จากตู้หนังสือเก่า

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

คำนำ

บทความเรื่อง *Withdrawal Symptoms: Social and Cultural Aspcts of the October 6 Coup.* โดยศาสตราจารย์เบ็น แอนเดอร์สัน แห่งมหาวิทยาลัยคอร์แนล ยังเป็นบทวิเคราะห์เรื่องกรณี 6 ตุลาคม 2519 ที่ดีที่สุดในรอบ 2 ทศวรรษที่ผ่านมา ผู้เขียนตั้งข้อสังเกตว่า แม้การสังหารทางการเมืองจะไม่ใช่เรื่องใหม่ในการเมืองไทยสมัยใหม่ นับแต่สมัยจอมพล ป. พิบูลสงคราม มาถึงจอมพลสฤษดิ์ ธนะรัชต์ และมาถึงจอมพลถนอม กิตติขจร ประภาส จารุเสถียร แต่สิ่งที่แปลกใหม่ในเหตุการณ์ 6 ตุลาคม 2519 ก็คือการที่การใช้ความรุนแรงครั้งนี้ กระทำไปโดยไม่มีลักษณะของการสั่งการจากฝ่ายบริหารราชการ (nonadministrative) เป็นการกระทำในที่สาธารณะอย่างโจ่งแจ้ง (public) และมีลักษณะของฝูงชนหรือม็อบ (mob character) บทความนี้จึงต้องการศึกษาดูว่ามีเหตุผลอะไรที่ทำให้เกิดความรุนแรงแบบใหม่ที่ว่านี้ขึ้นมา ผู้เขียนเชื่อว่าเหตุการณ์นี้เป็นอาการของวิกฤตทางการเมือง ทางสังคมและทางวัฒนธรรมในปัจจุบันของสังคมสยาม การวิเคราะห์จะทำไปสองด้าน คือหนึ่งดูจากการก่อรูปทางชนชั้น และสองดูที่การผันผวนทางอุดมการณ์

กล่าวทางด้านการก่อรูปทางชนชั้น ได้แก่การเกิดขึ้นของชนชั้นกระฎุมพี อันประกอบไปด้วยชนชั้นกลาง และชนชั้นนายทุนน้อย ซึ่งขยายตัวอย่างรวดเร็วในสมัยที่สหรัฐอเมริกาเข้ามาตั้งฐานทัพและขยายทุนเข้ามาด้วย ทั้งหมดนี้เกิดขึ้นในทศวรรษปี ค.ศ. 1960 กลุ่มกระฎุมพีและนายทุนน้อยที่เกิดและโตจากเศรษฐกิจอเมริกันดังกล่าว จะกลายเป็นกลุ่มสนับสนุนขบวนการฝ่ายขวา กลายเป็นแนวร่วมประชาชนของกลุ่มทหารการเมือง นายธนาคาร ผู้นำข้าราชการ และชนชั้นสูงซึ่งยังกุมอำนาจสำคัญอยู่

ในด้านของการผันผวนทางอุดมการณ์ก็เป็นผลมาจากการเข้ามาของอเมริกาเช่นกัน ที่สำคัญแสดงออกในการปฏิวัติ 14 ตุลาคม

2516 จากนั้นตามมาด้วยปฏิกิริยาของฝ่ายอุดมการณ์ชาติ ศาสนา พระมหากษัตริย์ ซึ่งเร่งระดมฉีดการโฆษณาและการครอบงำด้วยอุดมการณ์ที่รุนแรงขึ้นในท่ามกลางการผกผันทางอุดมการณ์นี้เอง ที่อุดมการณ์ชาติศาสนาพระมหากษัตริย์ไม่ได้เป็นเพียงอุดมการณ์ในทาง "ประเพณี" แบบเก่าดั้งเดิมของชาวบ้านอีกต่อไป หากได้ยกระดับขึ้นมาเป็นอุดมการณ์ที่เป็นของกลุ่มสมาคมและคณะที่มีการก่อรูปมาอย่างจำเพาะเจาะจง (หมายถึงกลุ่มจัดตั้งเฉพาะมากมายที่เกิดขึ้นในระหว่างนั้น) เป้าหมายของกลุ่มฝ่ายขวาจัดต่าง ๆ ได้แก่ชนชั้นกระฎุมพีใหม่ที่เพิ่งเกิดขึ้นมา จึงเห็นได้ว่านักปลุกระดมและโฆษณาฝ่ายขวาจัดเป็นทั้งสมาชิกส่วนหนึ่งที่บ้าคลั่งในชั้นชนนี้เอง กับเป็นผู้สร้างสถานการณ์ที่เจ้าเล่ห์ในคณะผู้ปกครองด้วยในขณะเดียวกัน

ผู้เขียนสรุปถึงผลของ "6 ตุลา" ว่ามีสองหนทาง หนึ่งช่วยเร่งทำลายมายาคติเกี่ยวกับการเมืองไทยลงไป เปิดช่องให้กับการวิพากษ์วิจารณ์สถาบันชั้นสูงได้มากขึ้น อีกประการหนึ่งการใช้ความรุนแรงเกินไปของฝ่ายขวาในการปราบปรามนักศึกษาภายใต้คำอ้างว่าเพื่อชาติ และกล่าวหานักศึกษาฝ่ายซ้ายว่าเป็นคนส่วนน้อยเป็นคอมมิวนิสต์นั้น ในทางปฏิบัติคนไม่อาจรับข้ออ้างนั้นได้ นั่นคือการทำให้การต่อสู้ของฝ่ายนักศึกษาไม่ใช่เป็นเพียงการต่อต้านทำลายชาติดังที่มีการกล่าวหากัน

ธเนศ อาภรณ์สุวรรณ

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by Ben Anderson

Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Troubles of New Classes

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Occupational Group	Nos. in 1960	Nos. in 1970	% Increase
Total	13,836,984	16,850,136	21.7
A. Professional, technical & related workers	173,960	284,104	63.3
B. Administrative, executive & managerial workers	26,191	246,591	941.5
C. Clerical workers	154,303	190,238	23.3
D. Sales workers	735,457	833,607	13.3
E. Farmers, fishermen, hunters, loggers, & related workers	11,332,489	13,217,416	16.6
F. Miners, quarrymen, & related workers	26,255	42,605	62.2
G. Workers in transport & communications occupations	144,610	225,204	55.7
H. Craftsmen, prod-process workers, & laborers not elsewhere classified	806,205	1,109,943	37.7
I. Service, sport & recreation workers	273,375	471,999	72.7
J. Unclassifiable	99,259	30,560	-59.2
K. New entrants to the work force	64,880	197,869	305.0

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Malcolm Caldwell

THAILAND: towards the revolution

ORISA IRAWONWUT

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

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

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

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

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

union of democratic thais

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

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

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

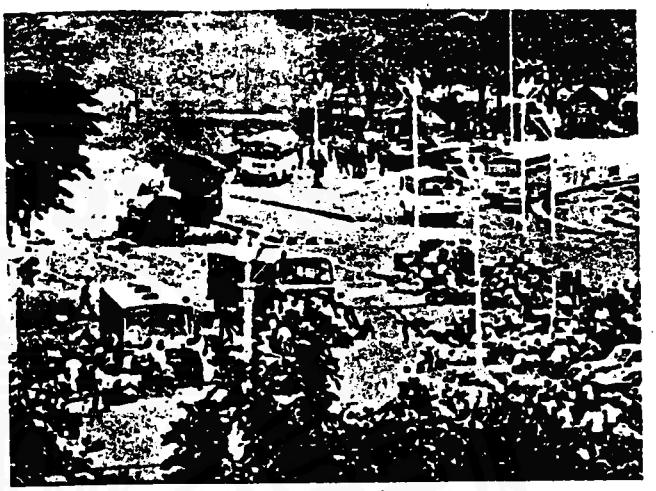
Ideological Upheaval

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Notes

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Occupations of Parents of University Students (c. 1968)

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

Source: Richard Kraft, *Education in Thailand: Student Background and University Admission* (Bangkok: Educational Planning Office, Ministry of Education, 1968), cited in Mudannayke, ed., *Thailand Yearbook, 1975-76*, p. 1 17. Kraft estimated that the children of government officials had a 268 times better chance of being admitted to a university (and those of manufacturers and industrialists a 36 times better chance) than children of farm families.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

50. "Strangely enough, vocational school graduates have a difficult time finding jobs. In the rural areas, only 25 percent are able to find jobs and in the greater Bangkok area the situation is not much better, with only about 50 percent able to find employment." Mudannayake, ed., *Thailand Yearbook, 1975-76*, p.1 10.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

63. Natee notes that of his 496 fellow-applicants for admission to the Scouts branch in Nakhon Pathom in September 1976, 70% were between the ages 35-42, 25% were young people, and most of the rest in their sixties and seventies. He adds that "most of the people who joined the program were reasonably well-off." See "Village Scouts," pp. 34-35. Indeed, this would have had to have been so, for the trainees were required to: buy expensive badges and colored group photographs; contribute 40-50 baht daily for food; make religious donations; and pay for the elaborate costumes used for the beauty and dance competitions. (Ibid., p. 36.)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

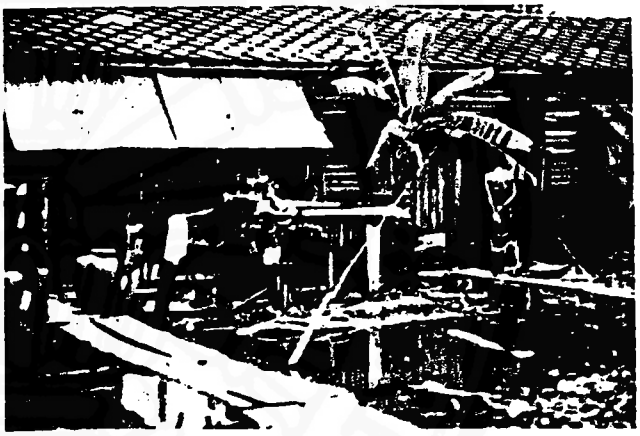
82. On this case, see Somporn, "Rightist Phoenix," p. 384; and S. J. Tambiah, *World Conqueror and World Renouncer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp. 257-60. Though the two men, Phra Phimonladham and Phra Sasanasophon, were completely exonerated by the courts, the Sangha hierarchs were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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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