent of the respondents felt that the political institutions, from the village headmen and subdistrict chiefs on up to the government, can solve the economic problems. Only 24 percent had any confidence in the business institutions, and only 15.2 percent had any confidence in the military. But the respondents did not think that they could rely too much on the government. Because only 11 percent felt that the government can help. As a result, 81.5 percent gamble, with 43 percent playing the government lottery or the underground lottery.

Based on the results of this survey, it can be concluded that the economy of most people, particularly the poor, has not improved. However, the economy is picking up. So far, little has been achieved in distributing income to the poor people. The government must take steps to solve this problem.

11943

Local Official Views Lao Trade, Security
42070015a Bangkok SU ANAKHOT in Thai
19-25 Aug 87 pp 21-22

[Excerpt] Where are the Border Crossing Points?

Nakhon Phanom Province has designated four border crossing points, that is, the customs checkpoints in Muang, That Phanom, Tha Uthen, and Ban Phaeng districts. These four points opened trade between Thai and Lao citizens on 11 May. Permission has been given to open the border twice a week on Mondays and Thursdays from 0900 to 1300 hours. Thai officials will stipulate trading areas at points that can be controlled. No taxes will be collected. The Lao will not have to have a border pass, but a card will be issued to show that they are Lao who have come here to trade.

Prasit Iampracha, the district officer in That Phanom District, said that when the province first opened these points at the beginning of this year, we had problems controlling the Lao. Sometimes, 200 came but only 100 returned. Thus, we had to close the points temporarily. They were reopened in May. This is small-scale trade that helps the Lao. We derive psychological benefits.

As for these four border crossing points, the situation is different at each point. The point in Tha Uthen handles the largest number of Lao. On the average, 200-300 Lao a day cross into Thailand here. This is followed by the border point in Muang District. The goods that the Lao bring to sell include rattan, resin, tamarind, meat of jungle animals, honey, and bamboo. The Lao buy mainly consumer goods, especially used clothing. Officials in Tha Uthen District have said that the value of trade on the days that Lao come here is 90-100,000 baht per day. At the border point in Muang District, the figure is approximately 200,000 baht per day.

As for why the Lao do not buy and sell more in Thailand, one Lao who lives in Ban Hin Boun (opposite Tha Uthen District) said that some Lao officials have set up (illegal) checkpoints and collect taxes from the Lao who take goods to sell in Thailand or who bring back goods from Thailand. Some days, they stipulate that the Lao can bring back only two items of used clothing. If they bring back more than that, the clothing is seized.

However, the Lao are happy that Thai officials have given them permission to trade here. Even where there are no border crossing points, the Lao can purchase Thai goods, because there are black markets all along the Mekong River. When we were still "fraternal countries," the Lao used the markets on the Thai side as if they were Lao markets, and they used Thai money, which is still the case today.

Trade and Security

An ISOC [Internal Security Operations Command] official said that opposite the trading point at the Muang District customs checkpoint is Thakhek District, Khammouan Province. Most of those who come here are wealthy Vietnamese, not Lao. The figures show that only about 100 people come here each day. But the amount of money that changes hands at the market is greater than at any other point. Why do the Lao officials permit only

Vietnamese to come? We know that Lao want to come, too. But Lao officials are very strict. Many Lao travel from Thakhek to Ban Hin Boun in order to cross over to Tha Uthen. They are stopped by Lao officials. If this does not help the Lao, the points might be closed.

As for Lao not being allowed to come and trade on the Thai side, Mukdahan Province is experiencing the same problem. The province implemented a policy of establishing a central market where Thai and Lao could engage in trade and barter goods along the Mekong River (across the river from Mukdahan is Khanthabouli District, Savannakhet Province). But the Lao did not come and so this market had to close.

"As for why Lao officials are not allowing Lao citizens to come here, there is probably some misunderstanding. Thakhek and Khanthabouli are large districts that have customs checkpoints. To leave the country, a person must have a border pass. There is more red tape than at Ban Hin Boun or Ban Pakse. And so they have to look for points that are more convenient," said a news source from the local mass media.

While security officials in some units would prefer to close the border points, officials in other units have said that opening these trading points has ruined the black markets. If we want the economy on the Thai side to thrive, we must relax things. We must allow Lao to come purchase goods from Thailand. Some border units are trying to relax things as much as possible. They want to open up the markets. They are often attacked and blocked by certain officials who make huge profits from the black markets.

The merchants in the districts that have border crossing points agree with the province. They have long wanted the government to implement a policy of "trade leading ideology." Even though the border has not yet been opened up completely, this is better than not doing anything. Because the economy in the border districts has been poor ever since the Thai-Lao border was closed.

One big merchant said that anytime you prohibit something, there will be smuggling. For example, when officials suppressed marijuana cultivation, the merchants went and hired Lao to grow marijuana on the Lao side. And it is shipped out from the port of Danang. The same is true of these checkpoints. If you prohibit open trading, black markets will flourish. Figures show that business at the black markets totals at least 1.5 billion baht a year.

Trade and security are frequently at odds. These points in Nakhon Phanom are just temporary trading points. They might be "closed" for security reasons at any time. Several other provinces are trying to do this. But they are being hampered by the fact that senior Thai and Lao officials can't seem to reach an agreement. Thus, in the meantime, there will have to be negotiations at the level of district officer and subdistrict chief.

The merchants will have to continue making appeals as long as the governments of Thailand and Laos let politics lead economics. How long will these border trading points be able to breathe life into the economy of Nakhon Phanom if people claim that the border has been opened for the Vietnamese in Laos? We will have to wait and see.

11943

Industrialists Oppose Changes in Copyright Laws
42070013b Bangkok NAEO NA in Thai
24 Sep 87 pp 7, 14

[Unattributed report: "Industrial Association Board Issues Resolution Against Revising the Copyright Law, Which is What the United States Is Trying To Pressure Us Into Doing"]

[Text] The board of the Thai Industrial Association passed a resolution against revising the intellectual property protection laws because of U.S. pressure. Studies have shown that if the United States does cut Thailand's special tariff rights, this would not have much of an impact on us. It was agreed that the association would continue to monitor the government's actions on this issue.

The government is planning to revise the copyright, patent, and trademark laws, which are known collectively as the intellectual property protection laws, as desired by the United States. The board of the Thai Industrial Association formed a work committee headed by Miss Mewadi Kanchanachari to study what effects this might have. The results will then be submitted to the government.

A news source in the Thai Industrial Association told Naeo Na that Miss Mewadi submitted the results of the study to the board on 22 September. The report stated that if Thailand refuses to revise the intellectual property protection laws and the United States cuts the special tariff rights (GSP) on Thai goods, the industrial sectors that will be affected rather seriously include the glass and sheet glass sector and the furniture sector.

The iron and metal sector will be affected, too. But today, Thailand is exporting large quantities of these goods to the United States, and it seems likely that the United States will find an excuse to cut our special tariff rights on these goods.

The industrial sectors that will not be affected very much are the gas, chemical, electrical industry, food, vehicle assembly, vehicle parts production, and air conditioner sectors.

The industrial sectors that will not be affected at all are the plastics, drugs, aluminum products, leather and leather products, and industrial machinery sectors. As for the remaining industrial sectors, no opinion was given on the effect that this might have.

The work committee concluded its report to the board by saying that the government should not revise the intellectual property protection laws as the United States is pressuring us to do.

It also recommended that the association monitor the government's activities on this. It should make it clear to the government that the majority of the members of the association oppose revising the intellectual property protection laws.

In the event that a conference is held either here or abroad to discuss this issue, the association should send Dr Waiwuti Thanetworakun, the representative from the drug sector, and Mr Prathip Kosincharanon, the representative from the plastics sector, as its delegates to the meeting.

A news source in the association said that actually, the results of the study conducted by Miss Mewadi's work team were sent to the association's executive committee on 15 September. The executive committee agreed with the findings of the work team, and the association's board approved this at its meeting on 22 September.

"The association will not send a letter to the government. It was agreed that all board members and executive committee members will say that the majority of association members are opposed to revising the intellectual property protection laws whenever government units or the mass media ask about this," said the news source.

11943

Reasons for 'Brain Drain' at Bank of Thailand Noted

42070012a Bangkok MATICHON SUT SAPDA in Thai 6 Sep 87 pp 16-17

[Unattributed report: "The Bank of Thailand Today; Is It True That There is a Brain Drain?"]

[Text] A question for those who heard the news last week about the salary raise given to BoT [Bank of Thailand] officials is, was it really necessary to give them a raise? Is it just the salary issue that has caused many senior BoT officials to leave the BoT and go to work at commercial banks and finance companies or enter politics?

It is well known that among employees at public units and state enterprises, officials at the BoT receive the highest salaries and best benefits. This is particularly

true for senior officials at the level of section head, assistant department chief, deputy department chief, department chief, assistant governor, deputy governor, and governor.

But their salaries and benefits are much lower than those of people in the private sector, particularly people at financial institutions such as commercial banks, finance companies, and finance and securities companies, who are supervised by BoT officials. For example, the salary of the governor of the BoT is 60,000 baht a month, and he must pay tax on this. By comparison, the managing director of a commercial bank earns anywhere from 100,000-400,000 baht a month, and his company pays his tax. There is a huge difference between their net monthly salaries. And as compared with the salaries of employees at prosperous finance and securities companies, the net salary of the governor of the BoT may be equal to that of a department head.

But to say that BoT officials leave the BoT to go to work at one of the financial institutions just because of the money involved is being somewhat unfair to these people. Because if you look at which senior BoT officials have left the bank to go to work at other financial institutions or engage in some other activity and look at their backgrounds, you will see that the above reason alone is inadequate.

One person who left was Mr Ophan Chaiprawat, the former director of the Department of Financial Institution Supervision and Examination. After the crisis involving the Racha Finance Company, he left the BoT to become the deputy managing director of the Thai Commerce Bank. Mr Phaibun Wattanasiritham, the assistant managing director of the Thai Thanu Bank, is the former director of the Securities Market of Thailand. Others include one of the first students to be granted a BoT scholarship, Mr Sathaphon Chinachit, the director of the Credit Control Division, Thai Commerce Bank; Mrs Chatha Wattanasiritham, the assistant managing director at the Thai Commerce Bank; Mr Roengchai Marakanon, the deputy managing director of the Krung Thai Bank; and, most recently, Miss Naphaphon Ruangsakun, the former director of the Financial Institution Restoration and Development Fund, who is now the assistant managing director at the Thai Thanu Bank. Besides these, many other officials at lower levels have left the BoT in order to go to work elsewhere.

Did they all leave because of the money or were there personal reasons? Did they encounter conflicts in their work or have a conflict of views? Or did they have some inner inspiration or desire such as in the case of Mr Suphachai Phanitchaphak, who left in order to run for election and who is now the deputy minister of finance?

Money was definitely not the only reason. But it will not hurt anything to increase the salaries and benefits of bank officials so that they can live with honor in society in accord with the level of their responsibilities and

duties. If this is done, the work of the organization will improve. The amount of money flowing into the treasury will not decline, and this will not lead to too great a difference between officials here and officials at the state enterprises and other public units.

But there are two points that the BoT should consider. First, why have so many top people at the BoT left the bank for other positions or careers? If they have left for personal reasons, there is nothing wrong with that. But if there are secret reasons that have not been brought into the open and clarified, that is cause to worry about the future of this powerful institution and its ability to manage the country's financial system properly.

Second, shouldn't the BoT try to attract experienced, knowledgeable, and qualified outsiders for the unfilled positions for which the bank has not been able to develop people from the inside instead of just allowing its capable people to leave for other institutions? In the past, Mr Phaisan Kumalawisai was brought in to serve as director of the Legal Department and Mr Panya Prempri was brought in to become the director of the Computer Center. But outsiders have never been brought in to serve in positions directly concerned with financial matters, positions in which they could provide new input and ideas.

Only those who are left can make decisions about these things. It's not true that nothing can be done because the brain drain has already occurred. Because the people who remain, whether in positions that are higher than, equal to, or lower than those held by the people who have left, are "brains," too.

11943

Central Bank Transfers, New Jobs Reported
42070013c Bangkok NAEO NA in Thai 18 Sep 87 p 8

[Text] In the annual reshuffle at the Bank of Thailand [BoT], the director of the International Department and the deputy director of the Legal Department were transferred to the Department of Administrative Services. Preparations are being made to hold the World Bank and IMF meeting in Thailand 4 years from now. Two new departments have been established.

Mr Siri Kancharoendi, chief of the Office of the Secretary, BoT, disclosed the results of the meeting held by the board of the BoT last Wednesday. Two new people have been appointed assistant governors of the BoT. The two men who were appointed are Mr Roengchai Marakanon, the former director of the Department of Banking, who was sent to help manage things at the Krung Thai Bank and who has held the position of deputy managing director there for almost 2 years, and Mr Praphan Wirothai, the director of the Issue Department.

As a result of these appointments, there are now five instead of four assistant governors. Because after Mr Adun Kitruang died last year while on a visit to a BoT branch office, no one was appointed to his position. It was felt that the remaining four people could handle the work.

The five assistant governors have the following duties: Mr Roengchai is responsible for supervising the BoT's branch offices at Hat Yai, Lampang, and Korat. Mr Praphan is responsible for monitoring the work of the Note Printing Works and the Issue Department in place of Commander Somkiet Lilahut, who will retire at the end of September. Mr Nan Kitchalak is responsible for monitoring the International Department and the Accounts Department. Miss Wari Hawanon is responsible for monitoring personnel affairs and the training center. Mr Phaisan Kumanwisai is responsible for monitoring the Department of Commercial Bank Supervision and Examination, the Department of Financial Institution Supervision and Examination, the Legal Department, and the Department of Banking.

Besides this, officials in various departments were transferred. Mrs Praphaphim Sakuntaphai, the director of the International Department, was appointed director of the Department of Administrative Services. The reason for her transfer to this department is that in 4 years, that is, in 1991, Thailand will host the annual meeting of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). The meeting will be attended by approximately 1,000 financial and monetary administrators from more than 100 countries. The bank needs someone with experience in international banking to make the preparations.

Mr Nit Siyaphai, the director of the Department of Administrative Services, was appointed director of the Issue Department. Mr Sakon Phuangphong and Mr Songkhwan Suwantemi, the two deputy directors of the Legal Department, were appointed deputy directors of the Department of Administrative Services. Mr Phanuwit Suphathammakit, the deputy director of the Department of Financial Institution Supervision and Examination was appointed director of the Northeastern Branch Office. Lady Siwong Mahasanthana, the deputy director of the Department of Banking, was appointed director of this department in place of Mr Wiwat Usanno, who is retiring.

Mr Prachuap Phanthumchinda, the director of the Northeastern Branch Office, was appointed director of the Deposits and Bonds Department, which is a new department. Mrs Somsiri Thephatsadin Na Ayuthaya, the deputy director of the International Department, was appointed director of the Currency Exchange Department, which is another new department.

Mr Phenwan Thongdithae, the deputy director of the Department of Commercial Banks Supervision and Examination, was appointed director of the Audit and Inspection Department.

Several middle echelon administrators serving as section heads were promoted to deputy director positions. Mr Udomsap Dechakamput, the head of the Currency Exchange Control Section, was appointed deputy director of the Department of Banking. Mr Surachai Phukbamrung, the head of Financial Institution Examination Section 1, was appointed deputy director of the Department of Commercial Banks Supervision and Examination. Mr Wibun Rattanachai, the head of Financial Institution Examination and Analysis Section 2, was appointed deputy director of the Department of Financial Institution Supervision and Examination. Mrs Bunlom Phuangsuwan, the head of the Bond Audit Section, was appointed deputy director of the Audit and Inspection Department. Mr Khamron Khamkaeo, the assistant director of the Legal Department, was promoted to deputy director of this department.

11943

Commerce Ministry Decision Process on Soybeans Reported

42070018b Bangkok KHAO PHISSET in Thai
26 Aug-1 Sep 87 pp 29, 30

[Article: "The Politics of Soybeans, Montri Wants to Study the Import System Another Year"]

[Text] "If there is anything you want to ask, go ahead. I am willing to answer any question about this," said Montri Phongphanit, the minister of commerce, cheerfully to reporters on 7 August before issuing a statement on the import of soybeans.

The cabinet resolution of 16 September 1986 promised the United States that Thailand would consider the possibility of changing the import of soybean products from a quota to a tariff system. The United States feels that the quota system is too complex for importers and that only certain importers are selected.

The cabinet ordered the Ministry of Commerce to complete the study within 1 year as promised the United States. Thus, a work committee headed by Somphon Kiattiphaibun, the director-general of the Department of Business Economics, was established in order to conduct the study and make the changes in accord with the promise made to the United States by the cabinet.

Montri said that the study conducted by this work committee showed that implementing a tariff system for the import of soybean products would be very beneficial. There are no disadvantages. But because the use of soybean products concerns other types of vegetable oils such as rice bran, palm, and sunflower seed oil, it is not enough to adjust the import tariff system just on soybeans. And there might be problems that could seriously affect Thailand's interests.

"For this reason, I will ask the cabinet to extend the study period for another year in order to make a careful study. This study must look at other types of vegetable oils. There is no way to complete this by the 16 September deadline," said Montri officially for the first time.

Somphon Kiattiphaibun added that using a tariff and surcharge system for the import of soybean products has other problems that need to be reviewed. If this system is used with soybeans only, there will be more problems in importing sunflower seed. And adjusting the tariff on soybean oil might have a strong effect on Thailand's production of palm oil.

Montri said that he made this decision after talking with the directors-general of various departments in the Ministry of Commerce. They all agreed that the time limit should be extended.

He was asked, In view of the fact that the cabinet promised the United States that this would be concluded within 1 year, won't asking for an extension make it seem as though we are trying to find a way to twist the agreement? Montri said, "No. The United States is a big country. It must try to understand Thailand, which is much smaller. The United States will probably see the problem and be fair. Because regardless of whether we change this or not, the United States will not benefit very much."

Montri also said that extending the study period is tantamount to extending the use of the quota import system another year (the people who are probably very happy about this are the influential soybean oil extraction plants).

The statements by this handsome minister can be summarized as follows:

1. The study ordered by the cabinet has not been completed.
2. There will continue to be import quotas on soybean meal.
3. The Ministry of Commerce will submit this matter to the cabinet in the near future.

After having summarized the facts, the questions are:

1. The cabinet set a time limit of 1 year. Did the work committee of the Ministry of Commerce really carry out things in accord with this order?
2. When the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (which had the cabinet's permission to conduct negotiations with the United States) made this promise to the United States, didn't it already have this data?

3. In making this decision to extend the time, did Montri discuss the matter with Air Chief Marshal Sitthi Sawetsila, the leader of the Social Action Party and minister of foreign affairs? If he didn't, why didn't he?

4. What will happen if the United States uses this to charge that Thailand has gone back on its word and uses other trade measures to put pressure on Thailand? What damage could this do, and who will be responsible?

5. Will the cabinet approve the request of the Ministry of Commerce?

6. Who stands to benefit from keeping the system of import quotas?

As for the first question, the Ministry of Commerce would probably say that it has worked very hard. Because it is well known by those on the work committee that the results of the study were submitted to Montri in July. He was informed that there are two choices (for the details, see issue 529 of *Khao Phiset Thurakit*, pp 32, 33). But for reasons not explained, Montri was not satisfied with the results of the study.

As for the next question, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has confirmed that it had the data before the negotiations began and that it had studied the advantages and disadvantages of changing to a tariff import system (such as choosing not to take action and not opening a loophole for corruption from the buying and selling of quotas).

With respect to this, there is another question that needs to be answered. That is, how different were the data of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from the data of the Ministry of Commerce? Or did the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reach an agreement with the United States on its own and then put pressure on the Ministry of Commerce to follow suit, which is what several senior people in the Ministry of Commerce are saying? Mr Danai Dulalapha, a close advisor to Air Chief Marshal Sitthi, and Mr Phachon Isarasanao, a close advisor to Montri, should appear on television and clear up this matter.

As for the third question, Montri has clearly stated that "this is a matter for the Ministry of Commerce. This does not concern the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or the party leader." This means that Montri did not discuss this matter with Air Chief Marshal Sitthi.

The question is, would Montri dare to slight Air Chief Marshal Sitthi, the leader of his party, like this? Because as is known, in reaching this agreement with the United States, it was Air Chief Marshal Sitthi who gave the green light to proceed. Now, how can he face the U.S. representative in view of the fact that a member of his party has twisted this matter? Or does the Social Action

Party want the people to think that this is a stratagem in the struggle with the United States, in which the party leader makes a promise and a member of the party then twists things?

A news source close to the Social Action Party said that Montri seems to be very confident. Because he can't lose. If the cabinet rejects his proposal, there will be a stalemate. But if the cabinet accepts the proposal, that will be a victory for Montri.

The question is, What will the cabinet do? Because if it accepts Montri's proposal, it will have to break its promise to the United States. And it will have to waste time explaining why the matter was not completed in the year allotted.

Agricultural officials at the U.S. embassy have said that no action will be taken at this time. They will wait to see what the attitude of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is when it informs the United States of whether Thailand will act in accord with the agreement. But after that, it is impossible to tell how strong the U.S. reaction will be or what effect this will have on exports in the near future.

It is said that Montri has lobbied the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and even some cabinet ministers in order to get them to support his proposal to extend the study period and keep the quota system on soybean imports. "It seems that the results are quite satisfactory. This matter will be discussed on Tuesday, 25 August unless some mistake is made," said the news source.

This is a matter that we will have to follow, because this could easily become a major political problem, particularly in view of the fact that the United States has been upset about this for several years now.

11943

Hunger, Exploitation Plague Northeast Migrants, Income Noted

*42070017b Bangkok KHAO PHISSET in Thai
5-11 Aug 87 pp 35-37*

[Article: "Hualamphong, the Destination for Drought Victims"]

[Excerpts] Rawi Hiranchot, a Social Action Party MP from Roi Et, told *Khao Phiset* that "I have been visiting the people. But there aren't that many people to visit. Many people have migrated to Bangkok in search of work. Today, only children and elderly people are left to watch the drought in this area."

For the period October 1986 to May 1987, Department of Labor figures show that 2,658, 7,155, 411, 777, and 152 people have migrated to Bangkok from the northern,

northeastern, eastern, central, and southern regions respectively. For all of these people, Hualamphong [the main train station in Bangkok] is the initial destination.

Around midnight, *Khao Phiset* went to visit the people at Hualamphong. Rows of people were sleeping in front of the station. None of them had a blanket.

Mrs Siphrae, age 46, who is from Udon Thani Province, had fled the drought several days previously. As a result of her impoverished situation, she looks 60 years old.

"I came to Bangkok because of the severe drought in Udon. Rice yields are very small. There isn't enough to eat," she said. She told us that in Udon, people have to eat rice and salt or rice and coconut in order to survive. Now that she is in Bangkok, she stays at Hualamphong.

"The train arrived here early in the morning. I was asked to go work in a flour mill in Rayong. I had to work very hard all day. We worked from 0300 to 1000 hours and then took a short break. We then worked until 2200 hours. The dust from the flour got into my throat and eyes. I couldn't breathe, and my hair turned white because of the dust. The food that they gave us was food that you use to feed pigs. It consisted of boiled rice with potatoes. I couldn't eat it. Even rice with salt was better."

Finally, she left the mill and became an itinerant. She obtained food at temples and slept at Hualamphong. But when she went to the temples to ask for food, people called her lazy. But she has tried to help herself.

"I don't like to be called lazy and so I make trash bags from fertilizer bags and then walk about picking up paper around printing shops and trash barrels. Sometimes they give me some and so I manage to survive."

But there are days when she doesn't eat because she hasn't collected any paper even after working from 0400 hours to late at night. "Things are all right. There are days when I don't eat, but it's better than being exploited at the mill."

She saved enough money to buy a cart to haul the trash so that she would not have to carry it. But carelessly, she went to sleep in a different place one day, and a thief stole her cart, purse, and the few items of clothing that she had.

Some people suggested that she go to the Department of Public Welfare for help. She went and asked for help, but the people there treated her like a beggar. She didn't like this and so she began collecting trash and sleeping at Hualamphong again.

She sleeps under a power pole along the edge of the canal opposite Hualamphong. When it gets cold, she has to use her skirt as a cover, because she doesn't have a blanket. She sleeps inside the train station only when it rains. The police take pity on such days. Because usually, they chase people out of the station.

"On some things, I sympathize with them. Because some of those who come to sleep here hug and kiss each other and act disgracefully. Many people pass by. It's embarrassing. But others say that they are afraid that foreigners will say that Thai are poor. And so officials don't like people to sleep at Hualamphong."

She takes baths at the temple. She has to walk a long distance. On the days that she doesn't have anything to eat, she has to swallow her pride and beg for food. Usually, she eats rice and salt, because other things are expensive. She sometimes stops at Sanam Luang when students go to the park. She likes to listen. There is music. Sometimes, people say that the prime minister is coming. People wait, but he has never come.

"I would like to return to my home in Udon. But I don't have enough money for a ticket. Sometimes, people give me food and students come and chat with me. The welfare people have said that they will find a way to help the people at Hualamphong. But they haven't done anything. I would like to see Prime Minister Prem. I would like him to help us. If he came to Hualamphong and saw our condition, I am sure that he would try to help us. But he probably won't come."

In 1983, the Employment Service Division, Department of Labor, Ministry of Interior, conducted a survey among people who had migrated from the northeast in order to find work in Bangkok. It was learned that 60.8 percent of the migrants were young people approximately 18-24 years of age. The largest number of migrants were from Sisaket Province. The great majority had only a Grade-4 education. As for why they had migrated, 41.4 percent said that they had moved because of the drought. This was the main reason.

The most common types of jobs open to migrants are general household work for women and general labor for men, including jobs as restaurant employees, janitors, and security guards.

Mr Wirat Manisan, a meteorologist with the Department of Meteorology, said that the Department of Meteorology expects the amount of rain to increase in the next 2-3 months. Rainfall should increase beginning in August, with the high point coming around the end of October.

At present, the track of the monsoon winds is located in northern Laos. It is expected that this will move south to northern and northeastern Thailand in the near future. And normally every year, about three or four storms reach Thailand from the South China Sea. These storms usually occur during the period July-September, averaging

one storm a month. But this year, there have not been any storms. It is thought that storms from the South China Sea will hit Thailand sometime in the beginning of August, and so rainfall should increase in all regions. But we must be careful of flash floods if three or four storms hit in quick succession.

The northeast has an area of 106 million rai, and more than one-third of the country's population lives here. That is, 18,552,107 of the country's 52,962,204 people live in the northeast. But the differences between this region and the other regions are very great.

A 1985 survey on incomes found that the average per capita income of people in Bangkok is 59,003 baht. In the central, western, eastern, southern, and northern regions, the per capita incomes are 16,749, 21,047, 25,603, 15,358, and 13,353 baht respectively. As for the northeast, the average per capita income is only 8,124 baht, the lowest of any region.

A man who was lying on a pushcart near Hualamphong told *Khao Phiset* that he was from Huai Tai Subdistrict in Khu Khan District, Sisaket Province. He said that he is 53 years old and that he has five children. He is a field laborer and earns 20 baht a day. He plows the fields and transplants and harvests the rice.

"We have to work hard, but we never seem to have any luck." He also said that there has been a severe drought for 3 years. The drought was especially bad this year. The fields could not be worked, because there was no water. About 260 families live at Ban Huai Tai. Most are of Cambodian descent. This village is about 50 km from the provincial seat. The bus fare to the provincial seat is 11 baht. The train fare to Bangkok is 100 baht.

"We have made mistakes, too. We have cut some trees for them. But if we don't, we can't earn a living," he said about the cause of the drought.

It was midnight, but he couldn't get to sleep. His eyes were blank. He said that he is employed only 3 months out of the year. He doesn't have any work the other 9 months. He just sits about. He had to send two of his sons to the city to find work. They work in a factory in Phra Pra Daeng.

It costs at least 20 baht a day to live at Ban Huai Tai. He has to buy glutinous rice. He obtains fish, bamboo shoots, and vegetables on his own. But without money, he can't buy any rice.

"Sometimes I get a tank of water from the well so that we can take a bath. The older people wash first."

We asked him if he had heard about the "green northeast" project.

"Nothing is being done at our village. They are probably helping only those places mentioned in the news."

He is worried about his sons. He doesn't know if the factory where they are working is like the terrible factories mentioned in the news. He got worried and so he came to see. But they have moved and so he hasn't been able to find them. And so he is staying at Hualamphong. He plans to go look for them again even though his money is running out.

The young man sleeping on a pushcart next to him said that he was from Khuru Subdistrict in Trakan Phutphon District, Ubon Ratchathani Province.

"There are about 60 families, or approximately 300 people, in my village. About 200 have come to Bangkok. The young men and women have all come. Only old people are left there."

"The young people have all left. When they are old enough to work, they leave."

He told us about the reservoir near the village. During the dry season, vehicles can drive through the center of the reservoir. "It's like a leaky pan or jar. Public projects are difficult to understand. It's as if their way of helping the villagers is to build a monument for us to look at. That is, we have a reservoir but no water. We have water jars, but no water to put in them. There are canals, but no water in the canals. Everything is government property. Like monuments, they are just there to look at."

POLITICAL

Duyen Hai Disciplines 16 Party Members, Admits 33 New Ones

42090013b Ho Chi Minh City SAIGON GIAI PHONG
in Vietnamese 27 Aug 87 p 1

[Text] The party organization of Duyen Hai District, while strengthening control work and building strong party bases in order to raise the quality of its members, has taken disciplinary action against 16 party members, whose quality and morality had been declining and whose sense of responsibility had been lacking.

Nguyen Quoc Khoi, deputy director of the Services Corporation, was expelled from the party for having wrongly carried out the principle of management and having disseminated decadent cultural materials. Nguyen Van Ben, the public security deputy chief of An Thoi Dong Village, was expelled because he had failed to fulfill the assigned tasks, had lacked a sense of responsibility, and had been neglecting party activities. Truong Ngoc Nam, a party committee member in Binh Khanh Village, who had wrongly carried out the principle of cash management and economic contracts received a warning. Tran Van Linh, the public security chief of Tam Thon Hiep Village, who had been drinking heavily received a warning. Probationary CPV members Bui Van Thanh, who violated the financial principle, and Chau Van Loi, who disregarded discipline and committed illegitimate sexual relations, both had their names crossed out.

Since the beginning of 1987, 18 party bases in the district have admitted 33 new party members, including 6 who directly take part in production. However, the efforts to give advanced training to and to develop the capabilities of party members at the basic level have been slow. So far Duyen Hai District party committee echelons have not yet considered the cases of 80 prospective party members because some party organizations and chapters at the basic level did not complete their annual plans for party building; were showing little interest in building and consolidating mass organizations, particularly the Communist Youth Union; were confused about supplementing the files of party members in accordance with the CPV statutes; and were narrow-minded and prejudiced.

5598

Reader Urges Immediate Action To Promote Farm Production

42090013a Ho Chi Minh City SAIGON GIAI PHONG
in Vietnamese 27 Aug 87 p 1

["Speak Frankly, Speak the Truth" column by Nguyen Truc Quynh, Nguyen Dinh Chieu Retirees' Club: "Let Us Respond to 'Things That Need Be Done Right Now' Column in Agricultural Production"]

[Text] Everybody knows that our country is facing a serious state of imbalance in social life and that the lives of true working people is in an alarming state.

As for the reasons behind this situation, many people explain them with words of different degrees of harshness, but all of them have the same opinion about the following: enemy-inflicted misfortunes, natural calamities, and old-fashioned positions and policies having existed for many years and given rise to innumerable negative social aspects. As part of the "Speak Frankly, Speak the Truth" forum, *Saigon Giai Phong's* "Things That Need Be Done Right Now" column has offered many articles that mention the names and addresses of those individuals and organs that have been part of the "negative phenomena" having led to a decrease of the people's confidence in the revolutionary administration. This good deed must continue. In this spirit I would like to mention the "things that need be done right away, not only in the immediate future but also on a continuous and urgent basis for the entire period of transition," i.e., the question of concentrating efforts on agricultural production. If we do not resolve this question, the living conditions of our people will continue to be in the same state and the distance between our country and the developed countries will continue to be farther.

The recent party congress has mentioned correct programs and plan goals, which are the results of our party having groped in the dark in many years and having paid a rather high "tuition" for such a knowledge. But since the day its resolution was adopted, has there been any committee, sector, ministry, or general department that has really drafted a plan to serve "the leading front" which is agricultural production? The question of agricultural production (consisting of farming, fishery, and animal husbandry) is not only a question of raising prices, even less a question of "mutual agreement between buyer and seller" as in the period of simple production, but rather the synchronized activities of many sectors—agriculture, industry, commerce, communications, materials, construction, water conservancy, public health, education—under the unified leadership of the chairman of the Council of Ministers.

In our country today, if agricultural products are considered goods, the countryside and ricefields must be considered a huge goods-producing enterprise that has tens of millions of laborers and decades of existence and is toiling to produce wealth for society. But the irony is that "the director of this huge enterprise," after many years of running it in the red and driving our country's agricultural production to a standstill, has been elevated to a higher position of responsibilities! What will farmers, revolutionary intellectuals, cadres, and combatants coming from the countryside think about this phenomenon?

What are the hopes of our farmers today? In my opinion, there are only two hopes: having the basic conditions for farming and animal raising; and after selling their products, having things available for buying in order to renew their productive labor. But let us go to the two main agricultural-production zones of the country, the two deltas, particularly the Mekong delta, to see the bitter

truth. The minimum conditions for the above hopes are lacking: slow changes of seeds; shortages of water, fertilizers, and means of circulation; uncontrolled harmful insects; lack of schools for children; shortages of medicines, clothing materials, kerosene for lighting, and so on.

Unlike the developed countries, in our country almost all cadres and party members, including the high-ranking officials in the party and government, have come from the farmer class; the worker-farmer alliance has taken shape along with the development of the revolution, which during the war was protected and supported by the countryside. But who among officials at ministerial and general departmental levels and among committee chairmen and deputy chairmen close to the Secretariat have gone back to the countryside, the place of their "attachment," in order to listen to what farmers want to say and to have?

The relationship between the countryside and cities and the vital alliance between the two main classes of the revolution are showing a serious rift. Nobody can heal it, but instead it requires correct positions and policies, which the first people capable of implementing are the ones who hold the positions of authority in our ministries and sectors—who must propose at any cost the "Things that need to be done right away" in their ministry or sector.

If we cannot do that, our country, in my opinion, will continue to encounter difficulties resulting from a shortage of grain and the slogan to the effect that agricultural production is the party's leading front will remain only an empty one on paper.

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END

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